

Melksham Without Parish Council's Response to the 2nd Non-Statutory Consultation by Wiltshire Council on the A350 Melksham Bypass following a meeting of Full Council on 26 July 2021 at 7.00pm at 1 Swift Way, Bowerhill

Melksham Without Parish Council are in a unique position with regard to the proposed A350 Melksham Bypass. The majority of the proposed 10c route is in the parish, and its potential impact will affect the variety of communities that the council represent in differing and varying ways, from the north in Beanacre, the east in Woodrow and Sandridge, and to the south in Bowerhill and Redstocks. It is noted that it will have limited impact on residents in Shaw & Whitley as route 10c is now proposed, as well as those in Berryfield although those at the Semington Road end of the village, close to the existing A350, also have strong views.

The parish council has tried hard to listen to the views of its parishioners, and held two public meetings¹ to do just that, a summary of the views of those meetings are appendices as part of this document, as well as the views of those people that wrote to the parish council rather than attend a public meeting, in the main due to the reluctance to attend in person as the covid restrictions are relaxed.

The general consensus of the public opinion is that they are doubtful of the justification for this scheme, and feel that more up to date evidence is required. This is particularly as some evidence was collated pre-Covid and before improvements to 'Farmers' Roundabout. In the main, the residents feel that the Covid pandemic not only affected the results of surveys undertaken during 2020 and 2021 during the lockdown periods, but more importantly, that post-Covid there will be a widescale change in the way people conduct their daily life. That there has been a sea change and the previous working patterns of so many will change for good, and not return to pre-Covid levels in months and years to come. The shift to "working from home", the use of technology instead of meeting in person, the preference to not commute daily and to have a more flexible working pattern will be here to stay, and therefore there is a general feeling that new evidence needs to be obtained to justify the requirement for the Melksham A350 Bypass in the light of the changing world.

The parish council is aware that this project is not just about a bypass for Beanacre, or even for the wider Melksham area, but as part of the much bigger Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan² but nevertheless, feels that the justification for the scheme does need to be looked at again in the post Covid climate and against the wider priorities of Wiltshire Council and the Government as they move to zero carbon emission targets over the coming years.

Linked to this is the question of the accuracy of survey data that was undertaken in the height of the Covid lockdown period in January 21, when the "Footfall Survey" was undertaken over two days of inclement Winter weather, which is not felt to be indicative of the more usual levels of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders throughout the year under normal circumstances and better weather. Therefore, it is felt that the figures are not representative of typical footfall on some of the Public

¹ Monday 19th July 21 at St Barnabas Church, Beanacre & Wednesday 21st July 21 at Bowerhill Village Hall

² <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/>

Rights of Way/Bridleways, particularly those from Bowerhill to the Kennet & Avon Canal (Bridleway SEEN13).

Whilst questioning the need for the Bypass proposals in the changing world, the parish council does recognise that the consultation is about the proposed route 10c and therefore this is the right time and opportunity to raise any concerns or comments about the proposed route, any suitable mitigation to alleviate any local issues and raise any additional community benefits that could be achieved as part of the works, as part of the “shaping” of the route and informing the business case that they understand is the intention of this non statutory consultation process.

On that basis, and notwithstanding the request for the project justification to have further examination, Melksham Without Parish Council would like to see the following changes to the proposed alignment:

- The route to alter so that it does not cross Lower Woodrow as proposed, but closer to Melksham. This is to avoid sensitive properties such as a Listed Farmhouse with shallow foundations and a brand-new farm worker’s house, both of which are very close to the proposed route, one will almost be destroyed by the proposed alignment.
- More justification is given for the “eastern bulge” which brings the suggested alignment close to the community of Redstocks.
- The alignment to the East and South of Bowerhill is moved further towards the canal and away from village residents, such that the connection to the existing A350 may need to move further South.

The Parish Council also have concern at the proposed closure/diversion of various Public Rights of Way and Bridleways:

- The disconnect (circuitous diversion) between MELW66 and LACO36
- Severance of MELW48 which is the access to Hack Farm, Lower Woodrow.
- The treatment of Prater's Lane Bridleway 40.
- The total closure of MELW24.
- The total closure of MELW35 between Bowerhill Lane and Carnation Lane cutting off residents of Carnation Lane from Bowerhill. Consideration needs to be given to how these residents will access Bowerhill, such as the provision of a footpath. New kissing gates have been installed with Area Board & Parish Council (Melksham Without & Seend) funding in recent years on this section, working with the West Wiltshire Ramblers Association
- The closure and diversion of MELW45/SEEN17 preventing direct access to Giles Wood except via a dog-leg half way to the picnic area using SEEN13.
- Diversion of MELW42 to use a pedestrian crossing at the roundabout junction. There is a concern this will be dangerous, reminiscent of the highly dangerous Western Way crossing at Townsend Farm over the A350 which the Parish Council have sought enhancements to in order to improve pedestrian safety; and is now subject to further safety improvements by Wiltshire Council with “Re allocation of Road space” funding.

The Council asked that no Public Rights of Way or Bridleways are closed or diverted. However, if this is not possible, that tunnels or bridges are provided where they cross the proposed by-pass.

If the scheme for the A350 Melksham Bypass goes ahead the Parish Council would like to see the following mitigation and community benefits.

- A 'cutting' is used for the section of bypass between Bowerhill and the canal in order to improve the visual impact of the bypass.
- 'Bunds' adjacent to 'settlements' are created to mitigate against any noise.
- All bridges proposed are 'green bridges' particularly the one from Bowerhill to the canal/picnic area and Giles Wood, in order to provide the feel of the continuation of the open countryside.
- All bridges need to be easily accessible, with shallow ramps either side.
- Any acoustic barriers required should be 'green barriers' to provide a more 'natural' look to blend in with the countryside.
- Any tunnels/underpasses be 'green' in design to blend in with the countryside with adequate lighting and CCTV.
- Forestation of the whole area bounded by Portal Way, the canal, the bridleway and Brabazon Way.
- Forestation of as much of the area between the bridleway and the A365 as possible.
- Any pedestrian crossings should only be near roundabouts, where traffic speeds are lower, and should be traffic-light controlled.
- Pedestrians should be discouraged from attempting to cross the road elsewhere by means of barriers, railings, hedges, fences, etc.
- A footpath is provided from Sandridge Common to Prater's Lane. Currently people wishing to access Prater's Lane from Sandridge Common cannot access it unless they walk part way along the A3102, which is considered dangerous. There is no access via Lopes Close to Prater's Lane.
- It is noted the lay-by adjacent to Prater's Lane on the A3102 will be lost as part of the roundabout proposed at this junction. Prater's Lane is very popular, with not just local residents, but others further afield and therefore request some form of parking be created to replace that which will be lost.
- Improvements to the access and parking area at the end of Bowerhill Lane.
- A permanent all-weather surface for the whole length of the bridleway SEEN13, from the parking area to the picnic area, but with vehicular access prevented (except by authorized users e.g., farmer/landowner, Bowerhill Residents Action Group in order to maintain the picnic area, Canal & River Trust)
- It was noted in the A350 Melksham Bypass Second Consultation document it states provision would be made for a potential footway/cycleway adjacent to some sections of the bypass route, where possible, this should be **ALWAYS and the whole length of the by-pass.**
- Provision should be made for additional bridleways.
- Regarding relieving the traffic in the town centre as suggested in the A350 Melksham By-pass second consultation document, under Complementary

Walking and Cycling Measures, the parish council suggest the area from the Market Place to Sainsburys Supermarket be pedestrianised with bus access only.

- Improvements to safety for those people using Public Rights of Way through the Turnpike garage forecourt crossing the A365 to access MELW20. There have been several near misses here, as vehicles cannot see due to the slight bend in the road at this point.
- A strip of land will be created by the building of the by-pass between the proposed Littleton Roundabout and the small piece of paddock adjacent to Bowerhill Sports field, consideration be given to the Parish Council obtaining this piece of land in order to extend Bowerhill Sports field to create more public open space and football pitch provision.

The Parish Council also request discussions take place directly with the Highway Planners on the comments raised by the Parish Council in order to achieve as best an outcome as possible for its parishioners if the bypass were to go ahead.

