

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3rd October 2023

PRESENT: Councillor S Rabey (Chair)

Councillor P Alford
Councillor G Ellis
Councillor J Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS:	Linda Roberts	Town Clerk
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Five people were present and one was present virtually.

Laura Grimason of Gillings and Will Rees of Frontier Estates spoke on planning application PL/2023/06976

- Proposals are for a 71-bed care home to provide residential and nursing care for the elderly including for those with advanced needs such as dementia in response to an ageing population both locally and nationally.
- The application is out for consultation and as of the 3rd October, only 3 resident comments had been received. Consultee comments are being reviewed and raise no major concerns.
- The site is in a sustainable location with good access to local facilities and public transport services and will help to create a mixed and balanced community.
- Wiltshire Council have already accepted that there is provision of a community facility at the school.
- There is a current S106 variation application to remove the requirement for a medical centre and recycling centre on this site and this is progressing with Wiltshire Council.
- Around 53 FTE jobs are anticipated and care operators in our experience are able to find staff for care homes.

Melksham East Wiltshire Councillor Mike Sankey reminded the committee that he had called in application PL/2023/06976 and PL/202306725 to Wiltshire Council's planning committee but either call in could be cancelled if the committee felt it was not appropriate. He also read out some concerns on behalf of a resident of Melksham East

- Lack of the promised Community Centre

- Lack of parking. Verbena Court and surrounding roads are used by parents during school pick-up and drop off
- The school is not a suitable alternative for a Community Centre
- Increased traffic. There are already a number of “near misses” every day and speed limits are not observed

513/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Aves.

514/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

515/23 Minutes

The record that the last meeting was not quorate was acknowledged and signed.

516/23 Presentation from Joju Charging

Rob Dickin Of Joju Charging introduced himself and his company and gave a presentation, with reference to the written presentation in the agenda pack.

A feasibility study was undertaken looking into the opportunity to provide public EV charging for residents and visitors at the Church Street Car Park, Avonside Enterprise Park, Bath Road Car Park, King George V Playing Field Car Park, Lowbourne Car Park and Union Street Car Park.

Primarily looked at Fast Charging (upto 22kw) which would give a full charge in 4-5 hours. Since then Joju’s funding partner, Mer, has expressed interest in fully funding rapid chargers in the Church Street Car Park and Bath Road Car Park.

Avonside, KGV and Union St would have potential to provide facilities for people who do not have off street parking, with a proposed 4 sockets in each car park.

Rapid Chargers would give approximately 80% charge in half an hour. Installation would be funded by Mer in return for being sole providers for a period of 15 year. Council would get a revenue rebate based on the amount of electricity sold. Mer would be responsible for maintenance and would update chargers to latest technology part way through the 15 year period. There would also be the possibility of Mer funding expansion of the network if increased EV usage made this viable.

Rob concluded by saying the suggested approach would provide a service for visitors and residents visiting the town center and for those without off-street parking and home charging facilities.

Councillors asked questions on electricity supply, maintenance, working with Wiltshire Council, possibility of reduced rate for residents and “charger blocking”.

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to take the question of installing EV Chargers at Church Street Car Park, Bath Road Car Park, King George V Playing Field Car Park, and Union Street Car Park to Full Council on 30 October 2023 for approval and to allocate budget.

517/23 Planning Considerations

518/23 Planning Applications

519/23 PL/2023/06725 - Land at Longleaze Lane, Melksham, SN12 6QJ

Members raised concerns on the following issues.

- Access
- Availability of public transport
- Staffing
- Flooding
- The size and scale of the proposed built
- Heritage (nearby listed buildings)
- Landscaping, screening and the lack of protection to prevent mature planting being removed

Policy 6: Housing in Defined Settlements of our reviewed Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#2), which is going out to Regulation 14 consultation next week and states as follows:

Proposals for age restricted housing, extra-care communities and nursing homes will be supported only in the most sustainable locations, closely linked to local services and public transport.

It was proposed by Councillor Alford, seconded by Councillor Ellis and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to record that the committee does not support the application and request planning officers, if minded to grant the application, take into consideration the concerns raised.

520/23 PL/2023/06976 - Land at Verbena Court, Melksham, SN12 7GG

Members raised concerns on the following points.

- The size and scale of the proposed development

- Parking
- Entry to and exit from Cranesbill Road and Verbena Court
- Public transport links
- Lack of landscaping, planting and open green space.
- Location. It was acknowledged that there was a need for facilities but it was felt that this was not a suitable location.

Policy 6: Housing in Defined Settlements (attached) of our reviewed Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#2), which is going out to Regulation 14 consultation next week and states as follows:

Proposals for age restricted housing, extra-care communities and nursing homes will be supported only in the most sustainable locations, closely linked to local services and public transport.

It was proposed by Councillor Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Alford and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to object to the application.

521/23 PL/2023/07337

It was noted by the Chair Councillor Rabey that the date for response had passed but there was nothing contentious in the application.

522/23 PL/2023/07184

It was noted by the Chair Councillor Rabey that the date for response had passed but there was nothing contentious in the application.

523/23 PL/2023/07296

It was proposed by Councillor Alford, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to support the application.

524/23 PL/2023/07661

It was proposed by Councillor Westbrook, seconded by the Chair Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to support the application.

525/23 PL/2023/07646

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to support the application.

526/23 PL/2023/07903

It was proposed by the Chair Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to support the application.

527/23 PL/2023/07260

It was proposed by the Chair Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Westbrook and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to support the application.

528/23 Planning Decisions

529/23 PL/2023/05417

Noted

530/23 PL/2023/05595

Noted.

531/23 PL/2023/05557

Noted.

532/23 PL/2023/05047

Noted.

533/23 PL/2021/11678

Noted.

534/23 Explore Wiltshire App

Councillor Alford outlined how the app worked and confirmed that Wiltshire Council would provide training on inputting and maintaining details.

Councillor Ellis asked if there was any costs to Melksham Town Council. Councillor Alford confirmed the app was funded by Wiltshire Council but Melksham Town Council would need to find volunteers to input details.

The committee agreed in principle to Melksham having a presence on the app and delegated matters to the Town Clerk. The committee agreed to request that all councillors are encouraged to download the app. The Town Clerk suggested that the incoming Communications Officer could oversee the project.

535/23 Proposed Traffic Regulation Order for Consultation

It was noted that the date for consultation had passed and Councillor Ellis had submitted an informal response.

The effect on Assembly Hall users was mentioned but it was pointed out that the parking was for Campus users and other car parks are free after 6pm.

536/23 Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) Issues

The question of using anti-graffiti in the underpass and any effect it would have on Art in the Underpass was discussed.

It was proposed by Councillor Alford, seconded by the Chair Councillor Rabey and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Town Clerk submit a request to LHFIG to explore the cost of anti-graffiti paint and the possibility of a 50-50 funding split.

537/23 Temporary Road Closure Notifications

537/23.1 THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE (VARIOUS ROADS) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER (No.30) 2023 (Ref TTRO 9005)

Noted.

537/23.2 Wiltshire Council Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Temporary Closure of: C398 (Part), Melksham (Ref: TTRO 9049)

Noted.

538/23 Sparkle Team and Parish Steward

No new concerns were raised.

Meeting Closed at: 9.10 pm

Signed:

Dated: