

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council
held on Monday 16 January 2023 at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices
(First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place,
Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors Richard Wood (Chair of Planning), Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning), John Glover (Chair of Council), David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council) and Mark Harris

Officers: Teresa Strange, Clerk and Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

In attendance: Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill) and two members of public.

337/22 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping

Councillor Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded those present of the fire safety procedures for the building and.

338/22 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Chivers who was attending an appointment in Southampton.

Resolved: To accept and approve the reasons for absence.

339/22 Declarations of Interest

a) To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

The Clerk for transparency, reminded Members, Wessex Water who had an application or consideration on the agenda, had, as part of mitigation for their scheme for a pumping station on Westlands Lane, Beanacre had offered to plant a wildflower meadow at Shurnhold Fields, which was jointly owned by the Parish and Melksham Town Council.

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.

- 340/22** **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 business, where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

The Clerk note there were no items for discussion in closed session.

341/22 **Public Participation**

Standing Orders were suspended to enable members of public to speak to this item.

Councillor Holder explained he had no issues with planning applications listed for his Ward and would await to hear responses from the Parish Council.

With regards to the Pathfinder Place development, Councillor Holder explained some lighting was not working and had received an update earlier in the day from Taylor Wimpey, which stated the remaining street lighting was made operational on 13 January, unfortunately, there were still 4 street lights not working, however, the remedial works to fix these were booked in.

With regard to the proposed footpath from Tedder Gardens to Birch Grove, Taylor Wimpey had instructed a contractor to undertake this work but were awaiting a start date.

With regard to proposals for grit bins, as raised before Christmas, Councillor Holder stated he was still awaiting a response from Taylor Wimpey on this matter.

Councillor Wood sought clarification when the planting behind the piece of artwork on Pathfinder Way would be undertaken.

The Clerk clarified Taylor Wimpey were happy to undertake this work, as well as plant a Jubilee tree but would follow when the planting was due to take place.

Councillor Holder informed the meeting Taylor Wimpey had a planting plan for the whole site, which stated work would be undertaken later in the year, which may include the planting behind the artwork and planting of the Jubilee tree.

Councillor Glover sought an update from Councillor Holder on proposals

for a new Primary School on Pathfinder Place, as well as an update on proposals for a 70 bed care home and 210 dwellings, (Planning application PL/2022/08504) on an adjacent site, leading through from the Pathfinder estate through the narrow road and a difficult T junction.

Councillor Holder explained he had received an update from the Schools Team the previous week, stating the matter is progressing, with a hope, to appoint a consultant by the end of January and bring forward the planning application in the next couple of months. It was anticipated the school would be operational from September 2025.

With regards to planning application PL/2022/0804, Councillor Holder explained he had 'called in' this application to be considered at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee and was awaiting a date for the meeting, which he would attend and object strongly to proposals.

Councillor Holder stated he understood the Primary Care Trust had raised objections to previous proposals for this site and understood the Clerk had contacted them regarding the latest application to see if they had any additional comments they wished to make.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

342/22 To consider the following Planning Applications:

[PL/2022/09253](#): Land adjacent to Melksham National Grid Substation, Melksham. Installation of underground cable.

POST MEETING: Given previous experience of construction vehicles accessing a site on Westlands Lane via the A350, the following was also submitted as part of the Parish Council's comments:

The parish council feels strongly there should be a condition on construction traffic, that they should access the site via Whitley and not via the A350 at Beanacre. Thus avoiding the narrow lane with residential housing and the weight limit Network Rail bridge. See condition 8 of 17/04110/FUL for the battery storage facility adjacent. The parish council note Planning Enforcement had to be contacted numerous times for this application, as it was not adhered to, and therefore wish to see a condition imposed for this and/or sight of a construction management plan.

Comments: No Objection.

[PL/2022/09581](#): 67 Barnes Wallis Close, Bowerhill. Proposed First

Floor Side Extension.

Comment: No Objection.

PL/2022/09301: Land at the junction of Westland Road and A350 Beanacre. Change of use of agricultural land to Wessex Water operational land, comprising installation of a Sewage Pumping Station (SPS), palisade fencing, gates, and widening of an existing access from Westlands Lane. Applicant Wessex Water.

Comments: No objection and welcome.

