

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council  
held on Monday 14 August 2023 at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices  
(First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place,  
Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

**Present:** John Glover (Chair of Council); Richard Wood (Chair of Planning); Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning); Mark Harris and Peter Richardson

**Officer:** Teresa Strange, Clerk & Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

**In attendance:** Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill) and 10 members of public

**Via Zoom:** 2 members of public

**141/23 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**

Councillor Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting advising those present of the fire evacuation procedures and recording and publication of the meeting on YouTube.

**142/23 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Pafford who was on holiday and Councillor Chivers who was attending a medical appointment.

**Resolved:** To approve and accept the reasons for apology.

**143/23 Declarations of Interest**

**a) To receive Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Richardson, as a member of Shaw & Whitley Community Hub, declared an interest in the following revised plans:

PL/2023/04210 & PL/2023/04523 relating to the Pear Tree Inn, Top Lane, Whitley and proposed community village shop, and

PL/2023/03257: 89 Corsham Road as the applicant was known to him and had spoken to them regarding their proposals, as well as neighbours at 88 Corsham Road.

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

None received.

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

To note the Parish Council, have a dispensation lodged with Wiltshire Council dealing with Section 106 agreements relating to planning applications within the parish.

**144/23 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential Nature**

**Resolved:** For agenda item 11(a)(iii) to be held in closed session as it related to ongoing site selection work for the Neighbourhood Plan and related contact with developers.

**145/23 Public Participation**

Standing Orders were suspended.

**Planning Enforcement on Newall Road:**

The Chair of Pathfinder Place Residents Association was in attendance to speak to concerns of a potential business being run from a house on the estate, involving large vehicles often arriving during the night and sometimes blocking driveways. Following complaints, the Managing Agents had sent a letter reminding residents of the rules regarding commercial vehicles on the estate.

**52e Chapel Lane planning application:**

Several residents in the vicinity of Chapel Lane, Beanacre were in attendance to speak to planning application PL/2023/0588 and proposals for 3 dwellings on land to the rear of 52e Chapel Lane, raising the following concerns:

- Increased use of the single-track lane, which is a bridleway, there is no space for visitor parking on the lane.
- There is nowhere for vehicles to turn around, often vehicles use the top North side of the site to turn around or use driveways.
- Larger vehicles, such as sewerage trucks have to back out down the lane and onto the A350, or alternatively stop traffic on the A350 to reverse in. Any construction vehicles will also struggle accessing the lane.
- The site often floods, (photographs available).
- Concerns around drainage and increase in water table. Currently surface water runs into the back of properties. There is no slow soakage on the fields, with the drainage report from the applicant confirming this. The proposed development will reduce the area for surface water 'soakaway'.
- At least two residents have covenants within their house deeds for

rights of access onto the site for the purposes of maintenance, such as drainage. They have not been approached by the applicant to discuss proposals, noting there does not appear to be anything in the plans which suggest there will be continued access to the rear of their properties.

- Due to increased traffic on the A350 following the HGV restrictions on Cleveland Bridge in Bath, this can result in delays in exiting/accessing the lane; with it already taking several minutes to exit onto the A350
- Drawings suggest the bell mouth of the entrance to Chapel Lane is in excess of 12m wide, however, it is just over 4.5m wide.
- There are a few inaccuracies in the application form, with the applicant ticking no to several statements, which are untrue:
  - The site is within 20 metres of a water course, with a stream running to the rear of Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane and under the lane.
  - The site can be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridleway or other public land, as it is accessed via a bridleway.
  - The site is within an area known to flood, with flooding having occurred as recently as January this year in Westlands Lane and on the A350. There is a storm drain which runs along Chapel Lane and there is no mention of this in the plan.
- There are several inaccuracies within the Planning Statement, such as stating there are two footways either side of the road between Melksham and Beanacre, which is not the case.
- The removal of hedgerow and the loss of established habitat.
- Loss of amenity and privacy for existing residents.
- The number of bedrooms is not specified, therefore, difficult to know how large the dwellings will be.
- There is already enough new housing in Melksham.
- Impact on landscape and character.
- Understand site is designated farmland and a hay crop taken which is used for animal feed
- Increase in the number of bins for collection, therefore reducing the sight line for people exiting the lane. People often have to step onto the busy A350 road to avoid them at present.

