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MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Teresa Strange

First Floor
Melksham Community Campus,
Market Place, Melksham,
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
Tel: 01225 705700

Email: clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

Web: www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

Tuesday 16 July 2024

To all members of the Council Planning Committee: Councillors Richard Wood, Alan Baines, John Glover (Chair of Council) David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council), Terry Chivers, Mark Harris and Peter Richardson

You are summoned to attend the Planning Committee Meeting which will be held on **Monday 22 July at 7.00pm** at **Melksham Without Parish Council Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES** to consider the agenda below:

TO ACCESS THE MEETING REMOTELY, PLEASE FOLLOW THE ZOOM LINK BELOW. THE LINK WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE WHEN IT GOES LIVE SHORTLY BEFORE 7PM.

Click link here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2791815985?pwd=Y2x5T25DRlVWVU54UW1YWWE4NkNrZz09&omn=87307261429>

Or go to www.zoom.us or Phone 0131 4601196 and enter: **Meeting ID: 279 181 5985**
Passcode: 070920. Instructions on how to access Zoom are on the parish council website www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk. If you have difficulties accessing the meeting please call (do not text) the out of hours mobile: 07341 474234

YOU CAN ACCESS THE AGENDA PACK HERE

Yours sincerely,

Teresa Strange, Clerk



Serving rural communities around Melksham

AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**
2. **To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
 - a) To receive Declarations of Interest.
 - b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered.
 - c) To note standing Dispensations relating to planning applications.
4. **To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature**
*Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of **agenda item 12)c)i** as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*
5. **Public Participation**
6. **To consider the following new Planning Applications:**

[PL/2024/05160](#): **26 Elm Close, Bowerhill.** Double storey side extension. Applicant Matt Francis (Comments by 31 July)

[PL/2024/05800](#): **18 Blenheim Park, Bowerhill.** Demolish single flat roof garage and replace it with a single storey extension incorporating a double garage with a pitched roof with a rear hip. Applicant Martin Farley (Comments by 1 August)

[PL/2024/05921](#): **Land to the North West and South of West Hill, Whitley.** Change of use of land, one field north of West Hill and one field South of West Hill. From agricultural to equestrian, permission for existing stables and siting of two shipping containers and horse box. Applicant Mrs J Almond (Comments by 5 August)
7. **Revised/Amended Plans/Additional Information:** To comment on any revised/amended plans/additional information on planning applications received within the required **timeframe (14 days)**.

[PL/2023/08046](#): Land at Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill. Reserved matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission 16/01123/OUT relating to the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the Proposed Primary School (including Nursery and SEN provision)
8. **Lime Down:**
 - a) To consider reply from Wiltshire Council following submission of parish council's consultation comments.

- b) To consider any other correspondence that has arisen (awaiting replies from Lime Down and stakeholders on a number of issues)
 - c) **Lithium-ion Battery Safety Bill 2024.** To approve support for Bill to ensure better safety of and public acceptance of industrial lithium-ion battery storage facilities and suggested additional statutory consultees.
- 9. **Current planning applications:** Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.
 - a) **Blackmore Farm (Planning Application PL/2023/11188):** Outline permission for demolition of agricultural outbuildings and development of up to 500 dwellings; up to 5,000m² of employment (class E(g)(i)) & class E(g)(ii)); land for primary school (class F1); land for mixed use hub (class E/class F); open space; provision of access infrastructure from Sandridge Common; and provision of all associated infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of the site.
- 10. **Planning Enforcement:** To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.
- 11. **Planning Policy**
 - a) **Melksham Neighbourhood Plan:** To receive update.
 - b) **Gypsies & Traveller Development Plan.** To note pre-submission consultation under Regulation 19 will start week commencing 19 August.
<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s228694/Gypsies%20and%20Travellers%20Development%20Plan%20Document.pdf>
- 12. **S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)**
 - a) **Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements**
 - i) **Pathfinder Place:**
 - To note any updates and consider way forward.
 - ii) **Buckley Gardens, Semington Road (PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings)**
 - To note any updates and consider a way forward.
 - iii) **Land to rear of Townsend Farm for 50 dwellings (PL/2023/00808)**
 - To note any updates and consider a way forward.
 - iv) **Land South of Western Way for 210 dwellings and 70 bed care home (PL/2022/08504).**
 - To note any updates and consider a way forward.
 - b) **To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers**
 - c) **Contact with developers**
 - (i) To consider correspondence and revised plans following pre application meeting on 5 June.

Copy to all Councillors

EXTRACT FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 23 OCTOBER 2023

237/23 To consider the following new Planning Applications:

[PL/2023/08046](#): Land at Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill. Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission 16/01123/OUT, relating to the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposed primary school (including Nursery and SEN provision).

Comments: Having previously met at pre-app stage, the Members noted that some of their comments raised at the meeting have been taken on board, such as the provision of showers, scooter racks and electric charging points which are welcome. However, Members raised the following:

Concern was expressed at pedestrian safety, due to the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians accessing the school via the one entry point.

The potential for traffic to back up in the car park, due to vehicles waiting for a gap in the traffic, in order to turn right.

Given the conflict with vehicles and pedestrians accessing the site, concern was expressed that vehicles wishing to turn right into the school from the Melksham direction and having to wait for pedestrians to cross the access point may cause a backlog of traffic on Pathfinder Way. This will be exacerbated if the proposed adjacent development of 210 dwellings and a 70 bed care home ([PL/2022/08504](#)) is approved at Appeal.

The Parish Council therefore request Left Turn only signage be installed coming out of the school, in order to prevent this conflict. It was noted that there are examples of Left Turn only developments in other areas of Wiltshire, such as on Cepen Park in Chippenham.

Given the above concerns, Members supported the comments made by the Urban Design Officer in relation to the school access ie:

“I continue to share the concerns of colleagues within the Highway Authority regarding the single point of access into the site, and the close proximity of pedestrians to vehicles. Children are not very good at following visual cues on where they are supposed to walk, and tend to take the quickest, shortest possible route from A to B.