PL/2022/09814: Land rear of 23-24 Beanacre. Variation of condition 2 of 21/01535/FUL - to enable the roof space to have habitable rooms built into loft space as part of the development.

Comments: No Objection.

343/22 Revised Plans To comment on any revised plans received within the required timeframe (14 days).

None for consideration.

344/22 Planning Enforcement: To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

The Parish Officer explained recent Planning Enforcement queries the Parish Council had raised had been submitted to Planning Enforcement for investigation.

345/22 Call in Request: PL/2022/09196: Proposed 2 storey, 4 bedroomed House on School Lane. To consider requesting 'calling in' the application for consideration at a Planning Committee.

The Clerk apologised, explaining this should have been raised with Members, when the application was discussed at the Planning Committee meeting on 19 December, given the concerns of Members to proposals and sought a steer if Members wished to 'Called In' the application for consideration at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee meeting.

Resolved: To request Councillor Phil Alford, Melksham Without North & Shurnhold 'call in' this application for consideration at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee.

a) Neighbourhood Planning

i) To note Locality have agreed funding for Green Gap/Landscape Buffer Policy work.

Members welcomed the news Locality had agreed funding for work to be undertaken on a Green Gap/Landscape Buffer Policy for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

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

The Clerk explained the Steering Group were due to meet the following week to approve communications on the Neighbourhood Plan consultation. As Melksham News would be issued a few days after this meeting, earlier that day a press release had been designed with Members being provided with a copy for their information and noting.

The Clerk explained public consultation would be taking place on 9, 10 & 11 February at the Campus and Town Hall at various times. Display boards would be available, as well as Members of the Steering Group and officers being on hand to answer questions. A separate consultation on the town centre master plan would take place on 7 February, for businesses in the town. The display boards would then be in place for 6 weeks, but unmanned, in order for people to make comments on proposals.

It was noted the Steering Group would signing off on the press release at their meeting the following week.

b) 5 Year Land Supply Target and Impact on Communities. To note response from Michelle Donelan MP

Members noted the response from Michelle Donelan MP to the Council's concerns regarding the impact the 5 Year Land Supply Target was having on communities.

The Clerk explained with regard to the 5 Year Land Supply Target, a Government consultation was currently underway, with a deadline of 2 March. As there were 50-60 questions to answer, felt it was appropriate to put this on the Planning agenda for 27 February, as there were no other meetings that evening, therefore there would be more time to consider the Council's response to the consultation.

It was also hoped professional bodies would have responded by then and therefore, would be able gauge their responses.

The Clerk explained, as highlighted in Michelle Donelan MP's letter, there were proposals to end the obligation on local authorities to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of land for housing, where the plans were up to date. However, authorities with a Local Plan or where authorities benefitting from transitional arrangements, the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the 'titled balance' would typically not apply in relation to issues affecting land supply. Therefore, there was pressure on Wiltshire Council to make sure their Local Plan Review was still within the timetable to be a transitional arrangement.

Resolved: To send a copy of the consultation to Members now in order they could consider how the Council should respond to the various questions posed.

c) To note update proposals for 2,500 dwellings near Trowbridge

Members noted with concern a recent article in the local press regarding proposals for 2,500 dwellings near Trowbridge, with the developer requesting more time to complete legal formalities (Section 106 Agreement).

The scheme was given permission in 2018, subject to completion of a Section 106 Agreement with Wiltshire Council, which should have been completed by the end of January 2023. The developer stated due to concerns around the housing market and economy this was not a viable option and therefore, had sought an extension to the deadline to September 2023.

Councillor Baines noted at a recent Wiltshire Council Planning Committee meeting, an extension on signing the Section 106 Agreement had been agreed until the end of March 2023 and if this were not to happen the £8m grant offered by the Government would be lost.

Concern was expressed if the development were not to go ahead, 2,500 dwellings would have to be found elsewhere in Wiltshire.

d) Education Provision. To note Education Response to Planning Application PL/2022/08155 – Land to rear of Townsend Farm (Phase 2)

It was noted within the Education response to proposals for 53 dwellings on land to the rear of Townsend Farm they had stated primary school places were available within local schools to accommodate any children who would move into the development. As there were spaces available, there was no request for developer

contributions towards the cost of the 11 places this site would generate.