**Footpath to rear of Melksham Oak School timescales:**

Wiltshire Councillor Holder confirmed the dates previously provided for the construction of the footpath to the rear of Melksham Oak School could now be put in the public domain. See Minute 148/23(a)(i) for details

**Appeal – Land south of Western Way**

With regard to the Appeal for Land South of Western Way (PL/2022/08504), Wiltshire Councillor Holder noted since the application was submitted, Maitland Place has now been built and as the access to the site would be through Maitland Place, this will have a huge impact on

residents. Proposals will require the recently installed pavement being dug up and a designated walkway around the estate being removed, which he felt was against the original planning permission. There was a concern that this would be the access to the development for some 210 dwellings and 70 bed care homes and this was being investigated and a site visit arranged with the Cabinet Member for Planning later in week to consider if these concerns could form part of the submission to the hearing.

The Hearing will commence on 24 October, with 5 days set aside for the hearing. Councillor Holder hoped to attend and state objections to the application. Pathfinder Place residents were aware of the Appeal hearing dates and it was hoped some will attend. It is understood that in order to register to speak you need to be in attendance on the first day.

Councillor Glover pointed out that accessing Maitland Place from Pathfinder Way towards Bowerhill requires using a right filter lane. However, due to the high level of traffic on Pathfinder Way, it may be difficult for vehicles to make the turn. A solution, if necessary in the future, would be to implement a 'No Right' turn.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

**146/23 To consider the following new Planning Applications:**

**[PL/2023/01205](#)**: 29 Maitland Place, Bowerhill. Self contained garden outbuilding.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2023/06374](#)**: Raynescroft, 68C Shaw Hill, Shaw. Detached Garage with a Room Above.

**Comments:** Whilst having no objection, Members seek a condition on any planning consent, that the room above the garage is 'tied' to the house and cannot be converted into a separate dwelling.

Members noted building works appear to have already started.

**[PL/2023/06263](#)**: 71G School Lane, Shaw, Melksham. External timber cladding and raised roof to accommodate new roof build up.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2023/06144](#)**: Sandridge Lodge, Brick Hill, Bromham (Householder application). Proposed porch and BBQ shelter.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2023/06177](#):** Sandridge Lodge, Brick Hill, Bromham (Work to Listed Building). Proposed porch and BBQ shelter.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2023/05883](#):** Land to the rear of 52e, Chapel Lane, Beanacre. Erection of three dwellings, with access, parking, and associated works, including landscaping (Outline application with all matters reserved – Resubmission of PL/2022/06389).

**Comments:** The Parish Council object to this planning application for the following reasons:

- The site is outside the settlement boundary and is in the village of Beanacre, which is classed as a “Small Village” in the Core Strategy, as well as the draft Local Plan. The site therefore conflicts with Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy, as it is outside the defined limits of development and has not been brought forward through the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan adopted in February 2020, which confirms there is no current housing requirement for Melksham in the period 2006 -2026, in fact it has exceeded the current requirement in the Core Strategy. It has not been allocated in the draft Local Plan or the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.
- Attention is drawn to Policy 6 of the current made Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#1) - Housing in Defined Settlements: ‘development at the small villages of Beanacre and Berryfield, will be limited to infill within the existing built area or, where it is appropriate to provide a rural exception site for affordable housing to meet identified local needs, outside but well connected to the built area.’

This development cannot be classed as ‘infill’, given the open countryside to the rear of the site. The site is not a Rural Exception site and there is no reference to any affordable housing. There is no mention how many bedrooms will be provided therefore, it is difficult to ascertain how these dwellings will meet the needs of local people and with only 3 dwellings, it will not meet the Core Strategy policy criteria to provide affordable housing. There is a recent Housing Needs Assessment for the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area as part of the evidence base for the reviewed plan (NHP#2) here:

<https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/np2-evidence-base>

- Highway Safety Concerns. The site is located on a narrow single-track lane. Vehicles at present have no facility to turn around to exit Chapel Lane without impinging on someone else's land and this application will exacerbate the situation. Members also noted the comments of residents that vehicles often have to back out onto the A350 or stop traffic on the A350 in order to reverse into the Lane and that the drawing is incorrect, showing the 'bellmouth' to the Lane being some 12m wide.