In the worst case scenario this may result in children cutting diagonally across the car park to get to the left side of the building. One way in which this scenario could be reduced is to introduce another pedestrian only access gate and footpath further south along Pathfinder Way, in a direct alignment with the footpath that runs along the left-hand side of the car park.”

The comments from the Highway Officer were not published online and available when the parish council reviewed the application.

It is noted that it has already been suggested that children from various new developments on Semington Road would likely attend this school and have to use a circuitous route (map attached) to get to the school, as there is no footpath along Western Way ie:

- 17/12514/REM: 150 dwellings (Bowood View) – built and occupied
- PL/2023/00808: 50 dwellings behind Townsend Farm – commenced on site Oct 23
- PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings (Buckley Gardens) – commenced on site Sept 23
- PL/2022/08155: 53 dwellings behind Townsend Farm, (pending decision).

Concern was expressed that those wishing to access the school from Semington Road, may be tempted to walk along the grass verge of the A365 Western Way, seeing this as a quicker route which is extremely dangerous without a footpath. It would also result in children inhaling the car fumes from the 100s of vehicles travelling along this route.

To this end, Members have urged Wiltshire Council to start work on a safe walking route from Semington Road to the new school, particularly as s106 funds have been pooled from the recent developments.

Disappointment was expressed that the Parish Council's suggestion of an additional pedestrian access to the school off of the A365 (Western Way), via the hoggin footpath adjacent to the school, had not been taken on board, particularly as there is already a crossing and it would provide a safer walking route to school and avoid the conflict of pedestrians and vehicles accessing the school.

Experience has shown in recent years that access and highway issues that the Parish Council have requested at planning and pre app stage for new schools in the parish had not been included as planning conditions or s106 requirements, with Wiltshire Council then having to put them in retrospectively at a greater cost and at their expense. For example, the rear footpath access to Melksham Oak School and the highway access to the new Forest & Sandridge school.

Whilst the applicant has expressed concern at security for the school if an additional pedestrian access is provided, it is noted Bowerhill School has a rear access, which is locked during school hours and has a member of staff on duty at the gate at school opening and closing times. Other local schools also have a second pedestrian access point, and therefore the parish council do not believe that there is a threat to the security of the site.

Attention is drawn to draft Wiltshire Council's School Place Strategy, that states children have a right to walk and cycle to school safely. It is also noted the Travel Plan provided by Hydrock to support the application refers to safe walking routes and is encouraging people to walk and cycle to school, which highlights the need for a safe walking route to the school from Semington Road in particular.

Concern was expressed at the potential for people to park on Pathfinder Way to access the school and the impact this will have, particularly as Pathfinder Way is used by HGVs to access the industrial estate and people wishing to access the residential areas of Bowerhill, as well as being part of a bus route.

Therefore, Melksham Without Parish Council have applied to Wiltshire Council for traffic waiting restrictions on:

- Pathfinder Way (Whole length)
- On the entrances of Newall Road and Maitland Place with Pathfinder Way
- At the proposed new primary school access road on Pathfinder Way

Given the location of the school entrance, just off a roundabout, with a traffic island situated close by, there is potential for traffic to back up along Pathfinder Way, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day, which coincides with changes in shifts for several businesses on Bowerhill Industrial Estate.

Members would like to see the proposed cladding graduated to blend in to the adjacent green buffer, similar to nearby Great Bear Distribution (Cereal Partners) on the A350/Portal Road, Bowerhill.

Whilst a defibrillator is currently being installed on Pathfinder Way by the Parish Council for community use, Members ask that a defibrillator be provided at the school for their use. This is from the experience at Bowerhill school where the community defib is consistently taken from the community cabinet for use in the school.

Members expressed disappointment that there is no mention of the provision of solar storage batteries within proposals for the school.

Concern was expressed from looking at the Design & Access Statement that it was difficult to see how Phase 2 would fit with Phase 1.

Given the concerns of Wiltshire Air Ambulance (and Wiltshire Council's Public Protection Officer) over the potential for a 'bird strike' as the helicopter leaves and returns to its base at Outmarsh, due to the large number of seagulls nesting in the area, particularly on the flat roofs on the industrial units on Bowerhill Industrial Estate, the Parish Council seek a condition to ensure proofing against seagull roosting and a bird management scheme be put in place.

Teresa Strange

From: Thomas, Nic <Nic.Thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 July 2024 16:21
To: Teresa Strange; Botterill, Nick
Cc: Drainage; Alford, Phil; Lorraine McRandle
Subject: RE: Melksham Without Parish Council's comments to the Lime Down Solar consultation

Dear Teresa,

Thank you for your e-mail.

The council is aware that an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) is being prepared for the Lime Down solar project. We are also aware of the initial informal consultation process that the applicant carried out with residents earlier this year. As is normal for these types of schemes, we have been approached by the developer to ask for background information such as site constraints, planning histories etc. They have also informed us of what the project entails and the intended timeline for the various statutory and non-statutory stages. We have not received any formal request for our views or opinions, and it would be inappropriate for the council to respond when we do not have any formal proposal to consider. We are obliged as a public authority to respond to information requests to assist the applicant to prepare their application, which will be submitted to the Secretary of State (via the Planning Inspectorate) for consideration in due course.

An initial conversation has taken place about putting in place a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the developer. A PPA is simply a project management tool that is recommended by government to help with the administration of these types of large-scale applications. They allow for agreement to be reached on the preparation of information, timescales for responses, meeting arrangements and funding for the work that is required to assist the developer with preparing their technical reports. This gives the council the opportunity to direct the applicant to relevant technical matters that the applicant needs to consider. This happens on the majority of strategic development projects of this type but is in no way linked to whether the council would or would not support an application if and when it is submitted to the Secretary of State. The applicant is fully aware that this is the case. At this stage a PPA has not been agreed.

The council is of course aware that there has been a great deal of opposition from members of those communities affected by the different elements of this project. Comments at this stage should be submitted to the developer directly so that they can be considered as part of the preparation of the scheme. The council has no role to play in collecting or forwarding comments as part of this process.