They had also listed a number of schools they felt were within a 2 mile safe walking route from the site, ie Aloeric, Bowerhill, Forest & Sandridge CE, Rivermead, The Manor and St George's, Semington. Members noted ironically whilst being the furthest away St George's Primary School, Semington had the safest walking route.

With regard to early years provision, the report stated there were currently 6 nurseries and 2 childminders within a 2 mile safe walking route of the site. It was anticipated 4 places would be required for this development, with a developer contribution of £70,088 being sought from the developer.

With regard to secondary education, the report stated there were 85 places available at Melksham Oak, with an estimated 8 places being required to accommodate children from this development, therefore, Wiltshire Council were not seeking a developer contribution towards secondary education.

Councillor Glover noted, previously, the Council had been led to believe there was no capacity at Melksham Oak.

The Clerk reminded Members the report was written at a moment in time and things may have changed ie another planning application for additional houses for instance being submitted and highlighted the concerns of the Parish Council educational provision was always considered chronologically and not holistically, which was a frustration.

Councillor Pafford expressed concern particularly for those with buggies and walking with small children a 2 mile walk to a school/nursery was not a reasonable expectation, particularly on unsafe routes.

Councillor Wood highlighted as far as Wiltshire Council were concerned there was a safe walking route to Pathfinder Place School and Bowerhill Primary, however, this was not the case.

Recommendation: To ask Wiltshire Council how they came to the decision the schools listed in their report were on a 2 mile safe walking route, despite difficulties of crossing major roads on these routes.

e) New Government legislation for faster broadband in [new homes](#)

Members welcomed having previously requested it, that new laws were to be introduced to ensure new homes in England were built with gigabit broadband connections, as part of the wider mission to ensure better digital transformation across the Country.

347/22 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)

a) To note update on ongoing and new S106 Agreements

i) Hunters Wood/The Acorns:

- To note update on Footpath to rear of Melksham Oak School

Following a request from the Parish Council for some lighting during the hours of darkness to enable people to walk safely to and from Melksham Oak School, the Senior Transport Planner had responded, confirming the proposed footpath would be lit and that Wiltshire Council were currently in discussions with their lighting developer on options and awaiting a quotation.

ii) Bowood View:

- To receive update on village hall, play area.

The Clerk explained the legal agreement for the adoption of the play area had been received and would put on the Full Council agenda for approval and signing.

Councillor Glove sought clarification on whether Bellway would be installing the tarmac footpath in the play area as promised.

The Clerk clarified the Parish Council had discussed whether to adopt the play area prior to the tarmacked path being installed, however, the Council had agreed to go ahead with adopting the play area for the good of parishioners.

The Clerk agreed to include correspondence regarding Bellway's stance on this matter for Members information for the Full Council meeting on 23 January.

Councillor Wood reminded Members the official opening of the new village hall was on Saturday, 21 January from 12-3.00pm.

The Clerk explained the Village Hall Management Committee were now a charity and this information would be conveyed to Full Council on 23 January.

- To note letter to residents from the parish council

Councillor Wood noted the comprehensive letter which had been circulated to residents of Bowood View in relation to a potential footbridge connecting Bowood View to the adjacent site for 144 dwellings (Planning Application PL/2022/02749), information on Berryfield Village Hall, such as defibrillator training on Saturday 14

January, the grand opening on Saturday, 21 January, and an area of green space on Bowood View being nominated for inclusion as a Local Green Space in Melksham's Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk highlighted the deadline for any comments to questions posed in the letter was Sunday, 15 January.

iii) Pathfinder Way:

- To receive update from Taylor Wimpey on issues eg lights, grit bins

An updated regarding lighting on Pathfinder Way had been provided by Councillor Holder earlier in the meeting.

The Clerk explained with regard to grit bins, this was on the Highway agenda after this meeting for discussions,

- To receive update on Play Area

The Clerk explained she had not received an update on this from the Solicitors and therefore would chase this up.

b) To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers

None to report.

c) Contact with developers.

i) To receive notes on meeting held on 13 December with Terra Strategic regarding proposals for 53 dwellings on land West of Semington Road (PL/2022/08155).