APPENDIX ONE:

NOTES FROM PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 19TH JULY 2021 AT ST BARNABAS CHURCH, BEANACRE BY MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

TO HEAR VIEWS OF PARISH RESIDENTS ON THE PROPOSED BYPASS CONSULTATION (2ND NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON ROUTE 10C) TO INFORM THE PARISH COUNCIL WHEN FORMING THEIR OWN RESPONSE

Present:

Melksham Without Parish Council

Councillor John Glover	Chair of Council and Chair of meeting
Councillor Alan Baines	Chair of Highway & Streetscene Committee
Councillor David Pafford	Vice Chair of Council
Councillor Mark Harris	
Councillor John Doel	
Councillor Richard Wood	
Teresa Strange	Clerk
Lorraine McRandle	Parish Officer

Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford (Melksham Without North & Shurnhold)

21 Members of the public

Councillor John Glover opened the meeting and explained the meeting was not planned to be a discussion type event, but for the councillors to listen to the views of parishioners to aid the forming of the parish council's own response to the Wiltshire Council consultation.

The parish council area surrounds the town and represents communities that will most likely have opposing views on the potential bypass, such as those in Beanacre and Bowerhill, and the parish council will be making their response to the consultation following input from all the differing views of their parishioners.

It was reiterated by the Chairman and other councillors during the meeting that residents must send their views to Wiltshire Council direct, that can be done either by the online survey, by email or writing to the officers at County Hall.¹ In addition, to note that this is the time to ask for any mitigation to alleviate concerns raised, in case Wiltshire Council are minded to proceed with the project. So, if objecting – or supporting – do state that if it goes ahead, what mitigation would be required to overcome a problem area (for example to ameliorate noise) and to suggest what that

¹ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/3146/A350-Melksham-bypass>

mitigation could be perhaps as a cutting, trees); as well as suggested improvements to Rights of Way etc.

The message that the proposed bypass is not just a “Melksham” or “Beanacre” bypass was also emphasised; and not just a project of Wiltshire Council but a part of a Strategic Route by the Western Gateway comprising of several local authorities including Gloucester, Wiltshire, Christchurch, Poole, Dorset and BANES.² The Western Gateway is a group of combined authorities working together to obtain the funding for the project which is classed as a “Major Road Network”. It would be funded in the main by central Government, with some element from Wiltshire Council. There are currently arguments being put forward by some that is not affordable, and Wiltshire Council published documents stating that it is affordable; a dichotomy of views.

Councillor Baines explained that some of the problem has been caused by the route across the Avon Valley not being fully completed when the work was done by BANES³ at Batheaston some years ago, due to the environmental objections, and now most HGVs use the A350 which is being further emphasised by the HGV ban on the Cleveland Bridge in Bath and the Bath Clean Air zone. This means that the A350 has become the major route for North-South traffic for Heavy Goods vehicles, these are the issue rather than the private cars and commuters.

A summary of the views put forward by residents:

1. Redstocks residents – concerns of close proximity of the Bypass to Redstocks (100 yards to houses) which will create considerable noise and pollution
2. Redstocks resident (previously lived in Woodrow and Beanacre) – concerns about the current economy which is now in a mess, works in mental health and thinks that is an area where funding would be better spent, the world is a different place since covid with people working at home. Is housing development behind this project? Not for or against the project, but is ‘for nature’ and doesn’t want any money spent on a road; we need more trees, there are perfectly acceptable roads. It should be concentrated on ‘community’ now.
3. Redstocks resident – understand population increasing, road traffic increasing, the bypass is coming, but route 10c will only be 100 or 50m from some houses in Redstocks. The community have taken professional advice from an independent consultant about a proposal to move the route one field further away from the houses. In terms of mitigation, they would be looking for environmental woodland, sound barriers. Moving one field away would also avoid the medieval site as the proposed route would mean that mitigation would be in the field with the medieval site.

² <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/about/>

³ Bath & North East Somerset Local Authority

It was confirmed by the Chairman that being realistic whilst objecting and coming up with a compromise position would carry more weight than an outright objection with no reasoning.

4. Councillor John Doel as a landowner and resident of Woodrow Road declared an interest and felt the proposal for no junction at Woodrow meant people would not use Woodrow as a rat run to get to A350. Junction at Lacock seemed sensible having witnessed a fatal accident there some years ago. However, the proposed route would come extremely close to his house.
5. Woodrow resident – concern at loss of part of land and business for several farmers in Woodrow.
6. A350 made worse by traffic accessing Asda and McDonalds and creating a backlog which is the main issue.
7. Woodrow resident - Concern a lot of people have only just found about the proposals and would have appreciated someone speaking to them about the proposals.
8. Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford explained presentations had taken place at the Area Board, Town Council and Parish Council, the route was only indicative and therefore that was why landowners/farmers had not been spoken to yet, once the route had been finalised then discussions would take place with landowners/farmers and reiterated proposals were still at the non-statutory stage and there were still opportunities to tweak the route.
9. Councillor Baines explained proposals with regard to the route around Redstocks and Lower Woodrow in particular had taken the Parish Council by surprise and hopefully some of these aspects could be changed with good reasons why.
10. Resident of Lower Woodrow who rented land was concerned at the destructive nature the overpass in Lower Woodrow would have and people's life in the area and note an attenuation pond is proposed on someone's land. Clarification was sought on what an attenuation pond was for.

Councillor Baines explained attenuation ponds where there to collect water from the road as drainage meaning the water did not drainage into water courses.

Councillor Glover reminded people to give alternatives when responding to the consultation to Wiltshire Council.

11. The loss of grade 1 agricultural land.
12. How much land will be lost to the scheme?
13. Government has put forward proposals to be carbon net zero by 2050. Therefore, does this road scheme need to be evaluated or at least look at the least destructive option.
14. Impact on the flood plain in Woodrow.
15. With regard to mitigation. Once built who will be responsible for making sure it is put in place, if trees etc proposed who will maintain

With regard to mitigation Councillor Baines explained as part of any planning consent, it would include for example tree planting and how would be responsible for its maintenance and for how long.

Councillor Wood, as did several Councillors, expressed disappointment that not more residents of Beanacre were present as the bypass would relieve the traffic issues in the village. Therefore, more support was needed from residents of Beanacre for the scheme.

Councillor Wood explained Wiltshire Council were willing to listen to what people had to say with regard to tweaking of the route. For example, the 'bulge' at Redstocks, was not set in stone as further investigations were needed on a possible ancient settlement in this area.

Whilst residents of both Redstocks and Woodrow/Lower Woodrow had a lot in common, it was better to send individual responses to the consultation, even though there was a commonality its what residents want addressed.

With regard to funding for the project there was potential to be able to apply for 'Levelling up' funding.

Councillor Wood explained the Parish Council could not stop the bypass, but after years of experience in responding to planning applications, even if objecting, in order to try and make the best out of the situation to ask for mitigation in order to make it more acceptable. Once the plans are approved it is too late.

Councillor Pafford explained the plans will have to go to a public enquiry and they will look at what has been proposed to mitigate the by-pass.

16. Dog leg through Bowerhill to Sandridge Common, Sandridge is on a hill.

Councillor Baines explained the reasoning for this route, was to avoid Lopes Close as otherwise it would be cut off from the town. Coincidentally the Parish Council had objected to the construction of Lopes Close.

17. Praters Lane will be severed by the by-pass.

Councillor Glover explained several public rights of way would be severed by the by-pass and will be looked at by the Parish Council with regards to alternatives, mitigation.

18. Redstocks resident. Information included in reports out of date. The population is going down. Would rather see the money spent on the local community

19. Concern people will be flooded in Woodrow Road area.
20. Concern people's views are not being listened to.
21. Resident of Melksham (close to Beanacre) concerned at the impact on wildlife and the loss of fields.

The Clerk asked those people who had filled in their information for track and trace if they were happy the Parish Council used this information in order to contact them with updates, if not to let officers know they wished to opt out.

The meeting was reminded the Parish Council would be putting in their response to the consultation once the meeting at Bowerhill had been held.

Those present were encouraged to attend Area Board meetings where updates on the scheme will be provided.

It was noted Lacock Parish Council were seeking an extension to the consultation deadline, as they were not aware of proposals for the northern part of the route until very recently. The Clerk confirmed the parish council were aware of this request, and it was an agenda for their Full Council meeting on Monday evening.

Meeting finished at 7.55pm

APPENDIX TWO:

NOTES FROM PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 21 JULY 2021 AT BOWERHILL VILLAGE HALL** BY MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL TO HEAR VIEWS OF PARISH RESIDENTS ON THE PROPOSED BYPASS CONSULTATION (2ND NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON ROUTE 10C) TO INFORM THE PARISH COUNCIL WHEN FORMING THEIR OWN RESPONSE

Present:

Melksham Without Parish Council

Councillor John Glover	Chair of Council and Chair of meeting
Councillor Alan Baines	Chair of Highway & Streetscene Committee
Councillor David Pafford	Vice Chair of Council
Councillor Mark Harris	
Councillor John Doel	
Councillor Robert Shea Simmonds	
Councillor Rob Hoyle	

Teresa Strange	Clerk
Lorraine McRandle	Parish Officer

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder
Peter Dunford, Community Engagement Manager (Melksham Community Area)

46 Members of the public present.

Councillor John Glover opened the meeting and explained the meeting was not planned to be a discussion type event, but for the councillors to listen to the views of parishioners to aid the forming of the parish council's own response to the Wiltshire Council consultation.

The parish council area surrounds the town and represents communities that will most likely have opposing views on the potential bypass, such as those in Beanacre and Bowerhill, and the parish council will be making their response to the consultation following input from all the differing views of their parishioners.

It was reiterated by the Chairman and other councillors during the meeting that residents must send their views to Wiltshire Council direct, that can be done either by the online survey, by email or writing to the officers at County Hall.¹ In addition, to note that this is the time to ask for any mitigation to alleviate concerns raised, in case Wiltshire Council are minded to proceed with the project. So, if objecting – or supporting – do state that if it goes ahead, what mitigation would be required to

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overcome a problem area (for example to ameliorate noise) and to suggest what that mitigation could be perhaps a cutting, trees; as well as suggested improvements to Rights of Way etc.

The message that the proposed bypass is not just a “Melksham” or “Beanacre” bypass was also emphasised; and not just a project of Wiltshire Council but a part of a Strategic Route by the Western Gateway comprising of several local authorities including Gloucester, Wiltshire, Christchurch, Poole, Dorset and BANES.² The Western Gateway is a group of combined authorities working together to obtain the funding for the project which is classed as a “Major Road Network”. It would be funded in the main by central Government, with some element from Wiltshire Council. There are currently arguments being put forward by some that it is not affordable, and Wiltshire Council had published documents stating that it is affordable; a dichotomy of views.

Councillor Glover stated there had been comments the project was to enable housing, however this was not the case, housing would happen whether the bypass went ahead or not.

As Melksham has a Neighbourhood Plan this provides 2 years protection against speculative development in inappropriate locations by developers if there is a lack of 5-year land supply. Wiltshire Council have to maintain a 5-year land supply for development, if they do not this means developers are more than likely to get planning permission for developments in locations they otherwise would not. Wiltshire Council have been given by the Government a housing figure of 44,000 to achieve by 2036.

Councillor Glover also explained in planning law³ the presumption was always in favour of development and unless there are any real material grounds to turn down an application it would be approved. However, having the Neighbourhood Plan at least provided some form of say where development should take place.

During the evening Councillor Holder explained with regard to mitigation to make the scheme acceptable, if this was too costly the by-pass may not go ahead.

Councillor Pafford explained the Parish Council did not have to consult with residents on this second consultation. However, the Council felt it was important to get the views of its residents before responding the consultation, as without doing so the Parish Council would have probably submitted a weaker response.

² <https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/about/>

³National Planning Policy Framework

Questions and Comments (several questions were asked which the Parish Council could not answer, as this was not their project and therefore directed people to the Major Highways Project Team at Wiltshire Council to get answers several times during the meeting) (Some post meeting notes have been provided to answer questions, if there was no opportunity to answer at the meeting):

QUESTION	ANSWER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an opportunity for the route to be changed/modified at this stage? 	<p>Now is the time to get some tweaks to the route, but the 10c North to South is the accepted route. Once it gets to the statutory consultation stage it will be too late.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oppose the by-pass and want to stop it. How do we do this? 	<p>The Parish Council do not have funds to organise a Stop the Bypass Campaign. People will have to organise themselves, pool together with others with similar views.</p> <p>Graham Ellis explained the A350 Alliance helped with the Westbury Bypass application some years ago and maybe they could help.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not want to ask for mitigation as this would indicate to Wiltshire Council we approve. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a more cost-effective route is found would this be taken forward? 	<p>A business case is being put together to look at cost against benefit.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are benefits to building it? What are the financial benefits? 	<p>The link will provide better connectivity from the North to Poole.</p> <p>Various Reports are available on Wiltshire Council's website.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No agricultural assessment has been undertaken. Project goes 	

<p>against Government commitment to farmers and local food production and food security.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has reasoning for an improved route to Poole from North changed now we are out of the EU? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there enough funding for the project, understand Wiltshire Council ring fenced money already for this project? 	<p>Funding available at present for an outline business case for the scheme.³</p> <p>The scheme will be competing with other major highway projects in the Country for funding to build the scheme. There may be opportunities to apply for funding from elsewhere.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council has not ring-fenced money.</p> <p>Boris Johnson announced early last year that some major highway project funding had been ring fenced, which included improvements to the A350 around Melksham.⁴</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will there be a public enquiry and at what stage? How do you trigger a Public Enquiry? 	<p>Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained his personal opinion was the business case might not be proven due to the amount of mitigation which may be required. There are various stages the project still has to go through before it will be built and a public enquiry was put in as one stage, when it will happen not sure. Everyone will have to take personally responsibility to put their views to Wiltshire Council.</p>

³ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/150m-to-be-invested-in-two-major-road-improvement-schemes-in-Wiltshire>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-confirms-hs2-will-go-ahead-alongside-revolution-in-local-transport>

	Suggested contacting the Major Highway Projects Team to ask when a Public Enquiry would be held (this was mentioned as part of the recent Area Board presentation) ⁵
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would an Impact Assessment on the Environment be undertaken? 	This would form part a future planning application if funding granted for the scheme.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of people are unaware a bypass has been proposed and that this meeting was even taken place. 	<p>Several updates on the A350 project have taken place, including one at the Assembly Hall last year. Two webinar events have taken place recently also. There have also been articles in Melksham News, other local newspapers and on the local ITV news.</p> <p>With regard to this public meeting, it was advertised widely on social media, the Parish Council's website, noticeboards and via Melksham News which is delivered to over 13,500 residences and businesses. Community Groups were also contacted to ask they advertise the meetings on their social media platforms and mailing lists.</p> <p>Residents were also contacted if in an area that the Parish Council know does not receive the Melksham News.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just moving problem from one part of town to the other, how is this fair as residents in Beanacre knew there was a major road outside their properties when they bought them. 	

⁵ <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=13988&Ver=4>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear town will die if bypass implemented as businesses will disappear particularly those who rely on passing trade along the A350 such as Asda, Leekes, Subway 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of A350 are already designed for dualling, why are they not being used? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on the environment. Would destroy the valley. 	<p>An Environment Impact Study will be undertaken as part of the planning application.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has consideration be given to the need for a bypass. Since Covid the world has changed and people are using their vehicles less. Transport services also reducing. Will the statistics be reviewed in light of Covid? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on the planet. Too late once the bypass is built. People should be encouraged to use their vehicles less. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will happen to the canal? Access to the canal. 	<p>A bridge is proposed over the by-pass to the canal. It could be that as part of mitigation a 'green bridge' is asked for which provides the effect of walking in the open countryside, whilst crossing the road</p> <p>The bridge will have low ramps either side for easy access.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on Public Rights of Way particularly to the canal. 	<p>Note: Public Rights of way will be diverted. There will be one access to the canal/Giles Wood from Bowerhill.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on wildlife in the area. Kingfishers have been spotted near the canal and are sensitive to noise, if the road is built near the canal they will probably disappear elsewhere. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on community. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Giles Wood which is used regularly particularly by Bowerhill Scouts. 	<p>Note: Public Rights of Way will be diverted and there will be one access via a bridge to Giles Wood and the canal.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway safety. Concern at having to cross a road to get to the canal, particularly children. 	<p>A bridge will be provided over the canal.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footfall survey information out of date. Undertaken in January during Covid. This does not give a true representation of how well used the footpath from Bowerhill to the canal is. Will information be updated post Covid? 	<p>This is a question to raise with Wiltshire Council.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic survey undertaken pre-covid. Will an updated report be done? 	<p>This is a question to raise with Wiltshire Council.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Integrated Transport System was talked about even in 2016. Maybe now the bypass is not required. 	<p>The Parish Council responded to this and supported the Bristol/Bath South Coast route taken it across the A46 to the A36 and would have taken away a lot of traffic onto a revamped A46; this was a missed opportunity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many trees will need to be planted to mitigate against the impact of the by-pass. 	<p>Advice to contact WC for a response.</p>