If and when a DCO application is submitted to the Secretary of State, at that point the council would be asked formally for its views. I anticipate this will be in the first or second quarter of 2025 (although timescales are entirely a matter for the applicant). It is likely that the council's response will need to be approved by Cabinet and so relevant papers would be in the public domain at the appropriate time.

Kind regards,

Nic Thomas
Director - Planning

Wiltshire Council

Tel: 01225 713283
Email: nic.thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk
Web: www.wiltshire.gov.uk



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From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 3:21 PM
To: Botterill, Nick <Nick.Botterill@wiltshire.gov.uk>; Thomas, Nic <Nic.Thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Cc: Drainage <Drainage@wiltshire.gov.uk>; Alford, Phil <Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk>; Lorraine McRandle <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: Melksham Without Parish Council's comments to the Lime Down Solar consultation

Dear Nick and Nic

Melksham Without Parish Council have understood to date that Wiltshire Council do not intend on making any comment on the Lime Down Solar proposals, however having met representatives from Lime Down recently, they explained that they are indeed in discussions with yourselves and are entering into a Planning Performance Agreement with yourselves.

Therefore, please find attached the response of Melksham Without Parish Council to the recent consultation which details their objection and concerns and questions raised relating to the proposals in the parish (Whitley and Beanacre).

One of the main concerns of the proposed Whitley Battery Storage is the effect on the two villages that have recurring internal property flooding, and therefore early engagement with the drainage team is deemed important by the Parish Council, hence why we have copied them in here.

We look forward to hearing from you as you form a response to the proposals, which you presumably will be sharing in the public domain?

With kind regards, Teresa

Teresa Strange
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Melksham Without Parish Council
First Floor
Melksham Community Campus
Market Place, Melksham
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
01225 705700
www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

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Teresa Strange

From: Teresa Strange
Sent: 16 July 2024 15:54
To: ron.bailey@parliament.uk
Subject: FW: URGENT E: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters
Attachments: Second Bill.docx

Dear Ron

The parish council have had chance to consider informally today (to be ratified by next council meeting).

3. Lithium-ion battery storage facilities

(1) for the purpose of ensuring better safety of and public acceptance of Industrial lithium-ion battery storage facilities:

- (a) the Environment Agency; and
- (b) the Health and Safety Executive; and
- (c) the local fire and rescue service for the relevant area

shall be statutory consultees when planning applications are considered.

This welcomed and is supported, but they do feel it could go further. They support Natural England and Historic England (and their regional counterparts) as being statutory consultees too. In the case of it being a DCO (Development Consent Order) and a decision made by the Secretary of State as a national infrastructure project, the Local Planning Authority should also be a statutory consultee. These are the statutory consultees, along with the Environment Agency, for Strategic Environmental Assessments, and Neighbourhood Plans for example.

In addition, they think there should be two other proposals:

- Large-scale BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) should be COMAH establishments (Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 2015) and be regulated appropriately. BESS are not currently within scope of COMAH. BESS facilities have significant health and safety risks and COMAH is intended to safeguard public health, property and the environment.
- Engineering standards should be developed to address the risks of “thermal runaway” in order to pre-empt propagation of runaway events.

A useful reference material is the paper “Safety of Grid Scale Lithium-ion Battery Energy Storage Systems” 5 June 2021, by Eurling Dr Edmund Fordham, Dr Wade Allison and Prof Sir David Melville. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Wade-Allison/publication/352158070_Safety_of_Grid_Scale_Lithium-ion_Battery_Energy_Storage_Systems/links/60bbaa59299bf10dff9c66f9/Safety-of-Grid-Scale-Lithium-ion-Battery-Energy-Storage-Systems.pdf

Thank you for getting in touch on this Bill.

With kind regards,

Teresa

Teresa Strange
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Melksham Without Parish Council
First Floor
Melksham Community Campus
Market Place, Melksham
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
01225 705700
www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

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From: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>
Sent: 16 July 2024 05:43
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: URGENT E: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooterrrs

Dear Teresa

Having been approached by other Local Councils I think I now have a Lord who will run with the attached. Comments please urgently. We only have until Thursday, and I am out all day tomorrow. Also did you Council take a decision on Lord Fosters Bill. I hope you are supporting.

All the best

Ron

From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 4:35 PM
To: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>
Subject: RE: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooterrrs

Thanks for coming back Ron,
All the best, Teresa

From: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>
Sent: 28 May 2024 15:54
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooterrrs

Dear Teresa,

Thank you for this. I have now had the opportunity to consult colleagues about your issue. I am sad to say that Electrical Safety First only has a remit as regards home electrical safety and thus, although it has experts they are not expert in the problem that you face.

I am very sympathetic but that's all I can offer.

I hope this won't stop the Council from supporting the Bill.
All the best
Ron

From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2024 12:02 PM
To: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>
Cc: CAWS <whitley.and.shaw@gmail.com>; Peter Richardson <peter.richardson@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooterrrs

Dear Ron

Thank you for sending this information through, it will be on the agenda for the next meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council when they meet in June.

Whilst writing, as part of Lord Foster's campaign and your role as parliamentary adviser, do you have any thoughts/research on the use of lithium batteries for storing electricity. See details here, the parish council includes the village of Whitley which is one of two proposed site for the battery storage <https://www.limedownsolar.co.uk/>

The comments of the parish council and the local action group CAWS (Community Action: Whitley & Shaw) are attached, which voice the concerns of such large scale lithium batteries being installed close to residential communities, with the fire risk, and the associated water contamination and flood risk if any fires have to be put out.

The parish council is located close to Lord Foster's area (Whitley is just 10 miles from the centre of Bath) and is subject to a potential 200no. battery storage installation as part of a national infrastructure project and we are looking for information as evidence of the lithium battery concerns raised by the local parish and town councils, as well as local MPs, particularly James Grey and Michelle Donelan.

With many thanks,

Teresa

Teresa Strange
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Melksham Without Parish Council
First Floor
Melksham Community Campus
Market Place, Melksham
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
01225 705700
www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

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From: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>

Sent: 20 May 2024 11:36

To: BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk>

Subject: FW: Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooterrrrs

Dear Local Council

I am writing to ask your Council to support our campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal.

