

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 24 February 2020 at 1 Swift Way (off Westinghouse Way), Bowerhill Industrial Estate, Melksham at 7.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillors Richard Wood (Council & Committee Chair), Alan Baines (Committee Vice-Chair), Terry Chivers, Greg Coombes, David Pafford and Mary Pile.

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

**Housekeeping & Announcements:** Councillor R Wood, welcomed all to the meeting and explained the fire evacuation procedures for those present.

**420/19 Apologies**

Councillor John Glover gave his apologies as on holiday.

Reasons for absence were noted and approved.

**421/19 Declarations of Interest**

**a) To receive Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**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.

**422/19 Public Participation (One member of public present)**

No member of public wished to speak at this point.

**423/19 Planning Applications**

Members considered the following planning application:

**20/00797/FUL:** The Bothy, Lagard Farm, First Lane, Whitley. Proposed extension to create new bedroom & garden room with a new porch.

**Comment:** No objection.

**Consultation on potential housing development on Semington Road****a) To note correspondence from developers about potential planning application**

Correspondence had been received from Nexus Planning in relation to land located to the East of Semington Road, Berryfield, acting on behalf of Hollins Strategic Land's intention to submit an outline planning application for a development of approximately 150 homes.

**b) To receive feedback from meeting with developers**

Councillor R Wood explained he, along with the Clerk, Parish Officer and Councillors Pafford, Baines, Pile, as well as Councillor Westbrook and Patsy Clover, Assistant to the Town Clerk from Melksham Town Council, earlier that day had met with Jon Penrose from Nexus to discuss Hollins Strategic Land's proposals for the site.

Councillor R Wood explained the following was proposed:

- Site access via a narrow entrance between two houses on Semington Road.
- A new access to Berryfield Sewage works (current access via Shails Lane) will be provided using the planned site access.
- Allotments. However, it was pointed out at the meeting, the parish had 76 allotments with these being provided in Berryfield. At present there was only one person on the waiting list.
- Public open space, including 2 play areas.
- Cycleway linkages throughout the development.
- Affordable housing.

Councillor R Wood pointed out most of what was being offered by the developer was what has to be delivered as part of any development of this size and reiterated concerns raised earlier in the day, that the site was remote, unsustainable, the narrow access to the site, with associated visibility issues, accessibility to local schools, the site was also outside the Settlement Boundary. Given the location of the site adjacent to Hampton Park West Industrial park, this site would be more suited to an extension of the industrial park.

At the meeting earlier in the day it had been noted that Melksham had already exceeded its housing requirement up to 2026 and when asked why this application was being submitted now, given it was understood Wiltshire Council had a 5 year land supply, the response from Jon Penrose was Wiltshire Council's current land supply was marginal and this site would help meet the housing needs in Wiltshire and clarified this was not an allocated site and Wiltshire Council had not asked for this site to go forward.

Councillor Baines raised a concern that the access to the site was very narrow and supported Councillor R Wood in that the site would be better suited to an extension of the adjacent industrial estate.

It was noted the site could not be accessed off Shails Lane as this was a private lane and would require the agreement of the landowners.

Councillor R Wood stated there was no indication at the meeting if the developers were going to make a contribution to the Wilts & Berks Canal, there was also no suggestion of community facilities, such as enhancing the village hall or providing a local shop.

Discussion had taken place at the meeting earlier in the day on additional footways being installed or public rights of way to provide better linkages to the rest of the community and facilities, such as current local schools and a potential primary school at Pathfinder Way, however, this did not appear to be well received.

A concern was raised at this meeting that potential residents could use a short cut across the A350 to access Bowerhill and the implications from a safety point of view, especially as nearby Shails Lane had been blocked off, following a pedestrian being killed, whilst trying to cross this road, whilst not using the nearby crossing. It was felt residents would also try to find a short cut to access Semington, rather than walking the long way round.

Councillor Pafford felt that the proposals were an overdevelopment of the site and when including the recent Bellway development next to this site, would double the size of Berryfield.

The Clerk explained she presumed if Wiltshire Council were minded to approve this application, the Council would wish to be involved in discussions on community benefit such as circular footpaths, equipped play areas and public art and be a signatory on any Section 106 agreement.