	Earlier in the meeting Cllr Glover suggested the planting of a 'wooded' area between Bowerhill and the by-pass in order to provide mitigation against noise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on the ecology of the area, which cannot be replaced once removed. A proper ecology survey needs to be undertaken. 	Note: An ecology report will be undertaken as part of a planning application.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route goes near to Melksham Oak School and concerns of the impact pollution will have on children's health. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern at loss of house value due to proximity of bypass. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on the local infrastructure. It cannot cope with more houses. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand bulge in design is to accommodate a football stadium. 	Note: There is evidence of an ancient settlement at this location and therefore the route is designed to avoid it. However further investigations need to take place and it could this section of the route could be tweaked.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand 1000s houses are to be built between Melksham and Sandridge where will the water dispersed from this development go. The water table is already high. Avon Valley floods already, cannot mitigate against this forever. 	Note: Melksham has met its' housing requirement up to 2026. Most planning applications in the pipeline have received planning permission (during a period of a lack of 5-year land supply) or been withdrawn. One has been turned down recently, which quoted the Neighbourhood Plan as a reason for refusal. There is one large application for 240 houses in Bowerhill (South of Western Way) and a 70-bed care home

	<p>awaiting a decision from Wiltshire Council. Another application has just been submitted to Wiltshire Council for 150 dwellings North of Dunch Lane by a developer, which both the Parish Council and the Town Council will be commenting on shortly.</p> <p>The Local Plan Review to 2036 will be looking at a housing allocation in Melksham.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Transport Study by the Chamber of Commerce stated that only 7.14% of respondents said it was difficult to move in the area. 26.19% said suppliers and employees travel around with ease. Therefore there is no need for a bypass. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Doel a resident and farmer of Lower Woodrow explained Woodrow was very dangerous, with lots of traffic using it. His property would also be extremely close to the proposed bypass. He was asked if he had been approached regarding his land. <p>Would like to see road turned into cycle track when bypassed.</p>	<p>Cllr Doel explained as a landowner he had yet to be approached and the bypass passed his property.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of evidence this is the right option. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goes against Government proposals to be net zero carbon by 2050. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact pollution would have. 	<p>Vehicles should not be burning fuel by time the time bypass is built due to</p>

	move to more cleaner types of fuel and electric vehicles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of engagement with farmers and landowners, particularly as this would impact their livelihoods if compulsory purchased (especially as they usually do not get market value). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journey time saving benefit? It suggests 3-4 minutes would be saved is this worth it? 	<p>Note: It relates to longer journeys, not local journeys and is the accumulative effective. More related to commercial traffic than local journeys.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on wellbeing and psychological wellbeing. Concern at the sociological impact. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The feeling of being cut off from villages if bypass built and the impact this will have. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident of Lower Woodrow who recently brought their property found no mention of proposed by-pass in legal searches. When will the proposed route appear on land searches? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was asked how to encourage people to respond to the survey and what precluded them from responding? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents expressed that they did not wish to ask for mitigation, that they just wanted to stop the bypass completely. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents questioned what bearing the views of other parts of the parish had on the bypass as not affected 	

(eg Shaw & Whitley) and if it was if it was weighted due to population	
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It was asked if the notes from the meeting could be circulated. It was agreed the notes would be available on the Parish Council's website in due course.

The parish council were meeting on Monday evening (26th July) at the Full Council meeting to consider their response. This was a public meeting, like all council meetings, but due to the covid restrictions and therefore room capacity members of the public were encouraged to attend via Zoom. Details and the zoom link are on the agenda on the parish council website.

Councillor Robert Shea-Simonds asked where did the Council go from here to respond to the Wiltshire Council consultation and asked for a show of hands to the question "Stop the Bypass" or "Mitigation Route" to which a majority of people in the room responded positively to "Stop the Bypass".

Wiltshire Councillor Holder informed that there would be regular updates and a public consultation event at Melksham Area Board meetings.

The parish council had pulled together links to useful information on the bypass consultation, recordings of meetings etc on their website here <http://www.melkshamwithout.co.uk/index.asp?page=news&id=522>

APPENDIX THREE:

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS ON THE A350 BYPASS CONSULTATION – BY EMAIL – to inform the Parish Council when they met to consider their response on Monday 26th July 21

There have been a number of emails received from Weds 21st July onwards, and they have been collated into one report for the review of Melksham Without Parish Council at their meeting on Monday 26th July.

Officers responded to them all in a timely manner (i.e., before the Weds night meeting if appropriate) and the response is detailed in the first part of this document, which was tailored at the beginning in line with what the original email said. We asked for residents to indicate where they lived if it was not obvious. For those that were not Melksham Without residents (some were from Town or Seend) then we have asked that they forward their comments to their relative parish/town council too and I have included at the bottom of the document.

RESPONSE FROM OFFICERS TO EMAILS RECEIVED:

Thank you for letting the parish council know your comments, which I will pass on to the councillors. Could you please let us know which part of the parish you live in, so we can keep a record of the differing views across the parish. With regards to the public meetings this week, there have now been several online engagement events run by Wiltshire Council, so the parish council wanted to give the opportunity to those not online to come out in public and have their say.

The parish council urge all parish residents to send their views to Wiltshire Council who are the decision makers, in addition to the parish council who are just consultees, like residents. The meeting tonight is to help the parish council understand the views of their residents to inform their own consultation submission.

We then insert the info/links from the website, how to reply to consultation etc
<http://www.melkshamwithout.co.uk/index.asp?page=news&id=522>

EMAILS RECEIVED from Parish residents:

BOWERHILL LANE RESIDENT

EMAIL 1

Regarding tonight's meeting, we are not comfortable with the gathering being held inside with the rise in local covid numbers, so we will still try to attend, but remain outside. As business owners we are concerned about exposure and the effect that it might have on our overall operations if we were to contract Covid.

We feel like that there are many more in the same position that are not happy to be in such close contact with others but are very interested to hear the Parish Council's position. Is there any way you would consider a third meeting outdoors (we would be happy to host in our field here at a later date) to ensure that all those within the Parish Council are able to participate safely and comfortably?

We are concerned that if we are unable to share our views safely at tonight's meeting, then they will go unheard. Would the Parish Council consider this third outdoor meeting to ensure that all feedback on this proposal can be heard and considered properly?

EMAIL 2:

Thank you we will, we Farm at the south end of the proposed route, Bowerhill Lane.

We have joined two of the online meetings and not found them very helpful at all, my son and his partner did attend the meeting last night and found it useful, yes I understand that your role as Parish council is to submit residents views to Wiltshire council

TOWNSEND FARM, SEMINGTON ROAD RESIDENT:

I would have liked to attend the meeting for this but both dates clashed with other meetings so I hope you don't mind me sending this email with my thoughts.

I did attend the webinar given by Wiltshire Council and will be making comments to them, but as I live in the Melksham Without parish I thought I should make my thoughts known to the councillors.

We certainly still need a bypass, as at this present time the volume of traffic is extremely heavy again, in particular the heavy goods vehicles using the road - have increased. Living beside the A350, we have found that these vehicles use the road 24/7 and there are now areas of the garden where at weekends we could sit out and enjoy a lull in HGV noise but this is no longer the case. BANES are talking about not allowing HGVs to use the Cleveland bridge again once it reopens and so this means the A350 will remain very noisy and busy at all times if this is the case.

I should ask that the council to consider supporting the bypass. In my opinion, 10 c seems to be a good option, as long as Wiltshire Council take steps to reduce damage to the local environment when building the road and provide noise abating measures for both Bowerhill Hill estate and Giles Wood.

LOCKING CLOSE, BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

In this email, I am providing our concerns and opinions regarding the proposed A350 bypass. Unfortunately we are unable to attend the meeting on Wednesday 21st July, but would still like to contribute our points against the bypass.

- Regardless of what has been stated in regards to this point before, we still firmly believe route option 10C was the only one to have been properly

considered throughout the entire process. Not only was it the only route option taken to the Wiltshire Cabinet board to be discussed, but alternative routes including 7a were more favoured in the previous consultation period yet have not been fully considered. This seems highly unfair for only one option to be fully discussed, making it seem as if this has been the chosen route from the start and the one that has been the favoured route all along. However, this was not the favoured route by the majority of residents who it will directly impact and who actually live right by the proposed location, but also by Melksham residents in general who use this area.