As per the Parish Council's policy on Pre App meetings, the notes of the meeting held with Terra Strategic on 13 December 2022 are included in the minutes as follows:

Those present, Councillor Richard Wood (Chair of Planning Committee), Councillor Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning Committee), Councillor John Glover (Chair of Council), Councillor Mark Harris, Teresa Strange, Clerk, Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer, Linda Roberts, Town Clerk (Melksham Town Council), Tamsin Almeida, Planning Manager, Terra Strategic, Mark Gay, Planning Director, Terra Strategic

Wiltshire Councillor Jonathon Seed (Melksham Without West & Rural) had tendered his apologies due to a prior engagement.

Councillor Wood chaired the meeting and reminded those present the site was adjacent to the 'Appeal' site to the rear of Townsend Farm, Semington Road for 50 affordable homes which was refused

by both the parish council and Wiltshire Council but approved at Appeal.

Tamsin explained once planning approval had been given for Phase 1, there was an obligation to put in a planning application for the wider parcel of land. It had always been the intention to come forward collectively with an application for an additional 53 units, which would also be affordable, as it was very clear from the Appeal decision there was a fundamental need for affordable housing in the area.

Mark from Terra Strategic explained in normal circumstances they would have met the Parish Council prior to submitting the planning application to Wiltshire Council. However, as the contractual position was always envisaged at the time the site was optioned up, that it would come forward as one site, it meant it had to be submitted fairly quickly. The land contract with the landowner stated, if the site was brought forward in more than one parcel, on grant of consent of an initial phase, the second parcel had to be submitted within two weeks of the first phase being approved. Therefore, if this site had not been brought forward by Terra, they would have been in breach of contract with the landowner and therefore had to protect their contractual position with regard to the site.

Mark clarified it was not originally anticipated the site would come forward as two sites, but one site, as per previous planning applications for the site. With current proposals for the site for 100% affordable housing. The need for affordable housing had not changed, despite the granting of planning permission for 100% affordable homes on the adjacent site. Also, the constraints of the site were comparable to the first phase of the site, which received planning permission.

It was explained this application would be accompanied by a Section 106 Agreement, with comparable financial contributions towards existing services, as with the Section 106 Agreement for the adjacent Appeal site.

It was stated, the Parish Council had found proposals for this application, just as objectionable, as with Phase 1 for the same reasons, such as:

- Unsustainability of the site due to its isolated location and difficulty in accessing facilities such as schools and shops.
- Outside of the settlement boundary.
- Lack of both primary school and secondary school places.
- Number of dead-ends proposed.
- Erosion of the buffer between the village and the town.

- Loss of higher grade agricultural land

Mark explained if there were elements of the scheme the Parish Council were not happy with, Terra would be happy to work with the Parish Council on these and whilst it would not remove the Parish Council's objections, if planning was granted, it would make it a more acceptable scheme within the realms of the Parish Council still objecting in principle.

Councillor Wood stated in was unfortunate at the Appeal, there had been a missed opportunity for Wiltshire Council to bring forward other issues which may have been germane and contrary to their clearly stated policy of having solely affordable housing sites, rather than mixed sites. Having had conversations with Sovereign, who were building Phase 1, they had been clear they would not be happy to go above 50 dwellings for an affordable housing site, however, this application would make the whole site over 100 affordable homes.

Mark explained he was aware of the conversations with Sovereign and believed their preference for smaller sites was because of their personal opinion of how many affordable homes could be built in one location, but due to the way they managed their stock they did not usually take on schemes with more than 50 dwellings in one locality. However, Conversations had been taking place with others who would be willing to take on the site.

Several Members noted having 100% affordable sites was contrary to Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy policy to build solely affordable housing schemes and could lead to a stigma being attached to the site.

Members noted the Planning Inspector had identified an affordable housing need in Melksham, however this need was for Wiltshire in general, due to a shortage and not specific to Melksham. Ironically because Melksham had already exceeded its housing requirement figure up to 2026, it already had significant affordable housing compared to other areas of Wiltshire, given the 30% requirement for affordable housing on new developments.

Mark explained he appreciated the Neighbourhood Plan had allocated a site and therefore Melksham was afforded the protection of a 3 year housing land supply, as opposed to a 5 year housing land supply, however currently in Wiltshire, there is greater than 3 year land supply, but less than a 5 year land supply, which has been upheld through decision making via the Planning Inspectorate and Wiltshire Council have accepted they do not have a 5 year land supply at this point in time. When there is no 5 year land supply, some policies in the Local Plan are afforded either less weight, or if material considerations that suggested that planning should be

granted contrary to those policies some of the benefits are afforded greater weight.