The exit/entrance to Chapel Lane is currently a hazard. There is anecdotal evidence that vehicles on the A350 run into the rear of vehicles waiting to turn into Westlands Lane, therefore the same can be said for vehicles that will be waiting to turn into Chapel Lane, particularly those travelling from the North.

The exit off Chapel Lane is not naturally at right angles to the carriageway and therefore from a highway point of view it would be undesirable to increase traffic from Chapel Lane onto the A350.

- The impact the proposed dwellings will have with regard to drainage in the area.

The area is known to have flooded previously, with follow up site visits by the Parish Council and the Wiltshire Council Drainage engineers taking place.

Attention is drawn to the application form where it states there has been no previous flooding. Whilst there may not have been incidences of flooding on the proposed development site, there have been incidences of flooding in the close vicinity and run off from the properties could exacerbate the situation.

Flooding has taken place as recently as January 2023 with properties in Westlands Lane and on the A350 experiencing internal property flooding.

Residents have provided photographs of water sitting on the development site and these will be submitted to Wiltshire Council.

There is a soakaway which runs to the rear of Westlands Lane and joins the stream near Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane and reappears to the rear of properties East of Beanacre. The gulley has been excavated to enable extra flow to the soakaway for improved surface water drainage.

There are various difficulties with drainage in the area and additional run off will need to be attenuated. There does not appear to be proposals to retain surface water, therefore there are drainage issues with this application, with a concern, given the lie of the land that surface water will drain towards existing properties.

Attention is drawn to Policy 3 of the current Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#1): 'Where development proposals are in areas with known surface water flooding issues, they should include appropriate mitigation and construction methods, including where appropriate, contributions towards wider catchment projects. Major development should include provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs), where appropriate, as part of the Natural Flood Management approach and wider Green Infrastructure networking.'

It was noted in the Flood Risk Analysis report undertaken to support the application, it refers to the impact on the new properties, however, it does not refer to any impact on existing properties.

- Whilst Wessex Water are currently undertaking a mains drainage scheme in Beanacre, this only includes Westlands Lane at present. It is understood there are no plans to provide mains drainage in Chapel Lane currently. Therefore, the proposed development will require septic tanks, with a significant possibility of pollution of surface water drainage from any private sewage system. The vehicles that empty septic tanks are large vehicles and they already have difficulty attending the existing properties in the area due to the access via Chapel Lane.
- There are no facilities in Beanacre, other than a church hall and play area. There is no shop for example and therefore for additional residents in Beanacre, access to public transport is important for it to be a sustainable development. There is only one bus service which travels through Beanacre, between Chippenham & Frome via Trowbridge (X34). However, there is no

evening service, with the last bus from both Chippenham and Frome leaving at 5.30pm and there is no Sunday service.

- The site has recently been assessed by AECOM as part of the site assessment process for NHP#2, and whilst not published as yet, please see an extract below:

‘Agricultural access from Chapel Lane may not support additional traffic movements and further consultation with the relevant Highways Authority will be critical’.

The site currently has agricultural access from Chapel Lane, a narrow rural track off the A350. This track may not be suitable to support additional traffic movements, or would require significant improvements outside of the site boundary. It is likely that existing boundary hedgerows would need to be partially removed and replanted to provide adequate visibility splays.

The site has a simple landform, however, it makes a positive contribution to the rural landscape and character of Beanacre and plays a key role in supporting the transition between the residential properties and the open countryside beyond to the North.

Development on this site will lead to the loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land.

The site is crossed by low level voltage overhead powerlines.

The site is not served by pedestrian access. It is not connected to a continuous pedestrian network’

Once the AECOM Site Assessment report is published, we will send a copy.