- One of the main points for receiving the approval for funding of the bypass was with the intent to increase access for cyclists and walkers, overall reducing traffic on the roads and therefore, reducing air and noise pollution. However, in the consultation report provided earlier this year, it was stated that there will be very few, if any cycle routes provided if the 10C bypass route were to be built. On top of this, the proposed location of the bypass will cut off access to the Kennet and Avon canal which is currently used by many walkers and cyclists, so if anything the bypass will only reduce the access to walking/ cycling routes and potentially as a result, consequently increase traffic. This cannot be justified if 10C is carried forward, as it contradicts some of the main points originally given to build the bypass in the first place.
- Still there is yet to be any actual proof that the bypass is needed, with no data or statistics suggesting the need for it in the first place, let alone in route 10c's specific location. Road traffic surveys and market research suggests that the majority of businesses using the current Beanacre road have very few issues regarding traffic, time of transport or loss of money because of issues relating to road usage. This was one of the main arguments for needing to build the new A350 bypass, but if this isn't actually a substantial problem, then again, why is the proposed bypass needed.
- Further testing is needed on current traffic levels and activity through and around Beanacre post-covid, but also following the recent traffic controls added to the Farmers roundabout. These should be given plenty of consideration to see if the bypass is still necessary with new post-covid levels of traffic, and if all the time and money spent developing the roundabout may in time solve some of traffic issues heading towards Beanacre/ Chippenham.
- If the bypass option 10C should go ahead, Bowerhill residents need to be assured that there will be measures to reduce the impact on them who for some including ourselves, will have the bypass literally outside of our back garden. The bypass would reduce house prices, quality of life within this area, and will simply be moving the issue of noise and air pollution from one area (Beanacre) to another, without actually solving the problem at all. It will simply be wasting an excessive amount of countryside and disruption to wildlife and local residents, without actually solving the problem, only moves it somewhere else. People living in or moving to Beanacre do so with the knowledge that there is a main road running through it which is used by many businesses and HGVs. However, residents living close to

the proposed route who have lived in their homes peacefully for decades, now face the possibility of this huge intrusion on their lives in an area which they did not choose to live near. Very little consideration has been given to these local residents up to this point, in what seems already like a done deal.

- It seems heavily likely that with 10C being the preferred route (and the only route being taken forward for further discussion), that the long term aim is to build a wider plan for future development and housing. Not only will this be taking up more of the countryside that is supposedly being protected or considered while proposing the bypass, but Melksham itself needs much better infrastructure to be able to support any further residential developments before even considering building more. Recent housing developments or ones currently being built are already happening in various places across Melksham, yet there has been no increase of doctors, dentists, schools etc. This will only be made worse with further proposed development which inevitably will come hand in hand with the bypass. The town's current infrastructure needs to be thoroughly considered and evaluated before approving the final bypass route, although it seems very likely the favoured 10C route is simply a scapegoat for further future housing developments. If this is not the case, some guarantee needs to be given that even if the 10C route does go ahead, that no additional countryside or land will be lost with housing around that area.
- Despite it being stated that limiting disruption to countryside and wildlife will be considered when deciding upon a final preferred route, the seemingly favoured 10C route would cause one of the highest amounts of destruction and loss of countryside/ wildlife compared to any of the other alternative original proposed routes.
- If the problem is simply traffic through Beanacre/ in the area, a much shorter and environmentally friendly route could be proposed to solve this. Unless the pushing of route 10C is for a wider future development in the near future, masked by supposed travel disruption and traffic levels within Beanacre.
- During the current post-covid economic climate, there are plenty of more important uses for the money that would be used for the bypass, which should be prioritised against a bypass that many people are strongly against and is arguably, not necessarily needed.

Thank you for your attention to this. We hope our points are considered, as we feel this bypass would cause nothing but distaste for many local residents, without it actually being proven to be needed. We feel the slight benefits from it are highly outweighed by the negatives, impacting the lives of many individuals by simply moving the problem from one place to another. And I have only provided a limited number of issues that should be considered, where there are plenty more in relation to the proposed bypass.

ST ATHAN CLOSE, BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting at Bowerhill Village Hall so I am writing to let you know my views.

The bypass is completely unnecessary; the traffic is really not bad through Melksham especially since the Farmer's roundabout was updated. The residents of Beanacre chose to live on an A road. We chose to move here 26 years ago because of the beautiful setting with the canal and fields just across the road from us where we could walk our dogs in the peace and quiet. To have a main road built through these lovely fields would be such a travesty, ruining the lives of the Bowerhill people and all the wildlife that call the fields their home. Just to save a few drivers 3 minutes! What a complete waste of money, especially when we are all trying to be environmentally friendly and looking after our countryside. Giles' Wood and the BRAG picnic area, where my father's ashes were scattered, would be spoiled forever.

Please don't ruin our precious countryside. Shame on the Council if this goes ahead, we have enough new houses already and we need our green spaces.

LOCKING CLOSE, BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

I would like to express my concern at the proposal to build a by-pass alongside my house. As a resident of Locking Close, the proposed route will be less than 150 metres from my home which I bought 20 years ago because of the outlook across green fields and access to the canal. I was advised at the time that the view would not change as the land alongside the canal was not suitable for building houses. It never once occurred to me that I would have to look at a road and a bridge instead! The amount of footfall using the fields leading to the canal is in the thousands each week; tourists moor and use local facilities as do boat dwellers; the fields are home to so much wildlife including deer. What an eyesore to have a road there instead.

I strongly advise that data be collected about the use of the path to the canal at Locking Close be repeated on a summer's day and the data collected on a cold, wintry day in January, so the full picture of how much it is used can be appreciated.

It is said that the by pass is needed to accommodate the increase in traffic - I was under the impression that the changes to Farmer's roundabout was to aid this. Traffic jams are far fewer since lockdown and working practises are unlikely to return to a pre- pandemic state so fewer cars will be on the road. I attended the meeting about the route and progress so far with regards to planning when time saved on journeys was shared. The maximum stated was 200 seconds - yes seconds - is the destruction of our countryside worth that? Not to mention the millions it will cost to build.

I am STRONGLY opposed to the proposition and wish my views to be shared please.

BELVEDERE ROAD, BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

EMAIL 1

I am reluctant to attend the meeting to be held this evening at Bowerhill Village Hall, due to the Covid risks, so would therefore like to share my views on the proposed bypass via email.

I strongly object to the bypass for a number of reasons which I shall list:

1 – I do not see a need for a bypass. Since the Farmer's roundabout was improved, I have not experienced congestion. The road is busier during peak times of travelling to and from work/school, but this would happen anywhere and doesn't cause any major hold-ups.

2 – the argument that traffic will increase may be flawed given that the changes that came about due to covid may impact in that many people will continue to work from home and shop online.

3 – If you are going to insist that the amount of traffic using the A350 will increase, surely building a faster (so you say) and bigger road, with room to expand, will only encourage more traffic to use it, thereby ensuring traffic WILL increase beyond that predicted anyway. It is like buying a bigger size pair of trousers to accommodate putting on weight and then putting on more weight because you have bigger trousers.

4 – The residents of Bowerhill have not been considered in that the bypass will skirt closely around the area bringing the problems associated with any main road with it – noise, pollution, accident risks. It will be a busier, faster road and therefore the impact on Bowerhill residents will be greater than the A350's current impact on residents who live nearby.

5 – The residents currently living by the main road, mostly bought their properties knowing and accepting they will be by a main road, the residents of Bowerhill, did not.

6 – The bypass will cut through beautiful countryside all the way along its route, with damage to the environment and wildlife.

7 – The bypass skirting round Bowerhill and along the route of the canal, will spoil a particular beautiful and currently peaceful area. It will spoil the area for locals and visitors. The way it crosses the picnic area/Giles Wood area is particularly heart breaking.

8 – The route will involve the compulsory purchase of property/land along its route, which is just awful for the people involved.

9 – It will most definitely lead to more houses being built as infill – eating up yet more countryside, adding to noise, amount of traffic and so on.

10 – Alternative options have been dismissed without adequate explanation to the public. There is definitely a spiel being fed to us which is like most politics, selling a line in support of an agenda and avoiding answering questions.

11 – the whole process of consultation is a farce. The route ‘sifted out’ is the only route that was presented the Department of Transport well before options were presented to the public.

