

MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 7th September 2015 at Crown Chambers, Melksham at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Richard Wood (Council Chair), John Glover (Council Vice-Chair), Alan Baines, Gregory Coombes, Rolf Brindle and Paul Carter.

Apologies: Mike Sankey.

Housekeeping: Cllr. Wood welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.

201/15 **Committee Members:** It was noted that Cllr. Steve Petty had stood down from the Planning Committee.

202/15 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Coombes declared an interest in agenda item 5b) as the applicants are his neighbours.

The Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders for a period of public participation.

203/15 **Public Participation:**
The Applicants for planning application 15/07896/OUT, 89, Corsham Road attended in support of their planning application, explaining that after living in the property for 40 years that they no longer needed all the land and wished to build a new property on the spare land. They explained that the proposed access to Bath road would remain the same and that there would be 5 parking spaces plus a turning area for the two properties.

Kevin Reed, Head of Operations, Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust, gave a short presentation on their proposal to re-site the HQ now that their joint role with Wiltshire Police has finished. They had looked at 4 potential sites as they needed to be within 7 miles of Devizes in order to respond to incidents anywhere in Wiltshire within 11 minutes. The site at Outmarsh Farm, Semington, is the preferred site. The proposed site is to the south of the old railway line which is currently a green field site, but any development would be landscaped and would take into consideration its rural position and would harmonise with the landscape and be environmentally friendly. The actual building would be no more than 15,000 sq metres in footage and would not be above two storeys. The actual design had not yet been decided as they wished to consider the opinions gathered from the public consultation.

Operationally, to minimise impact on local residents, there would be no fly zones over Bowerhill, Semington, Berryfield and the southern part of Melksham, unless there was a response to an incident in these areas. There would be only one aircraft operated from the site for 19 hours a day, 365 days a year. On average they would probably be tasking 2 or 3 incidents per 19 hour period.

With regard to the residents of Semington and increased traffic through the village, the intention is to possibly move the bus gate by the Police Station further south to facilitate access for staff and visitors and to reduce the impact on residents. The overall aim of the proposal is to re-house the operation and the charity staff and to have a better facility for the public to visit. The public facility would enable the Air

Ambulance to get much more involved in education and preventative work, such as first aid and road safety for children.

Cllr. Carter felt that the proposal was an excellent idea and would be a great asset to the Melksham area. Cllr. Baines concurred; adding that despite initial concern that this proposal could conflict with the objectives of the plans for the canal development it was noted that this was not the case and that the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust had written in support of the plans to relocate the Air Ambulance HQ to Outmarsh Farm. He queried the noise levels with regard to any servicing work of the helicopter.

Mr. Reed replied that after servicing the helicopter would need to carry out a ground run out, but that this would only take place in daylight hours and normally would only last for 4/5 minutes, the same amount of time as normal take off.

Cllr. Brindle queried the access to the site and asked if consideration could be given to reducing the issue of speeding traffic over the canal bridge by moving the bus gates even further south. Mr. Reed stated that all access and highways issues would be dependent upon the planners, and that the existing entrance would need to be enhanced to facilitate the delivery of aviation fuel by artic vehicles. He hoped that outline planning would be submitted during October, with full planning being approved for work to commence late spring or early summer 2016.

Cllr Glover queried whether the fuel would be stored underground. Mr. Reed replied that fuel storage would most likely take the form of above ground double bonded fuel tanks, any run offs would go into septic tanks before entering the storm drains.

The council reconvened.

204/15 **Planning Applications:** The Council considered the following applications and made the following comments, bringing forward agenda item 4b:

a) 15/07896/FUL – Land south of, 89 Corsham Road, Whitley, Wiltshire. SN12 8QF.

Demolish existing outbuilding and erect a New Dwelling (Outline application to determine access only). Applicant: Mr. David Harris

Comments: *The Council have no objections.*

b) 15/07416/FUL – 2, Lysander Road, Bowerhill, Melksham, Wiltshire. SN12 6SP.

Removing the existing 17.5m high monopole housing 3no. antennas and replace with 20m high monopole housing 6no. new antennas, 6no. Remote radio Heads and 3no. 0.3m diameter dishes, together with installing equipment within the existing equipment cabin. Applicant: Vodafone Limited

Comments: *The Council have no objections.*

c) 15/08056/PNCOU – Holding No 45/176/0231, land Off Shaw Hill, Oaks Farm, Shaw, Melksham, Wiltshire. Notification of Prior Approval – Change of use of agricultural building to two dwellings. Applicant: Mr. D. Geddes

Comments: *The Council have no objections,*

205/15 **Update on Application 14/11295/REM – Former George Ward Site:**

a) Correspondence concerning Playing Fields and Changing Rooms: The Committee noted correspondence from Wiltshire Council which indicated that the

rugby pitches and facilities off Dunch Lane were not likely to now be built and remain on the plans as to remove them would require a new planning application. It was questioned what would happen to the S106 funding if this did not happen. The Clerk reported that she has repeatedly queried with Wiltshire Council the S106 spend for this development and has received no response. It was suggested that recreational facilities, such as a MUGA should be provided for this development, as all other facilities are on the opposite side of Melksham, and that any spend of S106 funds should be directly related to development of this site. **Recommended:** 1. A global e-mail to be sent to all parties involved in the S106 Agreement for this site, querying the intention of the S106 spend, informing that if a response is not received that the Council, following proper procedure, will refer the matter to the Ombudsman. 2. This e-mail to be copied to Carlton Brand and Jane Scott.