Let me begin by introducing myself. I am the researcher for Lord (Don) Foster (hence my email address), who has been campaigning on this issue in the House of Lords. I am also the parliamentary advisor to Electrical Safety First, a UK Charity dedicated to reducing the deaths and injuries caused by electricity.

As you will probably know lithium battery fires are on the increase – there have been over 1000 in the past few years, nearly 200 injuries and a dozen fatalities. Homes have been destroyed. The cost to the UK runs into £billions. You will doubtless know of examples in your area. I attach a spreadsheet of some recent fires – as you will see there have been some in your area.

Lord Foster and Electrical Safety First are promoting the attached Bill (a summary of which is included at the end of this email) to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of lithium batteries and are aiming to get it into law as soon as possible. It has its First Reading on 5th June.

We have the support of many national organisations, as the attached logos show – including the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Royal Society for Public Health. In addition 2 coroners have called for the law to be tightened to ensure greater safety.

We are now contacting more locally based organisations, and it would be great if your Council was able to support this campaign. It would be a great boost.

Please do get in touch if you require any further information.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Ron Bailey

PS Don't worry if you are not meeting before June 5th. That is only the 1st Reading – other stages will follow, so you won't be too late. Your support will be valuable at any time.

Clause 1 would require third party *independent* approval-testing for e-bikes, e-scooters and their batteries before entering the UK market.

Clause 2: incidents of fires and harmful fumes resulting from lithium-ion batteries in waste vehicles and landfills are increasing. There are reportedly more than 200 landfill fires annually, making up 48 percent of all fires, costing £158 million and contributing significantly to pollution. This clause requires the government to establish regulations for the safe disposal of used lithium-ion batteries.

Clause 3 addresses specific fire concerns, ensuring safer access, charging, and storage of lithium-ion batteries. While an outright ban is suggested by some, conversion kits remain a financially practical solution, especially for gig economy workers reliant on sustainable transportation. Implementing a standardised approach to kits could establish design and installation controls, mitigating foreseeable risks.

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Lithium-ion Battery Safety Bill 2024 [HL]

A Bill to make provisions for greater safety regarding the storage, use and disposal of lithium-ion batteries

1. Purposes

(1) The first purposes of this Act are to provide for greater safety to

(a) householders; and

(b) communities

from the dangers and potential dangers of lithium-ion batteries.

(2) The second purpose of this Act is to increase public confidence in and acceptance of the need for lithium-ion battery technology.

(3) Any person discharging any function pursuant to this Act must have regard to those purposes.

2. Domestic premises

(1) The Secretary of State must within 12 months of the passing of this Act make regulations

(a) requiring, and setting up a mechanism for the independent certification of; and

(b) the disposal of; and

(c) the safety of equipment used for the charging and conversion of vehicles charged by

lithium-ion batteries

(2) Regulations made pursuant to subsection (1) may create offences.

3. Lithium-ion battery storage facilities

(1) for the purpose of ensuring better safety of and public acceptance of Industrial lithium-ion battery storage facilities:

(a) the Environment Agency; and

(b) the Health and Safety Executive; and

(c) the local fire and rescue service for the relevant area

shall be statutory consultees when planning applications are considered.

(2) The Secretary of State may within 12 months of the passing of this Act, by regulation, make provisions regarding the granting of environmental permits for industrial lithium-ion battery facilities.

4. Consultation

(1) Before making regulations under this Act the Secretary of State must consult any person who in his or her opinion has an interest in this matter.

From: Teresa Strange
Sent: 10 July 2024 13:35
Cc: JMNP 2; locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk
Subject: Melksham Neighbourhood Plan - extension of consultation until Thurs 22nd August due to additional evidence documents (viability assessments)

Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2

2020 – 2038

Pre-Submission Consultation Draft B June 2024



Dear Statutory Consultee/Landowner/Developer/Community Member

Please be advised that the current consultation at Regulation 14 stage for the review of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 (Version B: June 2024) is **being extended by one week until Thursday 22nd August.**

This is due to the addition of new documents to the suite of evidence:

- Viability assessments on the Cooper Tires, former Library and Whitley Farm sites
- Addendum to the Cooper Tires viability assessment – additional scenarios
- Appendices to the Addendum to the Cooper Tires viability assessment – additional scenarios

This gives 6 weeks from tomorrow, until midnight Thursday 22nd August, for these additional documents to be considered.

You can view the evidence documents here <https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/np2-evidence-base>

FORMAL NOTICE OF CONSULTATION ON THE REGULATION 14 STAGE OF THE REVIEWED MELKSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council has reviewed its current Neighbourhood Plan (adopted July 2021) for the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Area. The reviewed draft Plan updates some existing policies and provides some new policies which, once adopted, must be used in the determination of planning applications within the parishes of Melksham Town and Melksham Without.

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council are required to publicise the draft Neighbourhood Plan and invite comments.

Consultation on the draft B version of the JMNP2 will run for 9 weeks between Thursday 20th June and ends at midnight on Thursday 22nd August 2024.

Please submit your views to us, stating clearly which policy your comments relates to via email contact@melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org

We consulted with you back in October 2023 as part of our first formal public consultation (Pre-Submission Draft, Regulation 14, Consultation) on the draft updated Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan – JMNP2 for short.

Thank you if you took part in this consultation on what we are now calling the pre-submission draft A of JMNP2. We received over 980 individual comments. These comments have been very helpful to us and we are currently revising our Plan as a result.

Since the 2023 Consultation on the pre-submission draft of JMNP2, significant further work has been done to proposed site allocations at Melksham and Whitley in response to feedback. In addition, despite local opposition, outline planning permission was granted through appeal for 210 dwellings and a 70 bed care home on Land South of

Western Way. Our updated plans therefore proposes its allocation to make these numbers count, minimise harm the development may cause, and maximise the community benefits it delivers.

In this 2024 Pre-Submission Consultation on draft B of the JMNP2, we are seeking any comments you may wish to make on Policy 7 – divided into five allocations of land for housing, and Policy 19 – Green Wedges.

There are no other changes to the JMNP2 at this stage, which remains as it was in the 2023 Consultation. All previous comments submitted to the 2023 Consultation are still valid, and are being taken into consideration. There is no need to submit these comments to us again.