- Impact on the bridleway with Members supporting the comments of the Rights of Way Officer.

If Wiltshire Council are minded to approve this application, attention is drawn to the emerging Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#2), Melksham Design Code and draft Wiltshire Council Design Guide.



It was agreed to ask Councillor Phil Alford to call in this application and to keep residents informed of progress on the application.

**PL/2023/05863**: Beechfield House, Beanacre. Replacement of an aged and dilapidated sewage handling tank with the installation of a new grease trap, Bioficient 55 sewage treatment plant with twin final effluent pump chamber and associated interconnecting pipework and inspection chambers.

**Comments:** No objection.

**PL/2023/06480**: 26 Elm Close, Bowerhill. Single storey side extension and single storey rear extension to garage.

**Comments:** No objection.

**147/23 Revised Plans:** To comment on any revised plans on planning applications received within the required **timeframe (14 days)**:

**PL/2023/04210**: Pear Tree Inn, Top Lane, Whitley. Proposed Community Village Shop.

**Comments:** No objection.

**PL/2023/04523**: Pear Tree Inn, Top Lane, Whitley. 3 Fascia signs on proposed Community Village Shop.

**Comments:** No objection.

**PL/2023/03257**: 89 Corsham Road, Whitley. Proposed Side Extension.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow the applicant to speak to their application

The applicant updated Members on the revised plans and reasoning for the proposed layout.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

**Comments:** Whilst some of the comments raised previously have been addressed in the revised plans, the Parish Council are unable to support this application and reiterate previous comments ie:

- The proposed side extension is out of scale with the host property.
- Proposals are not sympathetic to the design, nor reflect features of the host property and therefore are

- incongruous.
- Impact on the streetscene.
  - Concern at the impact proposals will have on existing flooding experienced in the area and to adjacent properties.
  - Whilst the impact on 88 Corsham Road has been reduced somewhat with regard to loss of privacy, proposals are still in advance of the property and therefore will have an impact on the frontage aspect of the property.

Members highlighted that if proposals were for a single storey extension, this would be looked upon more favourably, as it would be less intrusive on both the host dwelling and surrounding area.

If Wiltshire Council are minded to approve this application, it is asked that a condition be placed on the application, that the extension cannot be sold as a separate dwelling in the future and remains ancillary to the host dwelling.

**148/23 Planning Enforcement:** To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

**a) 27 Newall Road, Bowerhill**

To note Planning Enforcement have been asked to investigate following concerns raised by residents of a potential business being run from a house on the estate, involving large trailer vehicles and car transporters often arriving during the night.

There were concerns of vehicles on the highway that were not taxed or insured and these had been highlighted to the Police, who had explained that they needed to see the cars being driven in order to take action.

The Managing Agents Remus had written to residents to remind them commercial vehicles were not allowed to be parked overnight on the estate.

The Chair of Pathfinder Way Residents Association stated the resident who had raised the concerns initially was happy to speak to the Council on this matter, if they wished. With the resident also contacting the social housing provider for the house concerned, but having made complaints in the last 6 months, no action has been taken.

Members felt the Council had done all they could in reporting to Planning Enforcement and the Police whom were making their own

investigations and therefore, the Council could only keep a watching brief on the situation.

- b) **19 The Beeches, Shaw.** To note Planning Enforcement have been asked to investigate.

Following concerns a wooden structure was being used as a hairdressers without planning permission at these premises, the concerns had been passed to Planning Enforcement to investigate.

**149/23 Planning Appeal Notification: PL/2022/08504: Land South of Western Way. Outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of up to 210 dwellings and 70 bed care home.**

Whilst noting an appeal had been lodged against Wiltshire Council's refusal of the above planning application, the Clerk asked if Members wished to make additional comments to those already submitted when considering the planning application, given the draft Local Plan and emerging Melksham Neighbourhood Plan#2, which had progressed since the previous comments were made.

Councillor Wood noted as Chair of the Planning Committee he would attend the Hearing to represent the Council.