The Parish Clerk stated the Planning Inspector had stated in summing up on proposals for the appeal site, it met all the requirements of Paragraph 14 protection of the National Planning Policy Framework.

It was noted the nearest primary school was Aloeric, however, it was understood it was currently full. The proposed new school at Pathfinder Place, Bowerhill, once built, would be inaccessible, other than by vehicle, therefore a footway needed to be provided along the A350 (Western Way), particularly as unaccompanied children would be tempted to walk along Western Way, where in parts there is no footway.

A safety concern was raised that residents, particularly children unaccompanied would be tempted to cross the A350 on its Western Arm, which has no pedestrian crossing and therefore dangerous, in order to access Aloeric School and the nearest shop (ie petrol station on Semington Road). It was suggested a bridge over the A350 or a subway was required to provide a safer walking route to school.

It was noted the only secondary school for Melksham was also some distance away from the site.

The Parish Clerk sought clarification where it was envisaged children from the development would access early years provision, as none was available at the nearest school ie Aloeric.

Councillor Wood sought clarification from Terra how they felt the site was sustainable and not as cut off from accessing facilities, as the parish council did and what funding they could contribute to building a new footpath to the proposed new primary school at Pathfinder Way.

Mark explained he was aware with previous planning applications for the site, there had been engagement with Highways and in the past, with Terra putting forward infrastructure ideas in order to bring the site forward. Wiltshire Council Highways had always wanted to provide the mitigation rather than being told by Terra what the suitable mitigation should be. Therefore, it would be interesting to see what Highway's response to proposals were and if they came forward with requirements for mitigation, in order for the scheme to come forward. This would then be something to look at with regard to financial contributions in order to make it happen. Highway improvements were not within the gift to bring forward without Wiltshire Council's suggestion.

Councillor Glover stated as more houses were proposed, the Parish Council would expect a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) to be included in proposals.

Tamsin explained proposals were only at outline at present, therefore, the layout would be different at Reserved Matters stage, with conversation still to be had on where play space would be provided ie within Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the proposals.

Mark explained with regard to play provision, in the original permission it was either to contribute to off site provision or provide on site. Colleagues at Living Spaces were in conversations with Sovereign on the provision of play space, as they would ultimately take on management for a play area, if they wanted the play space to come forward in Phase 1, if not would look at providing some provision as part of Phase 2. Tamsin explained if a play area was to be provided on Phase 1, there may be a requirement for Phase 2 to contribute to Phase 1, rather than two separate play areas.

Members raised concern at the difficulty of providing off site provision, due to access, particularly for young children.

The Parish Clerk explained at the meeting with Sovereign they had talked about providing play space in the North of Phase 1, adjacent to this site, therefore, a bigger park could essentially be provided.

Councillor Wood raised a concern as it was two sites of roughly 50 dwellings each coming forward, rather than one larger site, less play provision/space would be provided against the triggers set against each size of development.

Members asked for play provision for all ages, including teenagers, such as a teen shelter with wifi connectivity and somewhere for children to kick a ball.

Councillor Glover noted Sovereign may want to take on the management of the play area, however, the Parish Council had said in the past they would like to take on play areas in the parish and be involved in discussions on the design, in order that the same standard of play equipment was provided and they were maintained to the same standard ie rather than safety surfacing stop at the edge of the play area it continued beyond fencing to stop grass growing into it, with a maintenance contribution being made by the developers.

Mark explained he could put something into a contract stating whoever the play area delivery partner was, to encourage discussions with the Parish Council over the design of the play space, with an intention to take on management responsibility going forward.

Councillor Wood sought confirmation if trees and hedging would need to be removed in order to facilitate the site and if hedging left would be tidied up, which could lead to the loss of any biodiversity.

Mark confirmed it was not anticipated there would be a need to remove hedging and trees, a good landscape buffer would be provided around the site.

It was noted there was provision for a footpath out on to Berryfield Lane at the Western end, with concerns raised this may become an informal route for those wishing to access the town via the A350.

Mark explained the pedestrian access onto Berryfield Lane had been positioned on the South Western corner in order to deter people trying to access the A350 from the development.

Councillor Glover asked if any fencing could be installed on the Northern side of the site to stop people trying to access the A350 from this part of the development.

Mark explained discussions had been held with Highways regarding safety and fencing was one option which could be used with another being the planting of additional hedgerow.

