

## Melksham Town Council

### Minutes of the Economic Development & Planning Committee

on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

PRESENT: Councillor S Rabey Chair  
Councillor R Cleary Vice Chair  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor E Calland  
Councillor M Drewett  
Councillor G Elson  
Councillor A Westbrook

IN ATTENDANCE

OFFICERS Andrew Meacham Committee Clerk  
Dominic Rutterford (virtually) Communications & Marketing Officer

PUBLIC 7 members of the public were present

#### **250/25 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Alford, Councillor Griffin and Councillor Stokes. Substitutes were Councillor Calland, Councillor Drewett and Councillor A Westbrook

#### **251/25 Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **252/25 Minutes**

The minutes of 3rd February 2026, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair Councillor Rabey.

#### **253/25 Public Participation**

The first three members of the public spoke on items 6.3 and 6.4.

PP 1 – Owners since 1997 of 12 High St. Wish to object to the application. Objection relates to access, safety and preservation of the character of this listed setting. Proposal raises serious concerns about continued access to 12 High Street. The existing driveway provides essential access to multiple parts of the property, including the entrance to residential flats, the garage block at the rear and rear access for Melksham Barbers. These established lawful access rights belong to 12 High Street and are as shown on the title deeds. They are long-standing and fundamental to the use and operation of our property. The installation of gates will mean access will be restricted, whether intentionally or unintentionally, now or in the future.

The Chair advised that Melksham Town Council was a consultee. The comments would be recorded in the minutes and the recording but the resident should also submit comments to Wiltshire Council planning.

The Chair asked for clarification on access via the existing bollard

PP 2 – No clear explanation has been provided by the applicants as to how access will be reliably maintained for tenants and essential services. They will not discuss any details regarding any gate locking mechanism. Essential services include utility, postal and delivery services, waste collection, contractors, authorised tenants and visitors. Both residents and service providers depend on predictable and unobstructed access. Without clear guarantees, the proposed gates will disrupt essential daily functions associated (*illegible*). There are also serious safety concerns. The presence of gates across the access route would delay or obstruct fire or emergency services. Emergency access must remain immediate, reliable and unobstructed at all times. Any impediment through locking, delay in opening or mechanical failure could have consequences for residents and businesses. The flats at 12 High Street assist with housing provision for Wiltshire Council and have accommodated individuals who have been homeless. We have also previously had tenants with additional needs who required visits from carers. On one occasion a carer attending a vulnerable tenant was approached and challenged regarding her access. This highlights the very real risk that any gated restriction would create barriers or delays for those who rely on the consistent and unrestricted entry. Any obstruction, even temporary, would have consequences.

PP3 – The design of the proposed gates is not in keeping with the historic character of the listed buildings on either side of the driveway. The sweeping suburban gate design contrasts with the established perpendicular architectural lines that define the character of the listed setting. It is important that any new addition preserves and respects the heritage, significance and visual harmony of the surrounding listed structures within Melksham Town Centre's conservation area. Originally, as can be seen on the plans in the Town Hall, there is no access or driveway restrictions and recent photographs do not show any access restrictions. In summary, residents of 12 High Street rely on this access to get to their homes and would otherwise become homeless. This proposal introduces uncertainty, the risk of obstruction, restriction or control of that access, risks to established access rights, risks to emergency safety and harm to the historic character of the site. For these reasons we respectfully request that the Council objects to these applications.

PP4 – Representing Melksham Transport Users Group. Thank you for making this an agenda item so quickly. Regarding the markings of the footway leading to the station for the last 30 or 40 yards and asking for a grant to improve those markings. The pedestrian access is not up to a very good standard and at times can be very dangerous. At present two rather worn out white lines, no signage. Very busy road with various businesses, attracting a lot of vehicles. Vehicles continuously crossing and obstructing the pathway. This is not really the drivers fault as it is not very clear what the lines are. A grant would improve at that.

Jaywalking is not a crime in the UK, but where we do have crossings, we put down tactile surfacing and signage. When you get to the end of the pavement you are “invited” to go right straight onto the road. There is nothing to tell drivers that that is what you are going to do. In that way it is not fit for purpose. It is not just a matter of getting the lines renewed. Would be nice to improve it. White lines, infills, walking person image, signage. This is not a big task but would make it a lot safer for person to access the station and would probably encourage more people to use public transport.

The Chair advised that funding would be from LHFIG, not a Town Council grant.

**254/25 PL/2026/00528**

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** not to object to the application.

**255/25 PL/2025/07083**

Members referenced Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 13 – Biodiversity and Policy to deliver at least a 10% improvement in biodiversity value and 17 Trees and Hedgerows, no loss of habitat and no damage to or loss of trees of good arboricultural and amenity value. Members noted the Ecology objection and comments dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor A Westbrook, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** in view of the above to object to the application.

**226/25 PL/2025/09766**

Members discussed the points raised in public participation, the location and installation of the gate and heritage aspects. Members discussed whether to support with conditions, object or make no decision due to unclear and insufficient information.

It was again made clear that Melksham Town Council was not the decision maker and the public participants should submit their comments to Wiltshire Council planning.

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

**RESOLVED** in view of the confusion to object to the application at this stage with a request for an extension of consultation to allow clarification of the concerns raised on access.

**227/25 PL/2025/09634**

Members noted and agreed comments made by Heritage regarding design.

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Calland and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to object to the application and request changes to the design of the gate.

**228/25 PL/2026/00856**

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Elson and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** not to object to the application.

**229/25 PL/2026/00855**

It was noted that this was the first application relating to land that was part of the Cooper Avon estate.

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Cleary and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** not to object to the application.

**230/25 PL/202600859**

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Drewett and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** not to object to the application.

**231/25 PL/2026/01021**

It was proposed by Councillor Drewett, seconded by Councillor Elson and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** not to object to the application.

**232/25 Application to Extinguish footpath MELK103(part)**

The order was noted.

**233/25 Eastern Way (Part)**

It was proposed by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Drewett and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to request the section of the Eastern Way shown on in red on the map be renamed to become part of Snowberry Lane.



**234/25 LHFIG – Station Approach**

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

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the request and refer it to LHFIG for consideration.

**235/25 LHFIG Funding**

This item was deferred to the next meeting

**236/25 LHFIG Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

The meeting notes and expenditure were noted.

**237/25 Emergency Resilience Funding**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**238/25 Road Safety Update**

The report was noted.

**239/25 PL/2025/05097**

The appeal decision was noted.

**240/25 Temporary Road Closure – A350 Part), Melksham Without**

The closure was noted.

**241/25 Parish Steward**

It was noted that the method of funding for the Parish Steward was changing and the service was not being lost. It was noted that Parish stewards were currently re-deployed to deal with potholes.

Although not on the current agenda, it was requested that the success of the new management of the Hiding Place be noted.

Meeting closed at: 20:00

Signed .....

Dated .....