Members made the following additional comments:

- The draft Local Plan had not allocated this site as a strategic site for development. The site has also been identified as a 'green wedge/gap' in the AECOM Green Gap and Green Wedge Assessment between Berryfield, Melksham and Bowerhill as part of evidence in the emerging Melksham Neighbourhood Plan#2: <https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/np2-evidence-base> The draft Local Plan was due for consultation at Regulation 19 stage in the Autumn; the revised Melksham Neighbourhood Plan was due for consultation at Regulation 14 stage in the Autumn too.
- As access to the site is proposed via the adjacent new housing development, which is nearing completion, there is concern at the impact increased traffic will have on Maitland Place, which has not been designed for additional traffic.

**Resolved:** To forward the Council's previous comments and to add the above comments and to provide an update on site selection in Neighbourhood plan (NHP#2) once approved.

If the application is approved at Appeal, the applicant's attention be drawn to both the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (NHP#2) and Design Code.

**150/23 Current planning applications: Standing item for issues/queries**

arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

**a) Land West of Semington Road - Application for 53 dwellings (PL/2022/08155 Outline)**

The Clerk confirmed the 'Call in' on this application had been lodged by Councillor Seed verbally, however, not recorded on the Planning Portal; this was being followed up.

**b) Land West of Semington Road - Appeal site to rear of Townsend Farm for 50 dwellings (PL/2023/00808 Reserved Matters).**

Members noted the 'Call in Request' had been removed as a safe walking route to the proposed new school at Pathfinder Place had been addressed through the current s106 wording.

**c) Blackmore Farm (Planning Application PL/2023/01949) – Outline permission with some matters reserved for demolition of agricultural outbuildings and development of up to 650 dwellings; land for primary school; land for mixed use**

The Clerk asked as an allocation of 425 dwellings at Blackmore Farm had been made in the draft Local Plan, whether Members wished to submit any additional comments to reflect the allocation.

The Clerk also noted Highways had also submitted a substantial response to the application, which had recently been uploaded to the Planning Portal, and asked if Members wished to review this at the next Planning Committee meeting.

**Resolved:** To consider additional comments to proposals at the next Planning Committee meeting on 4 September and to submit a holding request in the meantime to Wiltshire Council stating the Parish Council wished to re-evaluate previous comments to proposals, in light of the allocation in the Local Plan and comments submitted by Highways.

**d) Land at Verbena Court (Planning Application No PL/2023/03797): Modification of Planning Obligation Address: Land at Verbena Court, Melksham. Application to modify obligations contained within the S106 agreement relating to marketing land within the Local Centre pursuant to consented outline planning permission 04/01895/OUTES.**

The Clerk explained that the Melksham Independent News were still pursuing with Wiltshire Council for evidence that the Parish Council had been consulted on the modification to the original S106, as Wiltshire Council were adamant the Parish Council had been informed. Wiltshire Council had produced the minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on 15 April 2013 as evidence, which noted the school's

agent explaining proposals for the new Forest & Sandridge School and that a change may happen.

The Clerk felt this did not show Wiltshire Council had consulted the Parish Council, just that someone from Pegasus, in a meeting with the Salisbury Diocese had stated a change may happen. It remained that the Parish Council had only been made aware after it had happened, by a developer later in the year.

Any future plans of the Town Council submitting a planning application for a community centre East of Melksham were still not clear.

Councillor Baines noted that at the time, the residents' consultation leaflet and the initial developer plan did say there would be a community facility on this site. Therefore, the developer consortium had been conscious they were building a significant number of dwellings which would require facilities to go with them, which was the basis of how the proposal was sold to the Parish Council and was understood to be in the S106 Agreement.

## **151/23 Planning Policy**

### **a) Neighbourhood Planning**

#### **i) To note minutes and confidential notes from Steering Group meetings held on 7 June and 26 July**

Members noted the minutes and confidential notes of the Steering Group meetings held on 7 June and 26 July.

#### **ii) Update on the Neighbourhood Plan Review and to consider any time critical requests before the next Steering Group meeting.**

The Clerk informed the meeting the Steering Group had been successful in receiving a £560 grant from Locality (the maximum still available to draw down from the £18,000 fund). The Technical Support applications for the Plan Health Check and Car Park Audits were looking favourable as they progressed.

