

Date: 25 July 2020

The Neighbourhood Plan 2020  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
Bowerhill, Melksham,

And to:

To: Management Development  
Planning Department  
Wiltshire Council  
County Hall, Trowbridge.

**RE: VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS PLANNED IN WHITLEY and NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2020**

My principal reference that I used was Crown Copyright ISBN 978-1-4098-4321-4 Jan 2015 and my approval or objection of the various planning proposals is based on the words from that document that **“Planning ensures that the right development happens in the right place, at the right time, benefitting communities and the economy. It identifies what development is needed & where, what areas need to be protected and enhanced and in assessing whether proposed development is suitable.”** Over-pinning our comments are the following 2 statements:—

Melksham Without is already 17% over its approved housing allocation at this time of writing.

We are in favour of ‘infill’ planning applications on brownfield sites but against any development outside the settlement boundaries for Shaw and Whitley Villages. We wish to comment on the following planning applications and proposed developments:—

**Whitley Toast Office:** Planning permission to turn the existing shop & post office into 2 dwellings. This would mean the loss of our village post office and shop. The village obviously needs both amenities, so an alternative site, located centrally in the village for a Post Office and shop ( even if mobile PO) would be preferred by us BEFORE the present Toast Office is given planning permission to convert into 2 dwellings.

To provide the period of time needed for the owner of this property to explore other options and for the Hub Committee to explore all options, especially for a shop and post office to become a community asset for Whitley, the consultation period could be extended by due process for a further 6 weeks.

**Middle Farm Corsham Rd Whitley:** proposed development for 18 houses along the East side of Corsham Road (B3353). This proposal is outside the settlement boundary of Whitley. We know that flood alleviation work has been done in recent years behind the existing homes on the East side of Corsham Rd, but with the addition of 18 new properties’ whose surface water will run into that same water course after heavy rains, the risk of flooding is renewed further down Corsham Rd as it feeds into the Southbrook and adds to the risk of recent flooding both at the Presbytery for Shaw Church and Shaw School. Finally, if Middle Farm were to agree to a continuation of Single Homes along Corsham Rd and built of a high specification to withstand flooding from opposite Top Lane to where the existing homes now begin, we would not object to the reduced application to be considered.

**Ashford Homes:** We oppose this development of 9 homes on the West side of Corsham Road and the North boundary of First Lane mainly because it is outside the settlement boundary and an area that floods regularly with runoff from Purlpit and Whitley entering the Southbrook watercourse near Purlpit but not being able to exit the narrow pipe buried under Corsham Road, thus causing flooding onto the existing flood plains both sides of the Southbrook. The proposed car park would increase traffic on Corsham Rd at 9am and 3pm, which already grinds to a standstill at those times of the day when families come to drop/off and collect their children at the same time as commercial and rush hour traffic tries to pass Shaw School. This bottleneck is already a very dangerous place for all pedestrians trying to get to/from their cars and walking to/from their homes in Shaw & Whitley.

To say that development of all these sites would radically change the nature of the village would be an understatement. Still Whitley would not have a shop nor a Post Office; the risk of flooding to existing and newly proposed properties further down the Corsham Rd remains a real possibility; and the nature of approving the Middle Farm/Ashford Homes developments would open up numerous possibilities for many more further infill planning applications onto green fields along the main routes through Whitley and outside the settlement boundaries. Furthermore infill development of the 3 main roads into and out of Whitley would change the nature of our green, rural village which is now pleasantly interspersed with green fields and NOT solid with housing development on both sides of all 3 main roads that form a triangle around the perimeter of our village. The green fields that divide Shaw from Whitley villages must be preserved and at present the Southbrook provides that division as well as a flood plain for both villages. Please let this 'natural' water course and flood plain remain as the one physical boundary between Shaw and Whitley villages.

Sincerely yours