- b) Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Wednesday 23rd September 2015:** It was noted that this planning application will be considered by the Strategic Planning Committee on Wednesday 23rd September 2015. Cllr Carter offered to attend to represent the Council.

206/15 **Planning Enforcement:** A Planning Enforcement Officer had been to look at the trees at Rosemary Way/Snarlton Lane and reported that some were dead and some were dying. The officer had corresponded saying that it could take some time to get replacement trees planted. **Recommended:** The Council to chase this by the end of October to ensure that new trees are put in during the optimum planting season.

207/15 **Comments to Recent Public Consultations:**

- a) Air Ambulance Consultation – Site at Outmarsh Farm:** **Recommended:** The Council responds to the consultation with a letter of support. This letter to be copied to Wiltshire Council and Semington Parish Council.
- b) British Solar Farm Renewables – Solar Farm at Melksham Road.**
Recommended: The Council make no comment as this is a non parish application.

208/15 **Revised SHLAA Sites Map for Melksham & Bowerhill:** The Committee noted that the new map showed 3 additional sites, two of which, Site 3478 and Site 3479, had been suggested by the Parish Council as the next logical areas for development. Previous maps had been accompanied by a detailed breakdown of each site listing planning capacity, usable areas and suggested densities, and it was considered that it would be useful to obtain this information for the new sites.

209/15 **Melksham Neighbourhood Plan – Housing Task Group:**

- a) Update from First Meeting:** The first meeting had gone well with the Tasking Group testing a trial scoring exercise for determining the suitability of potential future development sites. The test was carried out on a favourable site and an unfavourable site and the findings agreed with previous decisions. It was noted that this test took away decisions based on emotions and general opinion and focused on quantifiable criteria. It was identified that there was scope for expanding the scoring system with additional criteria; The Tasking Group will use the modified criteria on some more sites to test the scoring mechanism.
- b) Strategic Growth for the Designated Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Area:** The Housing Task Group had requested that the Parish Council consider where

they would prefer to see strategic growth in the Neighbourhood Plan Area in accordance with the principles of the Core Strategy.

- The Committee considered it was vitally important to support the views of parishioners by ensuring that the individuality of all the villages within the Parish were maintained by ensuring that coalescence was not permitted.
- Development north of Melksham to facilitate an Eastern Bypass would be the next logical area for development.
- Development to the South of the Town is not an option as this would create coalescence with Bowerhill, and additionally would put the A350 through the middle of the centre of Melksham rather than on its boundary edge.
- The Canal development will enlarge Berryfield considerably, and again this has the A350 as its boundary. Further development here would not be an option.
- Development to the west of the railway is also not an option. There are no facilities on this side of the Town and it would effectively mean creating another village between the Town and the village of Shaw.
- Expansion to the east of Bowerhill could be a possibility, providing that this is not in the flight path of the Air Ambulance should it be re-sited to Outmarsh Farm.

Cllr. Coombes left the meeting at 8.15pm.

Recommended: *The Parish Council inform the Housing Task Group that “Development north of Melksham to facilitate an Eastern Bypass would be the next logical area for development”.*

- 210/15 **Government Consultation on “Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of 14th Round Onshore Oil and Gas Licence Applications:**
- a) **Wiltshire Council Briefing Note:** The Committee noted this.
 - b) **SLCC News Article on Government Intervention of Fracking Decisions:** The Committee noted this.
 - c) **Consultation on “Block ST95”:** The Committee noted that areas of Melksham Without are within a 10km potential zone of impact of potential Fracking site ST95. Cllr Brindle raised concerns over how large oil tankers would access such a rural site. Additionally this site was through a spring line that supplied the Melksham Area and Fracking could disturb the aqua flows. **Recommended:** *The Council respond to the consultation stating that they are against Fracking on Site ST95 due to concerns over the threat to the water supply to the Melksham Area. Cllrs. Carter and Glover wished to have their vote against this recommendation recorded.*

- 211/15 **Government Planning Reform Proposals and High Court Judgement on Threshold for Affordable Housing:** The Committee noted these reports.

Meeting closed at 8.27pm

Chairman, 14th September, 2015