Whilst members welcomed the planting of additional hedging, a concern was raised this could be penetrated, as experienced in other areas of the parish.

Mark suggested a solution could be planting hedging either side of a fence in order to stop people trying to access the A350.

Councillor Baines sought clarification how surface water drainage would be incorporated into the scheme, as it had previously been mentioned a surface water pump may be required with a concern if this failed it would cause issues for residents.

Tamsin explained swales would be featured round the edge, with water discharge via what would be provided on Phase 1. There would be a two phased solution ie permeable paving and SUBs and believed with the 1st phase a pumping station was required in order to provide foul drainage.

Mark confirmed a surface water pump was not proposed, surface water drainage would be via swales/ponds, in order to provide run off and would usually be dry features and have capacity for a 1:100 year event and a 40% capacity uplift to allow for climate change. There would be wetter parts due to the topography of the site during wet weather.

Mark suggested where there were proposals for a swale on the Northern part of the site, this could be a continuous feature in order to stop people accessing the A350.

It was queried whether the amount of swales proposed was too much.

Tamsin confirmed the same Drainage Engineer had been used for both Phase 1 and 2 and therefore was aware of what was necessary for both sites.

Mark confirmed from a Planning Authority point of view they always sought as much as possible with regard to drainage.

Councillor Glover sought clarification if the developers would be making a contribution towards education and health.

Tamsin confirmed there would be contributions towards primary and early years provision for Phase 1 and would be guided by Wiltshire Council on the level of contribution for Phase 2 and understood there was a £300,000 contribution for 1st phase therefore the phase 2 contribution would be similar or larger, however, it was not clear if this development would trigger a request for a contribution towards secondary education. Contributions would also be subject to indexation.

Councillor Glover sought a contribution towards the new Berryfield Village Hall maintenance costs, which the Clerk confirmed had been included in the Council's comments to Wiltshire Council on the planning application.

The Parish Clerk confirmed the parish council had requested circular paths and the provision of bins in their comments and sought clarification how people would be able to walk around this site and if it would link to the 1st phase of the site.

Mark confirmed at reserved matters provision could be made to provide walking routes which linked both phases.

Mark explained they had provided trim trails on other developments and asked if this was something the parish council would like to see included on the site, as well as confirming the footpath would most likely be hoggin.

Councillor Wood, confirmed whilst this had been something which had been discussed previously, most people preferred to see a circular walk provided on developments, particularly dog walkers. Members also expressed concern there would not be enough footfall and the levels of ongoing maintenance required depending on what type of trim trail was provided.

It was pointed out and Terra took onboard, there was a potential area for children to kick a ball around at the Southern part of the site which was overlooked from a safety point of view by houses and was bordered by roadways rather than peoples' gardens.

The Parish Clerk explained there was a lot of development taking place along Semington Road with bus shelters being provided as part of the respective Section 106 Agreements, with suitable locations being located. Both the Town and Parish Council as a joint project were looking at putting in real-time information in bus shelters and therefore any bus shelters provided needed for this site needed to be tall enough and have an electricity supply. With a suggestion the Section 106 Agreement for this development needed to be flexible enough, that if the other developments along Semington Road provided bus shelters via their respective Section 106 Agreement, that real time information (RTI) be provided for these shelters. The Parish Clerk agreed to forward the estimated costs associated with providing RTI.

Mark agreed to explore this, once the response from Wiltshire Council Highways had been received.

The Parish Clerk felt a contribution towards improving the X34 bus service, which used Semington Road, would be useful, particularly as it only ran during the day and not on a Sunday.

Mark explained if the Parish Council had already raised this in their comments, this would usually trigger a response from Highways.

It was asked if there would be any Community Infrastructure (CIL) payments for this development, Tamsin confirmed there would be no CIL contributions from this application.

The Parish Clerk stated in recent times the parish council had been made aware of requests for the provision of bird, bat and bee bricks and reptile refugia and hibernacula in new developments and sought clarification if these would be provided in this development.

The Parish Clerk also sought confirmation if the developers were contributing to the canal scheme. Tamsin confirmed this had not been requested.

Mark confirmed a contribution had not been requested by Wiltshire Council, they would usually ask for a contribution relevant to the stage a particular scheme was at and as the Wilts & Berks Link Scheme was not sufficiently progressed at present, this was probably why a request had not been made. However, in principle, Terra were not opposed to contributing to the canal scheme, if

requested by Wiltshire Council, but obviously this would have to be borne against other commitments.