#### **iii) Update on Neighbourhood Plan site selection.**

This item was held in closed session.

The Clerk provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 26 July, explaining the sites had all been approved in principle, it was just the final details that were required for the approval of the Plan at the next meeting, that had been scheduled for Wednesday 6 September to give chance for the outstanding sites information to be investigated with stakeholders.

**b) Wiltshire Council's Design Guide. To note response sent in reply to the consultation and useful things to note when considering applications**

Members thanked the Clerk for the excellent response to the Design Guide consultation.

**c) Feedback on meeting with NHS on 30 June 2023**

The Clerk explained that the NHS had not commented on the proposals for the 650 dwellings at Blackmore Farm and had followed this up locally with a resulting meeting with the Senior Estates Manager BSW NHS (Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire) Integrated Care Board (ICB) at the end of June. The NHS representative explained that there had been a gap in their Estates team relating to planning responses, but now this had been resolved. Going forward, the NHS would be commenting on planning applications and had recently submitted comments on this development, as well as proposals for 210 dwellings and a 70-bed care home on Land South of Western Way (PL/2022/08504). The Clerk had also made them aware of proposals for 3 care homes in Melksham, in order they could provide a response, as well as the relevant person at Wiltshire Council to discuss S106 contributions.

**d) Local Plan. To note Factsheet for Large Villages and Local Service Centres**

Members noted the above document which gave the breakdown of the numbers for the housing allocation for Shaw & Whitley.

**152/23 Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence**

The Committee had been made aware following an advert in the Melksham News that Broughton Transport Solutions had applied to use Hangar 7, Lancaster Road, Bowerhill as an operating centre for 15 goods vehicles and 30 trailers, which appeared to be the same application applied for earlier in the year, to which the Parish Council had provided a response.

**Resolved:** To write to the Traffic Commissioner repeating the previous response, that the Parish Council welcome this operator who is doing the right thing in applying for the correct licence and highlighting the Council's concern at other operators not adhering to the regulations.

**153/23 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)**

**a) To note update on ongoing and new S106 Agreements**

**i) Hunters Wood/The Acorns:**

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder, having provided the timeline for the construction of the footpath to the rear of Melksham Oak School at a previous meeting, confirmed the timeline for the project was now in the public domain and could be included within the minutes:

### **July activity**

- Preliminary design (including ecology assessment and implications for lighting)
- Assessment and response to Biodiversity Net Gain requirements (BNG)
- Preparation of documents to accompany planning application.

### **August 23**

- Submit planning application

### **September/October 23**

- Planning application determined

### **October 23**

- Commission detailed design

### **December – February 24**

- Contractor lead-in period

### **March – May 24**

- Construction period

## **ii) Pathfinder Place:**

The Clerk informed the meeting that the draft land transfer for the Davey play area had just been received and therefore suggested having an Asset Management Meeting after the Planning Meeting on 4 September to review the lease; and there were several other leases and asset management items to be considered.

Following a resident of Maitland Place contacting the Council concerned a crossing was being installed on a blind corner on Maitland Place, which experienced speeding traffic, investigations had been undertaken, with Wiltshire Council confirming the recent works related to 'build outs'.

The Highway Engineer had stated, following a site visit, "due to the location of the parking bays opposite housing, and the current storm drainage layout, it was deemed the 'build out' would be installed 'as per drawing'. As the road is a 20mph, road traffic

should not be travelling in excess, the 'build out' will also act as a 'traffic calmer', slowing traffic enough for possible pedestrians looking to cross on the corner as the footway indicates."

Members noted the 'build outs' would slow traffic down, which was one of the concerns of the resident, the Section 38 Officers at Wiltshire Council would also deal with the adoption of the highway in due course and make sure it was completed in line with the plans submitted.

**iii) Buckley Gardens (144 dwellings on Semington Road)**

No update.

**d) To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers**

None.