In the second pre-submission consultation on draft B of the JMNP2, updated areas will be indicated with a **yellow strip** at the side of the page, and **UPDATED!** symbol.

Copies of the Plan will be available for public inspection from **Thursday 20th June until Thursday 22nd August 2024** for a period of **9** weeks.

The draft Plan and associated material are online at: www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org

Hard copies are available at:

- Melksham Town Hall, SN12 6ES
- Melksham Without Parish Council offices, SN12 6ES
- Melksham Campus entrance foyer, SN12 6ES
- Sprockets Café at Spindles Bike Shop, Top Lane, Whitley, SN12 8QU

Drop in consultation events are being held on:

- Friday 19th July, 4pm to 7pm at the Melksham Campus (past the Café area), Market Place, SN12 6ES
- Saturday 20th July, 11am to 2pm at Shaw Village Hall, The Beeches, Shaw, SN12 8EW
- Tuesday 23rd July, 5pm to 8pm at Bowerhill Village Hall, Halifax Road, Bowerhill, SN12 6SN

Representations may be made in the following ways:

- By email to: contact@melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org
- By delivering/posting a hard copy to Melksham Town Council, Town Hall, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES or Melksham Without Parish Council, First Floor, Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES
- By dropping into the Comments Box at any of the places where hard copies are available
- By dropping into the Comments Box at one of the drop in consultation events

Any person or organisation may comment on the Plan.

All representations must be received by either Melksham Town Council or Melksham Without Parish Council no later than midnight on Thursday **22nd August 2024**. All representations will be publicly available* and will be considered by both Councils in producing the final plan, which will then be submitted to Wiltshire Council for Regulation 16 consultation and Independent Examination.

*(*with personal information redacted). We will share information of who was contacted with Wiltshire Council to enable contact again at the Regulation 16 stage.*

Please address all correspondence to contact@melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org

Yours faithfully



Tracy Predeth



Teresa Strange

Locum Clerk
Melksham Town Council
01225 704187

Clerk
Melksham Without Parish Council
01225 705700

Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

On behalf of the Qualifying Bodies: Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council

Lorraine McRandle

From: Teresa Strange
Sent: 08 July 2024 17:17
To: Anne Sullivan; David Pafford; John Doel; Nathan Keates; Robert Shea-Simonds; Shona Holt; Alan Baines; John Glover; Mark Harris; Richard Wood; Terrence Chivers; Martin Franks; Peter Richardson
Cc: Lorraine McRandle; Marianne Rossi
Subject: FW: The Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan

Dear Councillors

Please see below, this will be on the next Planning Committee agenda (22nd July) – no sites allocated in the parish.
Kind regards, Teresa

From: Wiltshire Council <wiltshirecouncilnews@news.wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 July 2024 16:09
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: The Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan

[View this email in your browser](#)

5 July 2024



The Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan

At its meeting on Monday 15 July, Cabinet will consider the next steps for the Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan. All Wiltshire Council members will then have the opportunity to consider the draft Plan at Full Council on Wednesday 24 July.

This email explains more about the Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan, what the next steps are, and when we will be consulting with your communities.

What is the Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan?

Wiltshire Council, like all Local Planning Authorities, must plan for all members of the community, including Gypsies and Travellers.

National policy requires councils to make provision to meet the accommodation needs of travellers, which includes Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople, including the allocation of sites in development plans to meet this need.

The Plan addresses the accommodation needs of Wiltshire's travelling communities to 2038 and updates Core Policy 47 'Meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers' of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

The Plan is based on the robust evidence collated in our Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

How many sites have been identified in the Plan?

The draft Gypsies and Travellers Plan will make provision for three emergency stopping sites, each for up to six vehicles and caravans, to give travelling people places to stop when travelling through the county. This should help to reduce unauthorised encampments. A first site is allocated in the north of the county.

The Plan looks to utilise existing Gypsy and Traveller sites wherever possible and allocates 44 additional pitches on a number of existing sites to meet on-site needs. Seven new sites have been allocated, for 34 pitches in total.

For travelling showpeople, we have been able to accommodate all needs on three existing sites.

Where will new sites be?

The council has been looking at its own land and has approached landowners in the county with sites that are registered for development to help identify potential Gypsy and Traveller sites. Sites have been identified in line with national planning policy. Once the Plan is adopted, any identified sites would be subject to full consultation through the usual planning process.

To see the full list of proposed sites, [please see the Cabinet papers](#).

What are the next steps and how can communities have their say?

We will be holding a pre-submission consultation under Regulation 19 which will enable communities to have their say on the draft Plan. The consultation will start during week commencing 19 August and end in early October, and we will ensure the dates are widely publicised ahead of the start of the consultation.

To enable people to view the Plan and find out more, we will be holding a series of engagement sessions during the consultation, with events being held during early September in Salisbury, Devizes, Chippenham, Royal Wootton Bassett and Trowbridge, plus an online webinar-style event. We will have more information about these sessions, including dates and times, in the coming weeks.

We are also working with a specialist engagement provider to ensure that we engage effectively with Gypsy and Traveller communities throughout the county.

Following the public consultation and consideration of all comments received, the Plan will go to Cabinet and Full Council again in December. It will then be submitted for examination by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Government, who will consider all comments received on the Plan.

Once adopted, the Plan will sit alongside the Wiltshire Local Plan review. Together they will form the Local Plan for Wiltshire and complete the update of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. If found sound by the Inspector, it is anticipated to adopt the Plan in 2025.

We know that some people in your communities may have concerns about the draft Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan. To help people understand more about Gypsies and Travellers and why we need more sites in Wiltshire, we have produced a [Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan factsheet](#), which you may wish to share with your communities.

[Read the full draft Plan and Cabinet report](#)



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15 July 2024

Subject: Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document - Pre-submission Draft Plan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Nick Botterill - Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

The Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document has been in development since 2020. A Pre-Submission Draft Plan (the Plan) has now been prepared. It has been informed by evidence including an up-to-date gypsy and travellers' accommodation assessment (GTAA), engagement with the community and other stakeholders.