12 – It is an obscene waste of money at a time when the whole country needs to thinking very carefully about how money is being spent.

13 – It goes against what every government and council should be focusing on, which is tackling climate change.

EMAIL 2

I have been to the online meetings but there wasn’t an opportunity to interact due to the first meeting being constrained by time and the second being a webinar.

I would have liked to have come along tonight, but it does seem a bit rash given the ever growing numbers of covid cases in Wiltshire. If I can submit like this and help limit the number attending, then that seems sensible.

I live in Bowerhill- ■ Belvedere Road.

Thanks for the info, I will submit my objections to the main ‘consultation’.

BOWERHILL RESIDENT

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed Melksham bypass. I have been a resident of Bowerhill for 10 years. I am reluctant to attend the above meeting due to being clinically extremely vulnerable.

I am alarmed by the plans to destroy our beautiful countryside. I question the need for a bypass at all and after joining the online engagement event last week, I note that this project has an estimated cost of 135 million and will save a few minutes on car journey times. I fail to see how this can be justified. Not to mention building on a flood plain and destroying local wildlife, including breeding otters.

I would ask how does this project comply with current climate targets with the aim of reducing harmful carbon emissions and other environmental pollutants? A 4 lane highway will always be used to capacity, as we know from experience.

The issue of the associated housing development, has been muted and untransparent. At the online event, when raised, the response was “housing is a different department”! I suspect that at the centre of this project is the massive profit to various stakeholders and not the need for a bypass.

LOPES CLOSE, SANDRIDGE RESIDENT

RESPONSE TO MELKSHAM BYPASS OPTION10c

If there must be a new route around Melksham then it seems fairly sensible that the best option for a new bypass is on the eastern side of the town. Route 10c appears to be the best overall approximate route. The fact that it does not cut off Sandridge Common from the rest of Melksham is important to us as residents at Lopes Close.

This proposed route also means that New Road and Woodrow Road will no longer be used as a rat run/shortcut to Lacock and access to A350 avoiding congestion at Beanacre. I also agree that a safer access from Lacock to A350 is needed.

The unfortunate downside is the loss of farmland and open space and in particular access to the countryside via the footpaths and bridleways. The loss of the visual amenity of open countryside could be mitigated by tree planting all along the route but it needs to be substantial. This is also needed to minimise noise pollution. The dull drone of traffic will permeate across the flat land towards the large residential estates of east Melksham.

At Sandridge Common there is a belief (hope) that the new bypass and roundabout on A3102 near Manor Farm will actually reduce the traffic on the A3102 from Sandridge Common into town. In particular it may also reduce the speed of the traffic which frequently ignores the current 40 mph because it is at the bottom of a steep hill. The roundabout should slow the traffic down and disperse some of it to the North and South.

A 30 mile per hour speed limit from the proposed new roundabout on A3102 into Melksham would be hugely beneficial to the quality of life for the residents of Sandridge Common. It would also make for a much safer access into and out of the light industrial estate of Manor Farm and into the residential properties at Sandridge Common. On almost a daily basis I see or hear the sound of near misses as speeding traffic fails to slow down for vehicles using, in particular, the estate entrance.

The surveys carried out in January 2021 do not appear to me to be at all representative of the usage of local footpaths and bridleways. Poor weather combined with Covid restrictions definitely reduced the amount of pedestrians on bridleway Melk40 locally known as Praters Lane. This bridleway is normally heavily used by dog walkers and walkers in general every day. I personally use it twice a day and always come across other users. There are always cars parked in the car park which clearly belong to dog walkers and the like.

Currently the footpath from the direction of Melksham town expires at the entrance to Lopes Close. Perhaps if traffic numbers and speeds were reduced on this section of the Sandridge Common Road then it might be possible to narrow the road and create a footpath for access to Manor Farm estate and the nearby bridleway. Quite a few pedestrians currently risk life and limb to gain access to the facilities at Manor Farm estate which includes a gym and some of them are workers in the estate.

Lopes Close (opposite Manor Farm) is a private estate with no public right of way. So pedestrians currently have to walk on the main highway to access both the industrial estate and the bridleway.

My main concern is the effect on the bridleway Melk40-Praters Lane. Currently the large car park space is well used, often by the large number of dog walkers that access the bridleway. If the existing route happens then this bridleway would be bisected by the bypass so an under pass or footbridge is needed to access the whole route. It appears the plan is to divert the bridle way from the corner of the solar farm to a new point on the A3102 further north than where it is currently. Surely a cheaper solution would be to build a pedestrian underpass? This would allow continued use of the existing, well set out bridleway which give a delightful walk all the way towards Redstocks to the South.

However, if the diversion goes ahead there would then need to be pedestrian access from Sandridge Common direction which could be achieved by extending and creating a new footpath along the side of the road with an underpass near the proposed roundabout. In the current plan, residents of Lopes Close (10 out of 12 of which are dog owners) would lose our access to a safe open space. If the bridleway is to be diverted it would be essential to have a fairly large car park here to allow people to access the right of way. The majority of users currently travel by car to the bridleway — this wouldn't change and I believe would actually create more traffic as it is further to travel for people to access this super resource.

A possible solution might be to leave the bridleway as it is, with an underpass but maybe reduce the size of the carpark to dissuade drivers of large lorries using it as a rest area. The roundabout could be slightly further up the hill to the East leaving a distance between the roundabout and the parking area. Clearly as a resident of Lopes Close it would also be beneficial for us to have the roundabout as far away as possible from us (and Manor Farmhouse) to reduce noise and air pollution (always worse at junctions and roundabouts).

I cannot see any reference to street lighting but would assume that the roundabout will be lit. This will have a substantial visual impact on nearby properties and may well affect the bat colonies that exist near the Lopes Close area. Bats are currently regular nighttime visitors to the area and can be seen in the gardens of the houses at Lopes Close. I understand that the garage of number 12 Lopes Close had to be adapted to accommodate a bat population. Consideration needs to be given to the style and type of lighting on this roundabout with the A3102.

Although only a very small estate of 12 houses Lopes Close has a large number of primary age children. Several currently walk to Forest and Sandridge school — a rather perilous journey along the busy A3102. Any improvement in the footpath would be beneficial to them. In the future these children will be attending Melksham Oak School and any chance of a better pedestrian route would also be an example of good planning for the future.

Whilst I understand the strategic importance of the A350 I do find it astonishing that Melksham is being considered for a bypass when smaller settlements such as

Westbury suffer even more than us. On a personal level I have reservations about the estimates in the increase in traffic as predicted in the reports issued.

I am concerned by the statement “this is a single carriageway build but with the potential for expansion in the future” — so how much land is going to be taken from local farmers? Will there be an empty space either side of the single carriageway as there is on A350 towards Chippenham?

In terms of landscape evaluation there is no doubt in my mind that this route will devalue some of the prettiest landscape in the area. The view from the top of Sandridge Hill and the view from our houses will never quite be the same.

BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the public meeting this evening due to other commitments, but would like to share my views with you.

I have been a resident of Bowerhill for 8 years and chose this location because of its beautiful, quiet and natural surroundings. I grew up in Beanacre on the busy road, so realise that they need a bypass but I cannot understand why this should be at the expense of such a vast area of countryside affecting so many people who have never chosen to live on a main road.

The proposed route absolutely destroys the natural beauty that Melksham should be treasuring and preserving. The wildlife that live there, space for our children to learn about and amongst nature and an area that promotes wellbeing and peace by just being there. This will be an environmental disaster for the local area and with such focus elsewhere on conservation and ecology, I just cannot understand this proposed route.

Thank you for considering my views.

LOCKING CLOSE, BOWERHILL RESIDENT:

Thank you for this. I have just got home and I am exhausted, and I am sure many are but I need to prepare for work tomorrow too.

I would much appreciate it if you could pose the questions that I have now asked twice and still have received no reply. My husband is attending the meeting but he has his own questions that he wishes to ask.

The project was in the previous district plan- 25-30 years ago, and is now not relevant in today's world with the most urgent issue being to find solutions to the climate and ecological emergency.

In the light of the independent CCC report stating that the UK is woefully unprepared to meet emissions targets, how can (either the DFT- trickling down to WC Highways) there be any justification for constructing any further roads?

The report also says that going forward, with the climate and ecological emergency that we are in, ACTION needs to happen now. It further states that we will be in greater need of valuable agricultural land. The proposed road, as we

know, is the longest most destructive to agricultural land ,as well as being the most ecologically damaging along its 9.3km length.