**c) Contact with developers**

**i) To note feedback on meeting with DPP Planning held on 9 August regarding proposed new primary school at Pathfinder Way and to consider a formal response to the pre application consultation (under delegated powers)**

In line with Council policy, the notes of the meeting held on 9 August are included below:

Those in attendance included from the Parish Council: Councillors Richard Wood, Alan Baines, John Glover, Mark Harris, Peter Richardson, Robert Shea-Simonds and the Parish Officer. Also in attendance were Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill), Councillor Sue Mortimer, Melksham Town Council and the Town Clerk. Osian Roberts, Associate Director, DPP Planning and Katie Sapsed, Senior Architect, AWW were also present.

Proposals included:

- 1 Form Entry School\* (210 places)
- SEND Provision (20 places)
- Nursery (30 places)
- 2 storey with lift
- 2 formal play pitches & MUGA
- Cycle store
- Library
- Science & DT Space
- 1 electric car charging point (with option for more if school expanded to 2FE)
- Carbon neutral design



- Energy/Heating provided via heat source pumps and solar (75% roof coverage) with orientation of building at optimum position ie East/West.

(\*Consent for only 1FE primary school as part of planning application 16/01123/OUT (Pathfinder Place), with the point of access to the site established at Reserved Matters (18/04477/REM) and therefore cannot be changed)

AWW have been appointed by ISG (which DPP forms part of) and Wiltshire Council to develop designs for the school.

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder informed the meeting unfortunately, Anthony Dixon, Project Manager for the Scheme and Clara Davis, Head of School Place Commissioning, School Buildings & Places Team were unable to attend the meeting and therefore, if there were other questions outside design/planning issues, these would need to be fed back to them.

Whilst only a single form entry school is proposed, there is scope to expand the school to the rear and provide additional car parking to the front of the building to accommodate a 2 FE School.

Pre app discussions have taken place with Wiltshire Council with feedback already from Drainage, however, awaiting comments from Highways.

Local residents had been consulted with both positive and negative feedback, with the main concern being parking. These comments, along with those of the Parish Council will be included in a Community Engagement document, as part of the planning application.

The design includes various aspects including colourful cladding panels, and once a Trust has been appointed, they will be able to select the colours to match their branding.

A small part of the site (0.4ha) could be handed back to Taylor Wimpey, if Wiltshire Council do not extend the school to 2FE, within 10 years from the Land Transfer being signed, which has yet to take place.

The car park will provide 34 spaces (17 for staff, 4 visitors, 11 for 'primary' parents and 2 others), with a drop off bay, however, it is anticipated this will be for SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) children. A wide entrance is proposed and 'tracking' with a large vehicle has taken place to make sure there is sufficient entrance space.

Whilst welcoming the design, particularly with regard to energy efficiencies, Members raised the following concerns/comments, which Osian, Katie and Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder answered:

- Given experience elsewhere, is the car park large enough to accommodate all those who would be tempted to travel by car. Could the car park be extended now, rather than wait until it is a 2 FE school, particularly as most children will be from other parts of Melksham and not necessarily on an easy walking route to the school, such as children from Semington Road, with approval just been given for 50 (PL/2023/00808) and 144 dwellings (PL/2022/02749) respectively. It has already been suggested children from these developments will go to this school, and at present will have to use a circuitous route to get to the school, as there is no footpath along Western Way.

Would prefer work not to start on the school, until a safe walking route has been provided from Semington Road to the school, particularly as it is understood monies are available, noting, additional monies would probably be required.

A: The level of car parking provided is in accordance with Wiltshire Council planning policy, there is a difficult balance, between encouraging people to use alternative modes of transport and providing car parking. If a large car park was provided now this would encourage more people to use a car, as they know there would be parking available and therefore cause issues later on, if the school were to be extended.

