

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held
on Monday 6 April 2020 at 7.00pm**

**(DUE TO THE ON-GOING COVID 19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS THIS MEETING
WAS HELD REMOTELY IN ORDER TO INFORM THE CLERK/OFFICERS TO ACT
UNDER DELEGATED POWERS)**

Present: Councillors Richard Wood (Council & Committee Chair), John Glover (Council Vice Chair), Alan Baines (Committee Vice-Chair) and David Pafford

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Lorraine McRandle (Parish Officer)

494/19 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Pile who unfortunately could not access the meeting remotely.

Councillor Chivers who had no IT capabilities to join the meeting.

No communication had been received from Councillor Coombes.

Reasons for absence were noted and approved.

495/19 Declarations of Interest

a) To receive Declarations of Interest

Councillor R Wood declared a non pecuniary interest in planning application 20/01938/OUT as a resident of Semington Road.

**b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received
by the Clerk and not previously considered.**

None.

**c) To note standing Dispensations relating to planning
applications**

None.

20/01463/FUL: 45B Westlands Lane, Beanacre. Change of use from agricultural paddock to domestic garden. Applicant Mr Jason Hughes

Comment: No objection.

20/01539/FUL: Woolmore Farm Buildings. Redevelopment of redundant Farm buildings to provide 2,144 m² B1 Employment space, involving change of use of 296m² of existing agricultural buildings, plus 1848m² of new build offices, together with demolition, construction of a new access with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works. Applicant Mr John McQueen

Comments: Whilst welcoming this application, Members asked the footpath link is continued to housing developments to the north of this site and brought up to a standard as originally proposed under the application for the neighbouring 450 dwellings development (14/10461/OUT, 14/06938/OUT and 18/04644/REM apply).

Members due to highway safety concerns asked for a no right turn for vehicles existing this site, as they would be crossing the busy A365 with vehicles accelerating after negotiating a roundabout.

It was agreed to copy the comments on the footpath to Whitehorse Federation and the Headteacher of Melksham Oak

20/01709/FUL: Roundponds Solar Park, Roundponds Farm, Shurnhold. Retention of existing container. Applicant Warren Cann

Comment: No objection.

20/01878/LBC: Beanacre Manor, Beanacre Road, Beanacre Reinstatement of external tank base removed following a loss of kerosene heating oil – Amendment to 19/08829/LBC. Applicant Mr Thomas Marker

Comment: No objection

20/01938/OUT: Outline planning permission for up to 155 dwellings with informal and formal open space, including allotments, associated landscaping and vehicular and pedestrian accesses off Semington Road. All matters reserved except for principal means of access. Applicant Hollins Strategic Land LLP (comments by 8 May 2020)

Comment: Members **OBJECT** to this application on the following grounds:

- Outside the settlement boundary.
- Melksham has already exceeded its housing requirement up to 2026.
- Wiltshire Council have recently adopted the Housing Site Allocation Plan with no recommendation for housing in Melksham, given it has met its housing requirement up to 2026.
- As approval has recently been given for a new ring road in Chippenham this would release additional housing land in the Chippenham Housing Market (HMA), which includes Melksham therefore, it would be hard to argue that Melksham needs to take any additional housing proposed.
- The impact this development will have on the already stretched medical/education provision within the town.
- The site is remote and unsustainable, with limited access to local schools and facilities.
- Overdevelopment of the site, when considering the recent Bellway development next to this site. This development would double the size of Berryfield, which is classed as a small village in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- Lack of facilities proposed for the site.
- This site is more suitable for the expansion of Hampton Park West Industrial park adjacent to this site.

- The impact on local wildlife. This site is known to be a habitat for Great Crested Newts and bats.
- The impact this development will have on the ecology of the area, particularly to the hedge which forms the line of the former Wilts & Berks Canal. If this application were to go ahead any houses should be set well back from the former line of the canal, in order to protect this hedge.