The report also states that in the light of Covid 19,with fewer people travelling to and from their place of work, the CCC report suggests that working from home should be the new normal. Once again, how can this most costly of projects be justified?

There is currently a legal challenge being made to stop all road building in the UK - Wales has already committed to no new road building. In all conscience, how can Highways continue with these plans?

NOT AN EMAIL BUT A CONVERSATION WITH THE CLERK AND A BUSINESS ON A SPEEDING ISSUE ON THE A365 BATH ROAD

The Clerk spoke to the manager of the Turnpike Garage about a speeding issue and accidents at the garage, following them getting in touch (22/7). During the conversation he mentioned that the residents of Carnation Lane were elderly, not online and feeling quite cut off – and especially so when the bypass comes. They don't get the Melksham News either, the Manager tries to pass on info to them. We have sent a copy of the consultation pack to the garage for him to share and encouraged them to get in touch with the parish council office for more copies for residents. But as its so close to the bypass route I thought it worth adding in the comments here. There have been accidents at the garage due to speeding, the bus stops quite sharply as can't see any passengers on the side of the road until almost on top of them and the cars behind can end up on the other side of the road to avoid the stopping bus. More residents are using the rights of way, they cross the garage forecourt without looking (with dogs, on mobile phones). Customers have risen dramatically from 30 to 200/300 per day. *The clerk has added into the comments in terms of any Rights of Way/Highway improvements that could be requested as so close to the route. Here is the original email that prompted the phone call, and note that the parish council have requested this themselves in the past:*

This is my email, we have been communicating through Facebook, Thanks for looking into this for me . I am aware of the bypass but that is not what has made me get into contact !. We and the residents here are and have been concerned about the speed on this little stretch of road for a long time but now we also have a lot more people using the public footpaths which cross the road here , this has resulted in a lot of near misses on the road and forecourt. And I was hoping we could get the 'welcome to Bowerhill' sign and speed limit moved to the Devizes side of the bend. This may mean the bypass is going through Bowerhill rather than around it but that is not my main concern, safety is my main concern.

LOPES CLOSE, SANDRIDGE RESIDENT:

Copy of email sent to the consultation email address at WC

I am a resident of Lopes Close, Sandridge Common and therefore will be affected by the new Melksham Bypass.

I was unable to attend the meeting at Bowerhill Village Hall on the evening of the 21st July 2021 and therefore couldn't put my suggestions/comments forward.

Please find my comments/suggestions below that I would like to be considered:

- A number of the documents and maps in the consultation documents do not show Lopes Close and how close it is to the proposed new roundabout, please can this be amended to show this and recirculated?
- I believe there will be a loss of access to the bridleway for us. I believe you are planning to redirect it to the other side of new roundabout. Myself and my family use this bridleway to enjoy a stroll most weekends, in addition to walking our dog most days. Please can the access to the bridleway be reconsidered so we still have access to this?
- From the documents I have viewed the new roundabout is rather close to Lopes Close and Manor Farm. With this being so close this will inevitably increase noise and air pollution which is not an ideal situation at all. Please can this roundabout be moved further away from Lopes Close and Manor Farm to reduce the noise and air pollution as much as possible?
- Have you discussed reducing the speed limit on A3102 by our properties?
- Please can you confirm in detail the level of screening will there be to reduce visual impact of the road and roundabout? We currently have beautiful views from our house, one of reasons why we purchased the property, I do not want this spoiled by an intruding road/roundabout?
- We are often lucky enough to experience the local wildlife, cows, horses, deer, pheasants, rabbits, birds, birds of prey, bats to name a few. Please can you advise how this bypass will not affect their habitat/homes? How will ensure their habitat/homes are unaffected by the very large bypass?

RESIDENT OF LOCKING CLOSE, BOWERHILL

Please don;t build the bypass through Giles Wood and block out the canal , also our beautiful Bowerhill residence garden , I moved to Bowerhill 18 months ago so I could have the pleasure to walk along the canal path and down to Giles Wood as a daily exercise, I'm 76 years old and enjoying the beautiful walk along the canal path and see the boats and the wild life , . We are supposed to save and protect the wild life and the environment not destroy it , building the bypass will destroy so much wildlife and the noise will be terrible from the bypass . I would much rather walk to the beautiful fields via the canal than walk around the streets of Bowerhill ,

RESIDENT OF MANSTON CLOSE, BOWERHILL

Due to the outrage of the new bypass plans it has made me aware a without meeting is coming up on the 26th. Could you please make sure the stone age broadband in Bowerhill is Brought up. Manston close. Happy for anyone to contact me regarding this.

Also I see Wiltshire council are holding meet and greets over the new bypass on Friday mornings during the working week!? I can only assume this terrible choice of time is on purpose to limit the amount of people that can attend?

EMAILS RECEIVED from residents (unknown location):

UNKNOWN RESIDENT LOCATION

I am reluctant to attend the meeting to be held this evening at Bowerhill Village Hall, due to the Covid risks, so would therefore like to share my views on the proposed bypass via email.

I strongly object to the bypass for a number of reasons which I shall list:

1 – I do not see a need for a bypass. Since the Farmer's roundabout was improved, I have not experienced congestion. The road is busier during peak times of travelling to and from work/school, but this would happen anywhere and doesn't cause any major hold-ups.

2 – the argument that traffic will increase may be flawed given that the changes that came about due to covid may impact in that many people will continue to work from home and shop online.

3 – If you are going to insist that the amount of traffic using the A350 will increase, surely building a faster (so you say) and bigger road, with room to expand, will only encourage more traffic to use it, thereby ensuring traffic WILL increase beyond that predicted anyway. It is like buying a bigger size pair of trousers to accommodate putting on weight and then putting on more weight because you have bigger trousers.

4 – The residents of Bowerhill have not been considered in that the bypass will skirt closely around the area bringing the problems associated with any main road with it – noise, pollution, accident risks. It will be a busier, faster road and therefore the impact on Bowerhill residents will be greater than the A350's current impact on residents who live nearby.

5 – The residents currently living by the main road, mostly bought their properties knowing and accepting they will be by a main road, the residents of Bowerhill, did not.

6 – The bypass will cut through beautiful countryside all the way along its route, with damage to the environment and wildlife.

7 – The bypass skirting round Bowerhill and along the route of the canal, will spoil a particular beautiful and currently peaceful area. It will spoil the area for locals and visitors. The way it crosses the picnic area/Giles Wood area is particularly heart breaking.

8 – The route will involve the compulsory purchase of property/land along its route, which is just awful for the people involved.

9 – It will most definitely lead to more houses being built as infill – eating up yet more countryside, adding to noise, amount of traffic and so on.

10 – Alternative options have been dismissed without adequate explanation to the public. There is definitely a spiel being fed to us which is like most politics, selling a line in support of an agenda and avoiding answering questions.

11 – the whole process of consultation is a farce. The route ‘sifted out’ is the only route that was presented the Department of Transport well before options were presented to the public.

12 – It is an obscene waste of money at a time when the whole country needs to thinking very carefully about how money is being spent.

13 – It goes against what every government and council should be focusing on, which is tackling climate change.

UNKNOWN RESIDENT LOCATION

Despite the numerous presentations of statistical information, I am still at a loss as to why there is a need for a bypass in general and 10c in particular. The only wheat that I have been able to glean from the utter chaff proffered so far is that it will save 4-6 minutes on the average car journey by 2036. Bearing in mind the move towards more sustainable means of public transport and the inevitable increase in people working from home, why is this out-moded model for building more roads still being promoted as a solution. The only reason I can see is that this road will provide the basis for more, unprotected (because we won't be able to protest) house building within the footprint of this monstrosity to allow WC to survive as their funds are so woefully depleted. Atkins get a massive contract, developers get to bid for a house building honeypot with the promise of funding essential facilities. Nonsense! You can build those extra facilities(if you actually do)however, without the incentives for doctors, dentists, teachers, social workers, care workers, cleaners, cooks, to take up these ephemeral, promised posts then the plan to support the extra housing fails miserably. Leaving Melksham with less access to essentials and woefully under utilised public buildings.

Building roads is not the answer and is currently coming under scrutiny from within parliament as well as without. This last ditch attempt to secure funds for something that will inevitably cost far more than budgeted (but what will Atkins care)is ludicrous and must be stopped. Short sighted, and money ill spent, for a problem that may not even exist. Fix the issues of the previous road engineering white elephants instead of agreeing to a massive herd of them! Look at what we have in terms of vacant buildings and infrastructure and find solutions is surely the way forward. Where are the slide shows and presentations for that.