The Plan addresses the accommodation needs of Wiltshire's travelling communities to 2038 and updates Core Policy 47 'Meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers' of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This includes both the needs of travelling showpeople and gypsies and travellers. It will sit alongside the Wiltshire Local Plan review and together they will form the Local Plan for Wiltshire and complete the update of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Progression of the Plan alongside the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review will ensure that the accommodation needs of all parts of Wiltshire's communities can be addressed and the council meets its equality duties. Like the Local Plan, substantial time and investment has been made in preparing the Plan. This has included the consideration and allocation of council owned land due to the lack of private sites put forward through the call for sites exercises.

The council undertook consultation on the scope and objectives of the Plan early 2021 (Regulation 18 stage), as well as the accommodation needs at that time, the proposed approach to meeting needs and call for sites. Since then, significant work has been undertaken to prepare a draft Plan, which has involved assessing the potential to accommodate need on existing as well as new sites and ensuring that the Plan responds to evidence in the updated GTAA.

The Plan contains policies that collectively make provision for the needs of the travelling community. These include policies allocating new sites and existing sites to allow for additional pitches and plots to come forward as well as safeguarding existing sites so that they can continue to meet needs in the longer term. The plan takes a supportive approach to allowing for the siting of additional caravans on sites where planning permission is needed to help meet the needs of teenagers and younger single adults.

A criteria-based policy is also included to assess other new sites that may come forward to meet demonstrable needs that arise during the plan period, for example from undetermined households in the GTAA. It also includes a policy to address the needs of households that do not meet the planning definition of travellers, but nonetheless have protected characteristics and may require culturally appropriate accommodation such as mobile homes.

To help address the accommodation needs of travellers passing through the county and manage unauthorised encampments the Plan makes provision for three emergency stopping places to be delivered by the council by 2029. The first site is allocated in the Plan, and two additional sites will need to be brought forward by the council through implementation of the plan.

The council has reached the final consultation stage, where representations are invited on soundness and legal compliance, which is known as the Regulation 19 stage. The council will be publishing what it considers to be a sound plan and following consultation can proceed to submission and examination by a government appointed Planning Inspector.

Completion of the Regulation 19 consultation will enable the council to formally submit the Plan and for it to be examined in public by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. It is only once these stages have been completed, with a positive recommendation by the Inspector, that the Plan can be adopted by the council and gain full weight in decision making.

Publication of the draft Plan for consultation is proposed to start late summer 2024 and last for a period of at least six weeks in line with legislation and the council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Following the consultation, once the outcome has been considered a report will be brought back to Cabinet and Council in December, in order that the Plan can be taken forward to submission.

Proposals

That Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the 'Gypsies and Travellers Plan - Pre-submission Draft Development Plan Document' at Appendix 1 subject to amendment in 3.
- 2) Recommends to Full Council on 24 July 2024 that the Gypsies and Travellers Plan - Pre-submission Draft Development Plan Document at Appendix 1 (subject to modification in (3)) be approved for publication in line with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), for a period of at least six weeks public consultation.
- 3) Authorises the Director for Planning in consultation with the Director for Legal and Governance and Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning: to make any necessary minor changes to the Pre-submission Draft Development

Plan Document before it is published; to finalise the associated evidence documents for publication alongside the Plan; and to make arrangement for and undertake statutory consultation.

Reason for Proposals

To ensure the council continues to make progress in updating its Local Plan, and alongside the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review in line with the timescale set out in the recently approved Local Development Scheme and statutory requirements.

Alongside the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review, the Plan will help ensure that the council is planning to meet the accommodation needs of all different sectors of Wiltshire's community.

Parvis Khansari
Corporate Director - Place

Subject: Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document - Pre-submission Draft Plan

Cabinet Member: Cllr Nick Botterill - Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks to:
 - (i) Seek approval for the Pre-Submission Draft Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document to be formally published for a final stage of consultation; and
 - (ii) Set out the arrangements for consultation and next steps.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Council's 'Wiltshire Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Boater Strategy 2020-2025' recognises the importance of a settled base to support the health and well-being and educational needs of these communities. Providing for the housing needs of, and improving health outcomes for, Wiltshire's gypsy and traveller communities aligns with the 2022-2032 Business Plan mission Resilient Society. The importance of updating the Local Plan to provide an effective policy framework for the sustainable growth of Wiltshire is also explicitly referred to.

Background

3. The council has a statutory duty to prepare and maintain their Local Plan.
4. National planning policy sets out the government's overarching aim in planning for travellers, which is "*to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interest of the settled community*" (Paragraph 3, Planning policy for traveller sites - updated December 2023). It requires local planning authorities in producing their local plan to set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople to address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs.
5. Alongside the Wiltshire Local Plan review, the council's [Local Development Scheme \(March 2024\)](#) makes provision for a separate single plan to be prepared to address the housing needs of gypsies and travellers and review Core Policy 47 Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

6. Following [Cabinet approval](#), consultation was undertaken on the scope of the Plan, starting 13 January 2021 and closing on 9 March 2021 (aligned to consultation on the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review) and comments invited on: the proposed objectives of the plan; level of need to be addressed informed by a gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment; approach to meeting accommodation needs; and site assessment criteria. A call for sites was also undertaken to identify potential sites to be considered for allocation, which has remained open since then.
7. At the time the consultation was approved, capital budget was set aside to fund the delivery of three emergency stopping places in the light of the commitment made in the council's Emergency Stopping Places Strategy, approved by Cabinet in 2018.
8. The outcome of the consultation was subsequently published on the [council's website](#). In total 64 responses were made from different stakeholders including parish and town councils and 20 travellers who responded by telephone. During the consultation the opportunity was also taken to engage with travellers on unauthorised encampments. In response to the consultation and to take into account the more recent change to national planning policy in relation to the definition of gypsies and travellers, the council's gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment has been updated to ensure the plan is robust and informed by up to date evidence
9. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (June 2024) (GTAA) has a base date of 1 April 2024 (forming the start of the plan period) and identifies needs across the plan period to 2038. It takes into consideration the revised definition of travellers, which includes those who for educational, health or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently. Previously travellers who had ceased to travel (for whatever reason) were not included. This change was introduced by the December 2023 update to the government's Planning policy for traveller sites.