The bund of the canal should also be made a feature of this development if it were to go ahead.

- The impact this development will have on the environment/climate, as most residents would have to rely on their own vehicles to access facilities due to the remoteness of this site.
- The proximity of the adjacent sewerage works to this site and the potential impact this may have on new residents regarding noxious smells.
- The impact this development will have on the adjacent sewerage works in reducing the land available to extend their site, in order to cope with a future increase in demand.
- Whilst noting the plans are outline and therefore indicative, Plot 11 would appear to have no amenity space to the rear and is close to existing neighbouring properties.

Highway Safety Concerns

- Access to nearest schools ie Aloeric, Bowerhill Primary, St George's Primary, Semington and Melksham Oak are via the extremely busy A350. There have already been cases where pedestrians, including children have nearly been knocked over whilst using the crossing on the A350 from Berryfield, due to drivers not stopping in time for a red light.
- If students attend St George's Primary, Semington, drivers may be tempted to use the bus gate on

Semington Road as a short cut, rather than the A350.

- The access to the site is very narrow, which could result in visibility problems for those exiting the site.
- The proposed access will also be shared with Wessex Water in order to access their facility adjacent to the site, which could cause conflict with larger vehicles and those accessing the development.
- Large vehicles for the sewerage works, if this application were to go ahead, may decide to access their site north of Berryfield, off the A350, thereby having to negotiate traffic calming measures installed along Semington Road.
- Proposed access for pedestrians/cyclists into Shails Lane. This is a private lane (and not a Public Right of Way) and would require the agreement of the landowners.

Concern was raised that anyone using this lane would try to cross the busy A350 to access Bowerhill. Following a fatality not long after this road was opened, the Coroner recommended the access at the bottom of Shails Lane be blocked off. Pedestrians would also try to use this lane as a short cut to get to Semington from the development

Other concerns

- Whilst community allotments are proposed, the Parish Council already have 76 allotments located in Berryfield, with only one person on the waiting list and would prefer to see other community benefits.
- No indication the developers are making a contribution to the Wilts & Berks Canal Restoration Project or to community facilities, such as enhancing the village hall or providing a local shop.
- It is understood residents of the adjacent Bellway development (Bowood View) did not receive leaflets on proposals for this site as part of the public engagement process.

If Wiltshire Council are minded to approve this application, the Council would wish to be a signatory on any Section 106 agreement and involved in discussions on community benefit such as:

- Contributions to educational and medical facilities within Melksham area.
- Provision of a footbridge across the A350 from Berryfield.
- Maintenance contribution towards the new Berryfield Village Hall adjacent to this site.
- The provision of circular footpaths within the development.
- Equipped play areas and LEAPs (The Council would welcome discussions on who would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of these facilities)
- Public art.
- Provision of a community shop.
- Provision of equipment to accommodate not just young children, but teenagers, such as a teen shelter, gym equipment and MUGA. The area currently allocated to allotments would be an ideal location for these facilities.

The Council would also like to see the following:

- Bungalows provided and located near to the entrance to the site, as it is understood there is a need for these within the area, as well as additional footways installed or public rights of way to provide better linkages to the rest of the community and facilities, such as local schools including a potential primary school at Pathfinder Way.
- The provision of charging points on the development.
- The provision of additional landscaping and buffer to the south east of the site in order to protect the rural nature of Shails Lane and shield potential housing from the industrial site at Hampton Park.
- Social housing to be tenant blind.

- If shared surfaces within the scheme are proposed that different materials are used in order to delineated footpaths from road surfaces.

If the current public health situation changes, the Parish Council would like to revisit this application in order to have an opportunity to discuss this application with residents.

20/01941:FUL: 6a Padfield Gardens. Erection of single storey outbuilding within rear garden of the main house. The proposed building is to contain a small dance/exercise studio and shower room. Applicant Mr Daniel Tucker

Comment: Whilst having no objection to this application, the Council would like to see a condition placed on any planning approval, that this building cannot be used at a separate dwelling in the future.