The Clerk pointed out that Wiltshire Council were due to adopt the Housing Site Allocation Plan (which included Settlement Boundaries), the following day and there was no recommendation

within the document for housing in Melksham, given it had met its housing requirement up to 2026.

Councillor R Wood explained at the meeting, it had been raised that now approval had been given for a ring road for Chippenham this would release additional housing land and as Melksham was in the Chippenham Housing Market (HMA), it would be hard to argue that Melksham needed to take any additional housing proposed.

**Matters raised at the meeting with Jon Penrose, Nexus Planning earlier in the day, but not discussed at the Planning meeting:**

- The impact this development will have on medical/education provision.
- Large vehicles for the sewerage works will have to negotiate traffic calming installed along Semington Road.
- Poor visibility on exiting the site, given the narrow entrance to the site.
- Lack of facilities proposed for the site.
- It was understood there was a need for bungalows in the area and if these could be provided near the entrance to the site.
- If the development goes ahead that discussion takes place with developers on appropriate play equipment to accommodate not just younger children, but also teenagers.
- The impact on the climate, given residents will have to rely on their own vehicles to access facilities due to the remoteness of this site.
- The need for charging points to be installed on the site.
- The impact on wildlife, given the presence of Great Crested Newts and bats in the area.

- The impact on ecology on this site.
- The need for an attenuation pond/SuD's scheme on the site and additional or alternative access to the site.
- The need for an access from the site to the new village hall adjacent to the site.
- The need to protect the hedge on the site, which forms the line of the former Wilts & Berks Canal.

**Recommendation:** To inform Wiltshire Council, Nexus and Hollins Strategic Land that Melksham Without's Planning Committee would not wish to see development on this site for the reasons raised above.

#### **425/19 Neighbourhood Plan**

**a) To note the draft minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 29 January 2020**

**Recommendation:** To note the minutes of 29 January 2020.

**b) To adopt final Pre-App Protocol**

The Clerk informed the meeting, the draft policy had been updated in line with suggestions made at a previous meeting and would need to be adopted by both the Parish and Town Council and included suggestions made by the Town Clerk and that the Parish expect to be consulted by Wiltshire Council and developers on all Section 106 agreements and to be party to any negotiations and not a nominee.

**Recommendation:** The Council adopt the updated Pre-App Protocol as drawn-up by Place Studio Consultants for the Neighbourhood Plan.

**c) To approve Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Policy following recent suggested amendments by Full Council**

It was agreed at a previous meeting to only include the 4 main headings, which the Neighbourhood Plan consultants had taken on board and recommended the inclusion of some sub text.

**Recommend:** To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Policy as drawn-up by the Neighbourhood Plan consultants, Place Studio

**d) To consider any matters arising from the minutes**

There were no further matters to consider arising from the minutes.

**426/19 Seend Neighbourhood Plan**

**a) To note formal notice of consultation on the Regulation 14 Stage of Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan and to consider responding as a neighbouring parish**

**Recommendation:** To note Seend Neighbourhood Plan has entered its consultation stage (Regulation 14) and to place this item on the next Planning agenda with a view to making any comments.

**427/19 Wiltshire Site Allocations Plan**

The Clerk informed the meeting, Wiltshire Council were due to adopt the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, including revised Settlement Boundaries at a Full Council meeting on 25 February 2020.

The Clerk reminded Members with regard to housing figures, Shaw & Whitley are classed as a large village, Melksham and Bowerhill are considered together, Berryfield is classed as a small village and therefore does not have a Settlement Boundary, anywhere else in the parish is considered outside the Settlement Boundary.

**428/19 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)**

**a) To note update on ongoing and new s106 Agreements**

Councillor R Wood gave an update on the Bellway development, Berryfield and explained architects had been appointed for the village hall project and he and the Clerk would be meeting planning officers later in the week regarding this project.

It was noted progress was being made on the East of Melksham development, with a variation in planning regarding houses design and garages recently being submitted which would be considered at the next Planning meeting.

**b) To consider any new S106 queries**

There were no new Section 106 queries.

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

No Section 106 decisions had been made under delegated powers.

**d) To note any contact with developers**

Contact with developers recorded under minute no: 424b.

The meeting closed at 7.31pm

Chairman, 9 March 2020