Main Considerations for the Council

10. A Pre-Submission Draft Plan (the Plan) has been prepared, which is provided at **Appendix 1**, and has been informed by evidence as set out in the GTAA.
11. Progression of the Plan alongside the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review will ensure that the accommodation needs of all parts of Wiltshire's communities can be addressed and the council meets its equality duties. Like the Local Plan, substantial time and investment has been made in preparing the Plan. This has included the consideration of council owned land to identify sites for allocation due to the lack of private sites put forward through the call for sites exercises.
12. Core Policy 47 has been reviewed to ensure the Plan provides a sound basis on which to make provision for the needs of the travelling community and is replaced by policies that work collectively to do this. These include policies allocating new sites and existing sites to allow for additional pitches/plots¹ to come forward as well as safeguarding existing sites so that they can continue to meet needs in the longer term. The Plan takes a supportive approach to allowing for the siting of additional caravans

¹ When referring to the accommodation needs of these groups reference is made to plots when referring to travelling show people and pitches when referring to gypsies and travellers.

on sites where planning permission is needed to help meet the needs of teenagers and younger single adults.

13. A criteria-based policy is also included to assess other new sites that may come forward to meet demonstrable local needs that arise during the plan period, for example from undetermined households in the GTAA that are later established to meet the planning definition. It also includes a policy to address the needs of households that do not meet the planning definition of travellers, but nonetheless have protected characteristics and may require culturally appropriate accommodation such as mobile homes.

14. The format of the draft Plan is as follows:

- (i) Chapters 1 and 2 explain the role and purpose of the Plan; its objectives and how it relates to the Local Plan.
- (ii) Chapter 3 contains the strategy for meeting traveller needs over the Plan period to 2038. It includes targets for permanent pitches for both gypsies and travellers and permanent plots for travelling showpeople over the whole plan period to 2038 and for the first five years to 2029, based on the GTAA; as well as 3 emergency stopping place sites to be delivered by the council by 2029.

It contains policies relating to the safeguarding of existing sites for their continued use by travellers and intensification of existing sites to meet needs on sites, as well as criteria to assess new sites against. It also includes policy to address need for culturally appropriate accommodation.

- (iii) Chapter 4 contains site allocations relating to existing sites that are proposed for intensification to meet identified needs arising on those sites (16 sites); as well as new allocations for permanent accommodation (7 sites) and 1 site for transit accommodation (emergency stopping place). 3 existing travelling showpeople sites are also allocated for intensification to meet onsite needs.
- (iv) Chapter 5 clarifies how monitoring of the plan policies will be carried out.

15. At the Regulation 19 stage, the council is publishing what it considers to be a sound Plan that meets all the necessary legal requirements. See Legal Implications below. To be sound, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35), a Plan must be:

- (i) **Positively prepared** - providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- (ii) **Justified** - an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence.
- (iii) **Effective** - deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint

working on cross boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground.

- (iv) **Consistent with national policy** - enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and other statements of national policy, where relevant.

16. Alongside the Plan other documents will be published, including those setting out evidence informing the plan and its preparation. They will include:

- (i) Wiltshire Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (2024), Opinion Research Services
- (ii) Sustainability Appraisal including Non-technical Summary
- (iii) Habitats Regulations Assessment, LUC
- (iv) Evidence papers in relation to site selection and delivery, and the approach to teenage need.
- (v) Duty to cooperate statement - setting out engagement undertaken with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies as part of plan preparation.

Next steps and consultation arrangements

17. Subject to Cabinet and Council approval, preparations will be made to finalise and publish the consultation documents including the draft Plan. They will be made available for public inspection for the start of the consultations at the council's principal offices during normal opening hours as well as on the council's website.

18. Consultation needs to be undertaken for a period of at least six weeks in line with legal requirements and the council's [Statement of community involvement \(July 2020\)](#). In keeping with the March 2024 update to the Local Development Scheme, this is planned to commence by mid Q3, 2024. Publication of the draft plan for consultation is therefore proposed to start late summer 2024. A reasonable part of the consultation period will need to be outside of the August holiday period, as required by the Statement of community involvement.

19. Consultation is proposed to include the following:

- (i) Online publication of consultation documents on the council's website including the consultation portal.
- (ii) Consultation documents to be available for viewing at the council's main office hubs and/or council libraries as appropriate.
- (iii) Press release and publication of adverts in local newspapers to cover Wiltshire advertising the start of the consultation.
- (iv) Notifications to be sent to all Members and Town and Parish Councils.
- (v) Publicise through council newsletter.
- (vi) Email/letter to consultees on strategic planning consultation database informing them of the consultation.
- (vii) Social media campaign to raise awareness of the consultation and how to engage.
- (viii) In person engagement events and webinar.
- (ix) Chair's announcements where possible at Area Board meetings leading up to and at the start of the consultation to publicise the consultation and raise awareness.

- (x) Leaflet drop to traveller households, which will be designed and undertaken with the support of a third party familiar with traveller engagement.

20. Completion of the Regulation 19 consultation stage will enable the council to formally submit the Plan (following approval by Cabinet and Council) and for it to be examined by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. It is only once these stages have been completed, with a positive recommendation by the Inspector that the Plan can be adopted by the council and gain full weight in decision making.
21. Once the Regulation 19 consultation has been completed, and responses collated and a consultation report produced including the main issues raised, the Plan, following approval by Cabinet and Council, can be submitted and proceed to Examination in Public (EiP). The EiP is the final stage in the process and upon submission, the Inspector will take control of the process. In some cases, more than one Inspector is appointed to undertake the EiP. The Inspector's role is to examine whether the Plan meets the test of soundness defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35). As set out above, they require that the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy and meets all the relevant legislative requirements, including the duty to cooperate. The EiP focuses on the main issues that purport to affect the Plan's soundness and legal compliance.
22. At the end of the EiP the Inspector produces a report on behalf of the Secretary of State setting out recommendations and the reasons for them. The outcome could be one of three: (i) that the Plan is sound and legally compliant as submitted and should be adopted; (ii) the Plan is unsound and/or legally non-complaint as submitted but it is possible to make it so through main modifications, if requested to do so by the Council as local planning authority: (iii) the Plan is unsound and/or legally non-compliant and that it is not possible to make it so through main modifications, which would lead to an authority being invited to withdraw the Plan before a recommendation to that effect was made.