The Parish Clerk explained the parish council had concerns at any proposals for shared surfaces, having experienced this in other developments within the parish, whereby there was no delineation between the footpath and road surface, therefore causing safety issues for residents, but understood this type of road construction may be less popular now.

Mark confirmed this type of construction for road layouts to a large extent had gone away with changes in legislation and something which could be controlled more through Reserved Matters if the application were successful.

The Parish Clerk explained the current Melksham Neighbourhood Plan was under review but evidence documents were coming through all the time, such as design guides and the Housing Needs Assessment which could feed through to the developers for information.

It was noted that any Reserved Matters application would probably be after all the various evidence documents had been completed and signed off and therefore would have to be borne in mind.

The Parish Clerk stated the Parish Council had asked for practical art contributions in their comments back to Wiltshire Council and given experience of other art projects in new developments asked that the parish council be involved, along with members of the community in deciding what the art should look like and create something practical.

Mark explained if the planning application were successful, something could be included in the Section 106 Agreement that required engagement with the parish council on any art project.

Councillor Wood explained if the planning application were approved, he would prefer to see the same affordable housing providers as the adjacent site ie Sovereign build the site, having heard their proposals for more sustainable affordable homes and felt it was important any housing was affordable for the lifetime of the home.

Mark explained sustainability was very much at the forefront of affordable housing providers minds, particularly as they were currently having to spent a lot of money having to retro fit some of their poorer quality housing stock.

Tamsin stated she understood building regulations with regard to sustainability were due to change in July 2023.

The Town Clerk stated both phase 1 & 2 sites were self-constrained, community cohesion would be important, especially as people would have difficulty accessing facilities, particularly if they did not have access to a car. Therefore, it was important there was safe walking access to the village hall for instance, there was also a need to make sure, as both sites were for 100% affordable housing residents did not feel stigmatised and the residents feel part of the community.

The Parish Clerk asked Members if it was appropriate to ask for a financial contribution towards allotments, to enable the parish council to purchase additional land adjacent to existing allotments in Berryfield, close to this site, particularly as there was no available allotments plots which could be offered to any residents of this development if they requested one.

It was explained there was potential for some Rights of Way improvements, particular as there were several rights of way in the Berryfield Lane area and working with Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way Officer some improvements had already been made in Berryfield, such as the upgrading of stiles to kissing gates, but there were opportunities for more improvements, particularly to MELW07 with the provision of a bridge in order people could better access the river.

Mark explained if there was a request for a financial contribution from the Rights of Way Officer, would make sure the wording in the Section 106 Agreement was flexible enough to enable improvements to rights of way in the vicinity of the development following conversations between the Rights of Way Officer and the Council.

Councillor Wood felt the Parish Council's main priority was for contributions towards education and health provision.

It was noted with the planning application documentation submitted, it showed the nearest doctor's surgery as being only a few metres away, however, this was a hypnotherapy centre and not a doctor's surgery. Currently there were only two doctor surgeries in the town in the same vicinity.

The Parish Clerk explained access to Semington by vehicle was via Hampton Park West and then onto the A350 and back in again, rather than straight down Semington Road, therefore, access to St Georges School was quite difficult via a vehicle and was quite some distance to walk.

Mark explained the Education Department would inform the developers where they saw any children from the development attending. It was noted Pathfinder Way School was some way off being built.

It was explained the Parish Council had previously expressed concern for safety of pedestrians, particularly children crossing the A350. Whilst it had a safe crossing on the Eastern side, albeit people had to subsequently cross several busy roads to access Aloeric School for instance, most people used the Eastern side crossing, which is the desire line route for most people.

Whilst Mark noted the Parish Council were not keen on this application, stated if and where to come forward, would be more akin to what is acceptable to the Parish Council and was happy to come back to discuss any changes to the proposals following feedback from other consultees.

The Parish Clerk explained the Parish Council were due to have a Planning meeting the following week with notes from this meeting being included in the minutes and possibly sent to the Planning Officer for context, along with anything else which came forward at the meeting and agreed to forward these on to Terra as well.

Meeting closed at 7.38pm

Signed
Chair, Full Council, 23 January 2023