

## **Melksham Town Council**

### **Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 17th April 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Ellis (Chair)

Councillor P Aves  
Councillor S Crundell  
Councillor J Oatley  
Councillor S Rabey  
Councillor J Crundell  
Councillor S Mortimer

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**OFFICERS:** Linda Roberts Town Clerk

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** One member of the public was present virtually.

#### **377/22 Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Cooke who was substituted by Councillor Mortimer

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Goodhind who was substituted by Councillor J Crundell.

#### **378/22 Public Participation**

Unitary Councillor Mike Sankey was present to listen to the application regarding the building of 650 homes at Blackmore Farm. He advised that his fellow Wiltshire Councillor, Nick Holder had called in the application to the Western Area Planning Committee. He expressed his disappointment that the planning meetings of both Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council were being held at the same time on the same evening as he would like to have heard both councils deliberations. Councillor Ellis commented that he was not aware of the clash until it was too late to move the meeting.

#### **379/22 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **380/22 Minutes**

The minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023, having previously been circulated, had two minor amendments:

1. The Chair for the meeting was councillor Rabey,
2. It was the notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February that were received.

With the above amendments the minutes were **approved** as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Ellis.

The Chair, Councillor Ellis, moved that agenda item 7, LHFIG referral to investigate railings on the High Pavement be taken next to allow Councillor Price who was in attendance to speak to the item..

## **381/22 Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) Issues**

### **381/22.1 High Pavement**

Councillor Price has been contacted by a befriender of a constituent who is partially sighted. He read a letter from the befriender stating that the constituent had been a Melksham residents since 1965. The Highways Improvement Request Form had previously been circulated, along with a Special Inspection report from 2004. Tactile paving was not suitable due to this being generally known as dipped curb for crossing. In 2004, there was an approximate cost of £44,000 for a wall to be built. This will now be in the region of £100,000 to £150,000. It is believed there may be utilities at the edge of the road, which would also have an impact and cost implications.

Councillors Oatley, J Crundell, S Crundell, Aves and Mortimer have all been contacted by residents over the past few years all with the same concerns.

Councillor Ellis has looked at the history, one person has fallen off 50 years ago.

Councillor S Crundell commented that with increase in the number of mobility scooters in recent years, it is becoming more of a danger as you move to the side to avoid the scooters.

Councillor Ellis asked the Town Clerk to proceed with the LHFIG and ask Councillor Mike Sankey to review and look at any new technologies that might be available as a solution. The Town Council will then be able to look at the feasibility and costs of the new options available.

Proposed Councillor S Crundell  
Seconded Councillor Oatley

*7.30pm Councillor T Price left the meeting.*

### **382/22 Planning Considerations**

Members had due regard to the Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) when condiering the following planning applications.

### **383/22 Planning Applications**

Members made the following comments on the planning applications listed below:

#### **383/22.1 PL/2023/01949**

PL/2023/01949 – Land at Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham, SN12 7QS

This is a large application with outline planning permission being sought for 650 new homes.

Councillor S Crundell commented that this is in the Bowerhill division of the Town.

- Two points of access to Sandridge, outside Bowerhill/Sandridge
- It is outside of the sites identified in the Joint Neighbourhood Plan
- Great lengths and 7 years to write the Plan that the community wanted
- It completely ignores the guidelines and the Plan
- It is felt that it is trying to be slipped in before the new housing and levelling up agenda comes into play
- There is no due regard to the historic architecture of the town
- It is claimed it would enhance Clackers Brook, which crosses the road, and there are no details on the culverts and how the flood water would be managed
- There is no bus transit
- It is felt that the developer is taking advantage of the current climate in the housing sector

The Town Clerk advised that this area had previously been excluded at Stage 1, as it was not a suitable site, the developers are hovering. It was noted that Melksham Without Parish area adjacent to this site is being looked at for 300 additional homes.



**383/22.3 PL/2023/02537**

Proposed Works to Trees in a Conservation Area Giffords  
Lowbourne, Melksham, SN12 7DY

T2 Cherry reduce the 2 long lateral branches over the lawn with  
wound at base by up to 2 metres. T6 Cherry Reduce the long lateral  
branch over the wall by up to 2 metres. T7 Cherry Reduce approx. 6  
upper branches by up to 1 metre to contain the shape.

Approved subject to the approval by the Tree Warden.

Proposed Councillor S Crundell  
Seconded Councillor Aves

Unanimously agreed

**383/22.4 PL/2023/02536**

Works to a Protected Tree  
Giffords Court Lowbourne, Melksham, SN12 7DY  
T1 Horse Chestnut (TPO) Reduction of branch towards the corner of  
the  
building by up to 2 metres. Reduction of branch over lawn on the  
roadside by up to 2 metres. The work is to address long lateral  
branches with possible weak attachment.

Approved subject to the approval by the Tree Warden.

Proposed Councillor Rabey  
Seconded Councillor Mortimer  
Unanimously approved

**383/22.5 PL/2023/02519**

Householder Application  
5 SANDRIDGE ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 7BE  
Two storey & single storey rear extension.  
Councillor Ellis advised he knows the site; it is a large plot and is not  
overlooked.  
Approved.

Proposed Councillor Rabey  
Seconded Councillor S Crundell  
Unanimously approved

## **384/22 Planning Decisions**

Members noted the following planning decisions:

### **384/22.1 PL/2023/00691**

Noted

### **384/22.2 PL/2023/00599**

Noted

### **384/22.3 PL/2022/06470**

It was noted that the Town Council conditions were taken into account and formed part of the approval.

### **384/22.4 PL/2023/00559**

The planning decisions were noted.

### **384/22.5 PL/2022/09851**

Noted

### **384/22.6 Planning Appeal: PL/2022/06749**

The Town Clerk advised that this is for information only, deliberations are still taking place.

Councillor Oatley commented that he is involved with this application and the deliberations. He will feedback all the concerns. Councillor Mortimer asked if the ownership of the driveway had been notified to the Planning Officer, Councillor Oatley advised it had.

*Press officer arrived.*

## **385/22 Neighbourhood Plan**

The Town Clerk advised that more work is being carried out and further reports will be made following the Steering Group Meeting scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023. Councillor Ellis advised there is a Housing Task Group meeting later this week.

The Town Clerk stated that analysis of the feedback from the recent public engagement exercise is to be completed and will be reported to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and then this Committee.

**386/22 Sparkle Team and Parish Steward**

Councillor Oatley asked if the new pavement in the town could be cleaned, along with other pavement areas that are looking grubby.

Councillor Mortimer asked if the Bath Road play area could be cleared of leaves and the lining from the car park removed. The incorrectly painted parking bays had been brought to Wiltshire Council's attention and a request to remove them. It was reported that it was not a priority.

Councillor Oatley advised that he is the Wiltshire Councillor for that area and will see if he can get anything done.

Meeting Closed at: 8.00 pm

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:**