Safeguarding Implications

23. Although there are no direct safeguarding implications arising from the proposals, the plan is a key document in ensuring that the accommodation needs of the traveller community are being met and new sites are in locations, which as a minimum, have access to education and health services. Emergency stopping sites are a safe alternative to roadside encampments.

Public Health Implications

24. As recognised in the Health Needs Assessment for Gypsy, Traveller and Boater Populations Living in Wiltshire (July 2019) ethnic gypsies and travellers have significantly worse health outcomes than the general population and experience substantial health inequalities. Living conditions are one of the most significant contributory factors to poor health. Providing a settled base in locations where there is access to health and education services and connections to main service infrastructure has public health benefits.

Procurement Implications

25. There are no direct procurement implications relating to the proposals in the report, other than potentially securing the services of a third party to facilitate effective consultation with Wiltshire's gypsy and traveller communities. See financial implications also. However, the development of the Plan to date has been supported by evidence procured from suppliers. Any future procurement will be undertaken in line with corporate procedures.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

26. The council is subject to a public sector equality duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010. This consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which takes an inclusive approach to consultation ensuring that everyone can be involved.
27. Positively planning for the needs of Wiltshire's travelling communities will have a positive impact. A lack of suitable accommodation, as referred to above, can underpin many of the inequalities that they experience.
28. An Equality Impact Assessment is being carried out alongside the preparation of the Plan and will accompany the draft Plan when it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

29. Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the provisions of Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Habitats Regulations Assessment have been undertaken as part of the Plan's preparation. They help to ensure that negative environmental impacts are avoided, appropriate mitigation is identified, and policies and proposals deliver development in a sustainable manner while ensuring that accommodation needs can be addressed. These will be published alongside the Plan at the start of the consultation.

Workforce Implications

30. Preparation and implementation of the Plan has workforce implications for services across the council, as well as the Planning Service. A cross-authority delivery group has been supporting the development of the plan including officers from legal, development management, property, housing services and communications, as well as strategic planning. A dedicated project manager is in place. Specialist input from other services in relation to site assessments has been integral to development of the Plan e.g. highways, drainage, landscape, and ecology.
31. Input will continue to be required from services as the Plan progresses through the next stages of the process and resources aligned to ensure there is sufficient capacity. It is anticipated that this will be absorbed within the current capacity of services but will be kept under review.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

32. The principal risk is that the accommodation needs of these communities will not be met, which has implications for safeguarding and their health and wellbeing. It is likely to also lead to more incidents of unauthorised encampments, speculative development proposals and associated conflict with the settled community.

33. It is important for the council to continue to make progress on preparing the Plan alongside the Wiltshire Local Plan review in line with the commitment set out in the recently updated Local Development Scheme. This will ensure the housing needs of all sectors of the community are addressed in updating the Local Plan for Wiltshire.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

34. Communities may be concerned about new development taking place near to where they live. This is being mitigated by working with the council's communications team to design the consultation material and enable effective communication and engagement during the preparation of the Plan.

Financial Implications

35. The financial implications of taking forward the Plan through Regulation 19 consultation stage, the examination stage and onto adoption has been planned for in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). They will be met from the Strategic Planning service budget and the Local Plan earmarked reserve.
36. As previously reported and recognised by Cabinet, council owned land and financial investment is needed to support the delivery and management of transit accommodation (i.e. emergency stopping places). Provision has been made for this in the council's Capital Programme. However, the Emergency Stopping Places Strategy will need to be updated to support the identification and delivery of two further sites, in addition to the one that is set out in the Plan. Any further financial implications will be considered at that time. To ensure sufficient permanent sites can be allocated in the Plan, 5 sites comprising a total of 22 pitches are also included.

Legal Implications

37. The council has a statutory duty to prepare and maintain a Local Plan for Wiltshire (referred to in legislation as development plan documents), for which the process is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) 2004 (as amended) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Plan has been prepared in line with Regulations and appropriate consultation has been undertaken as set out in the background in line with legislation. There is a statutory duty to ensure the Plan is updated every five years. It is therefore important that progress be made with the Gypsies and Travellers Plan as it is now over nine years since the Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted.
38. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 33A of the PCPA 2004 (as amended), which requires the council to cooperate with neighbouring authorities constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to address any strategic cross boundary issues associated with the Plan, as well as other prescribed stakeholders. This engagement will be continued by the council during and beyond the Plan period. A statement has been prepared outlining the engagement that has taken place.
39. At the Regulation 19 stage, the council has a duty to engage with the public and other stakeholders and must carry out consultation in accordance with the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and Regulations. Comments received at this stage of the process, once the Plan has been submitted for examination, will ultimately

be considered by the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Plan.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

40. Overview and Scrutiny has not been formally engaged in the specific proposals in this report. However, members of the Environment Select Committee have received several informal confidential briefings during the development of the Plan, which have allowed for discussion and challenge to the emerging policies in the lead up to Cabinet.

Options Considered

41. Approval of the Plan and publishing it for formal consultation would mean significant progress on the Plan's preparation in line with expectations set out in the Local Development Scheme. Consultation must be undertaken in line with Regulations and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Conclusions

42. The Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document - Pre-submission draft Plan has been in preparation for a considerable period of time. It is based on robust evidence including an up-to-date gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment and informed by engagement with the community and other stakeholders. Alongside the wider Wiltshire Local Plan review it will complete the review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and ensure the housing needs of all sectors of Wiltshire's community can be addressed through an up-to-date Local Plan.

Nic Thomas - Director, Planning

Report Author: Georgina Clampitt-Dix, Head of Strategic Planning,
Email: georgina.clampitt-dix@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1: Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document - Pre-submission draft plan

Background Papers

Wiltshire Council Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessment, June 2024, Opinion Research Services; which can be viewed via this [Link](#).