If it all comes down to the quick financial win for bidding for funds to build more houses and kick the can literally down the road, rather than really addressing the issues facing Melksham in particular, and Wiltshire as a whole then own up to it and treat the caring residents if Melksham with some respect.

UNKNOWN RESIDENT LOCATION

I am unable to attend the meeting this evening in Bowerhill regarding the Melksham by-pass and so I am emailing you in the hope that my views will also be aired at the meeting. I understand from Mark Harris that this is what I should do.

Can Wiltshire County Council please justify why they are asking the Government to spend over £125 million pounds (and this is just an estimate. We all know that as soon as work commences, the costs will go up and up!) on a bypass that will :- - destroy acres of beautiful countryside -cut Bowerhill off from the canal and cut straight across one of the fields through which there are three paths which are used everyday by locals

- destroy the habitat of local flora and fauna
- create noise and pollution during its creation and thereafter use for the people of Bowerhill, Lacock, Redstocks, Seend Cleeve and the new Sandridge estate.
- it will destroy Melksham town centre and certainly not invigorate it

Nowhere else on this route does the bypass go anywhere near houses until it gets to Redstocks and Bowerhill. And although there were various options put forward, it is a joke to think that anything other than route 10c was going to be considered.

And all for saving a potential 4 minutes on a journey through Melksham and to placate the residents of Beanacre who bought their houses knowing the road was there and could not expect the traffic to decrease.

UNKNOWN RESIDENT LOCATION

I will keep this short for the moment as I appreciate you receive a lot of emails but I would like to add my protest at the Melksham Bypass and request that it does not proceed.

I expect the reasons are going to be similar to what most other people will have said.

Traffic is really not that bad even at peak times

There will be destruction to so much countryside which is not acceptable

We do not need even more housing

The town needs to be given a proper infrastructure

The money could be spent on far more necessary items

People will not drive on such a detour when they can just use the existing road

I have seen numerous other comments on this issue so do not feel it necessary to pad this email out at this stage but am willing to do so if necessary

I would suggest that the local people are able to have their say as to how their town should be run and the cost of the works are not acceptable - even if the council would reap that money back from building new houses as noted above this is not acceptable there are already too many new houses being built in Melksham.

Thank you for your time.

UNKNOWN LOCATION RESIDENT

Unfortunately unable to attend tonight's meeting but I strongly disagree we need this as it will cut our family farm in half and would be impossible to farm.

UNKNOWN LOCATION RESIDENT

As I may not be able to attend the meeting tomorrow at Bowerhill Village Hall I would like to add my views to those who are against the building of a bypass.

I cannot possibly understand how the loss of such a huge swathe of countryside for road building can be justified.

I have certainly not been convinced by any of the arguments or outdated statistics that have been put forward.

I believe Wiltshire Council has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2030 and I would like to understand how building 'unnecessary ' roads is still being considered at such a sensitive and crucial time for the environment.

UNKNOWN LOCATION RESIDENT

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I expect the reasons are going to be similar to what most other people will have said.

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EMAILS RECEIVED from NON Parish residents:

CHALFIELD CRESCENT, MELKSHAM TOWN RESIDENT

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting re The Melksham Bypass as am isolating.

I have studied the plans and honestly feel that a bypass is unnecessary. To bring relief to Beanacre will end up impacting far more people not to mention the environmental impact. Our beautiful countryside is fast disappearing!

The new road would, I feel certain, pave the way for more housing. We have already reached our quota.

The local infrastructure, especially GP services and education really can't cope as it is. With so many people already unable to see their GP things can only get worse sadly. Telephone appointments serve a purpose of sorts but ultimately the

Doctor/patient relationship will be lost and people's health and well-being could suffer as a result.

These are uncertain times. The Government is keen to push forward with it's green agenda. We can not possibly supply electricity for every household in order to charge the electric cars planned for our future along with the new boiler systems that will also be required.

During the summer months these heat pump boilers draw warm air from outside. However, during the winter month's they rely on electrical supply. The supply required for these systems is currently 40 amps. A normal house has an incoming fuse rating of 80-100 amps and corresponding cables to match that power. Imagine 40 of these going to the car charger and 40 to an oven! That leaves just 20 amps max for other appliances, non if your supply is at the lower end of 80 amps. An electric shower also takes 40 amps. You'd have to unplug the car to have a shower!

We just don't have the infrastructure to provide more power to each household at present. We'd need to find a way of generating huge amounts of power and also fitting the larger cabling required to support this countrywide and then to each house. So many people currently use gas for heating, water and cooking. The demand for electricity just to heat every home will be huge and then we'll have the car charging on top.

Driving could well become a luxury that many possibly won't be able to afford in the not too distant future, 2030.

I've digressed but do feel that we need to look at the bigger picture here. 2030 may seem a long way off but it will come around very quickly. The bypass could possibly be a waste of time and money and create more problems than benefits.

SEEND RESIDENT

Afternoon. My wife and I wanted to attend the bypass meeting this evening in bowerhill village hall, but as my wife is still not double jabbed and is also self employed, we don't want to risk it.

We do want to reiterate our opposition to the scheme tho, on the basis of environmental considerations and also that the numbers around traffic don't add up. WC are also not being up front about the housing implications on the back of this scheme as well, which would quickly erode any of the negligible benefits.

SEEND CLEEVE RESIDENT

It is a shame that this meeting is being held in an indoor environment on an exceptionally hot day when the virus is still ripping through communities. Such circumstances will keep people away.

As I shall not be attending (for my own safety), I should like to register my strong disapproval of the plans for this unnecessary bypass.

- 1). The bypass will ruin many hectares of pristine countryside - the 10c route seemingly already chosen by the council BEFORE consultation is by far the most land-grabbing.
- 2). The 10c route is the most environmentally damaging proposal and goes against the Government's current policy on infrastructure.
- 3) This bypass brings no benefit to Melksham - in fact, it destroys one of the most accessible beauty spots in the area (the Kennet + Avon canal near Bowerhill). The few hundred houses in Beanacre which may have some benefit is offset by the many thousands in Bowerhill and Sandridge whose environment will be destroyed.
- 4). This bypass goes nowhere - the North-South link is a fiction. Beyond Warminster, there are only small, meandering A roads. The ports of Poole and Weymouth are leisure-based, not commercial. Existing routes (including the M3) serve Portsmouth and Southampton well and will continue to be the preferred option.
- 5). Wiltshire is a rural county and should embrace that increasingly rare advantage - not destroy it.
- 6). Melksham is a small, country town thriving on its local economy and community.
The character of the town would be irretrievably damaged by the proposed 50% increase in size - assuming the land grab will be used not just for this pointless bypass but to meet some arbitrary housing needs of WCC generally. It will become a dormitory town. Is this really the preferred aim of Melksham Council?
- 7). This route is the NOT the preferred option of Melksham residents from the early consultations - upgrade of the existing infrastructure being seen as the most practical, economic (and least damaging) option.
- 8). If WCC has government money to burn, then Westbury has a far greater need. This would actually **benefit** Westbury residents where the existing road directs HGV traffic mere yards from the front doors of residents, even on new housing estates. The alleged problem in Beanacre (which is mostly caused by local traffic going to Aldi/McDonalds) pales in comparison to that faced in Westbury.
- 9). Does Melksham Council believe that an occasional time saving of 4 minutes is worth such overwhelming damage to the town and surrounding rural countryside?
- 10). Let no-one be fooled by the false promise of 'landscaping' - trees offer no protection from noise (I can cite examples across the country which clearly demonstrate this!). The ONLY noise protection is to put the bypass in a deep culvert - this will not be practical past Bowerhill where the road will run adjacent to houses less than 100m away.

Thank you for reading. I do hope these comments will be considered carefully.

Request from hirers of Bowerhill Sports field

A suggestion that a piece of land may become available for community use if no longer suitable for farming and/or if subject to compulsory purchase and therefore owned by Wiltshire Council. The piece of land is adjacent to the small paddock (that the parish council are interesting in leasing/purchasing to supplement the land available at Bowerhill Sports Field)– if this land (marked red) was no longer suitable for farming could it be donated to the parish council to enhance the scope of land that they have available for football pitches? If Wiltshire Council are purchasing, could it be a community asset transfer? MWPC Officers have undertaken a land registry search and are aware of who the owner is.