- 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.
- Give 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.
- Those vehicles wishing to turn right out of the school and waiting for a gap in traffic, may cause traffic to back up in the car park. Is there an opportunity to have a 'No right turn' coming out of the car park?
- Increase in traffic along Pathfinder Way, particular at the beginning and end of the school day, which coincides with change in shifts for several businesses on Bowerhill Industrial Estate.
- Could the feasibility of another pedestrian access off of the A365 (Western Way) be looked into, particularly as there is already a crossing provided, with most pupils probably going

to come from this direction. This will avoid pedestrians conflicting with the vehicular access and therefore provide a safer walking route to school via the hoggin path already provided.

A: There is a security issue with providing another access to the school, both from a safeguarding point of view and for the security of the school.

Those at the meeting noted other schools had alternative accesses, with lockable gates for security.

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder asked if the team could be tasked to look at a rear entrance to the school off of Western Way (A365).

- Can the proposed colour cladding be graduated to blend in, given the semi-rural area, similar to Cereal Partners (Great Bear Distribution)?
- Can showers be provided for staff, particularly as Wiltshire Council encourage people to cycle.

A: Can look into this.

- What element of land will be 'clawed back' if the school does not become 2FE and transferred back to Taylor Wimpey?

A: More play space than is required is currently provided, therefore, if some land is 'clawed back' (0.4ha) this would just require a reconfiguration of the line markings for the play pitches etc to fit with the land available.

- Drainage, the site is known to get water logged, particularly over the Winter months.

A: Drainage engineers have been in touch with the previous drainage engineers for the Pathfinder Place development, in order to understand any issues with the site and discussions are taking place with Drainage at Wiltshire Council.

- Will the Parish Council have an input in the name of the school?

A: The Schools Team at Wiltshire Council will be looking at potential Trusts to take on the school and hopefully Councillor Glover will be involved with this and once a Trust has been appointed, they will discuss options for naming of the school.

- Will there be battery storage?

A: Understand batteries need maintenance and therefore a decision has been made not to go along this route, but to connect solar directly to the Grid.

Councillor Harris queried this response, as he understood batteries did not require maintenance and would be the most energy efficient.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder suggested the Parish Council take this up with Anthony Dixon, Project Manager for the scheme.

- The land which is earmarked for a potential extension to the school, if there is a change to the designation if not required, could both councils be notified, as often there is a change without their knowledge?
- Is there enough data to project when a 2FE school will be required, so planning permission is in place before it is needed?

A: Unfortunately, difficult to know when things will come on stream, it can take several years. Wiltshire Council's School Teams cannot commence building of the school until the DfE sign it off to say there is a requirement for it, which would be the same for the extension.

- When will the 1FE school be built?

A: It is understood a planning application will be submitted in the Autumn, however, it would be dependent on the DfE approving the build, bearing in mind the level of need. Whilst noting several new developments have been approved recently, it is difficult to know how many primary aged school children will move in. Also, come September, several primary schools in Melksham have capacity, there is also a low birth rate at present.

Following the meeting held on 9 August, Members were asked to consider a formal response to the consultation.

Members raised the following:

- Conflict of pedestrians with vehicles accessing the car park, which will be exacerbated if the proposed adjacent development of 210 dwellings and a 70 bed care home were approved at Appeal.
- The need for a No Right Turn Right coming out of the school, in order to stop the conflict with traffic waiting to turn right into the school coming off the roundabout.

- Given concerns of potential for school traffic to park on Pathfinder Way in particular, the Parish Council have applied to Wiltshire Council for traffic 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 Place.
- That scooter racks are provided for students.
- Request showers are provided in line with Wiltshire Council's draft Design Guide, which states new businesses have to provide showers (to encourage cyclists)

**Resolved:** To send the comments raised by Members at the meeting on 9 August, as well as the additional comments raised above in response to the consultation and to forward copies to Clara Davis, Head of School Place Commissioning, School Buildings & Places Team and Julie Cleave, Highways Development Control Engineer.

**ii) Care Home planning applications/pre apps.**

The Clerk explained, as discussed above, she had met with a representative of the NHS and had passed the information to the Primary Care Network, to make them aware of proposals for 3 care homes in Melksham ie Land South of Western Way, Verbena Court and Longleaze Lane in order they could comment on proposals.

Meeting closed at 9.13pm

Signed:.....  
Chair, 11 September 2023