497/19 Neighbourhood Plan

a) To note the draft minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 26 February 2020

The Neighbourhood Plan minutes of 26 February 2020 would be available for circulation shortly.

b) To consider any matters arising from the minutes

Update provided below from the Clerk.

c) To receive update on progress on the Neighbourhood Plan & Regulation 14 from the Clerk

The Clerk explained that the draft plan was now finished following various updates and as of today had been approved by the Steering Group via email communication.

The site allocation changed from Whitley Farm to Middle Farm with circa 18 dwellings being suggested. However, if Savills were to review their proposals, their site could be included in the plan, at a later date.

An additional request to invoice £1,500 had been presented by Place Studio for work undertaken, which was outside the grant

funding received from Locality and therefore, would have to be paid for jointly by both Councils.

The Clerk asked if Members were happy to go ahead with consultation after Easter as it had been put on hold given the current public health crisis. This question had been asked of Steering Group members with a unanimous response requesting that the consultation goes ahead.

The Clerk had also asked if a presentation on the plan was still required prior to it being approved by the town and parish council, however, the feeling of the Steering Group members and a Town Council remote Planning meeting earlier that day, was that members were happy to approve the draft plan, without the need for a presentation.

The Clerk explained it was originally intended to launch the consultation in Melksham News, but given the current public health crisis this will not be able to take place, however, leaflets would be produced providing an explanation of why the consultation was taking place given current circumstances.

Recommendation:

- To go ahead with public consultation after Easter with a leaflet drop to residents.
- To pay the Council's contribution of the £1500 invoice presented by Place Studio for additional work to the plan.
- That no presentation is made to both councils to approve of the plan prior to the Regulation 14 consultation.

498/19

S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)

a) To note update on ongoing and new s106 Agreements

i) To receive update from Public Art Officer

The Clerk had circulated information to Members on public art projects within the parish, following an update from Meril Morgan, Public Arts Officer, Wiltshire Council who was due to retire shortly.

Land East of Semington Road – Bowood View

Trigger has not yet been reached, however Bellway have paid 10% of their £45,000 public art contribution to enable public art consultants/project management to be recruited to start work with the community. A draft project manager brief is awaiting approval, but once agreed one will be appointed.

It was noted that Bellway also had a planning condition to include interpretation of archaeology of this site.

Land South of Western Way – Pathfinder Way

Details of artwork have been submitted to Wiltshire Council for discharge and hopefully after a few minor issues have been addressed, planning conditions would be discharged soon.

Land North of Sandridge Road

Art sessions had taken place with the artist and Forest & Sandrige primary school pupils.

There had been proposals for wooden sculptures for this site. It was agreed that Officers would find out the latest situation from the artist.

Land at Semington Road, Berryfield for 155 dwellings

Requested £45,000 (£300 per dwelling).

Suggested the developer produce a public art plan and manage the delivery of the public art, with engagement with the parish council and local representatives.

ii) To receive update on status of land identified as possible site for East of Melksham Community Centre

The Clerk reported there was no update, but would chase this up.

iii) To receive update on developer communication regarding Berryfield Village Hall

Members were informed following a recent meeting, unfortunately the Planning Officer did not like the plans presented. The requests made had been referred back to the parish council's Cost Consultant to seek their view on the impact of the construction costs of the hall.

b) To consider any new S106 queries

There were no new S106 queries.

c) To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers

The Clerk stated she had made no S106 decisions under delegated powers to report.

d) To note any contact with developers

The Clerk explained Gleesons had been in touch regarding a proposed development and she would be in touch with them once there was more time available, given she was currently involved in the community response to the current Covid 19 outbreak.

i) To confirm arrangements for virtual meetings with developers.

The Clerk would be in touch with Members to discuss arrangements once a meeting has been arranged.

The meeting finished at 8.01pm

Chair:.....

Approved at Full Council Meeting
held 27 July 2020