



# Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Meeting  
Crown Chambers, 1st Floor, 7a Market Place, Melksham,  
Wiltshire SN12 6ES

Date: **Wednesday 13th September 2017**  
Start: **6pm**

## **Present:**

Cllr. Richard Wood (MWPC) (Chairman)  
Jo Eccleston (MWPC)  
Teresa Strange (MWPC)  
Lorraine McRandle (MTC)  
Steve Gray (Clerk, MTC)  
Cllr. Tony Watts (MTC)  
Cllr. Pat Aves (Wiltshire Council)  
Nick Westbrook (Health lead)  
Rolf Brindle (Transport lead)  
Shirley McCarthy (Environmental lead)  
Cllr. Richard Wiltshire (MTC)  
Cllr. Paul Carter (MWPC)

Notes: Phil McMullen (MCAP)

Plus two members of the public

## **1. Welcome & apologies**

Cllr. Richard Wood welcomed those present to the meeting and identified the emergency exits.

Phil McMullen reported that apologies had been received from Colin Goodhind, Clare Harris (MTC), Cllr. John Glover (MWPC), David Way (Wiltshire Council)

## **2. Declaration of Interests**

There is a standing declaration of interest in MCAP from Nick Westbrook, Shirley McCarthy, Colin Goodhind and Phil McMullen. There is a standing interest in Young Melksham by Teresa Strange, with reference to any discussions concerning the Canberra Youth Centre.

## **3. Public Participation**

There were two members of the public present, who wished only to observe.

## **4. Minutes of the last meeting**

4.1 Agree minutes of the July 26<sup>th</sup> meeting

[Link to copy of July minutes](#)

Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr. Tony Watts, seconded by Rolf Brindle. All present were in favour and the Minutes were duly signed.

4.2 Agree minutes of August 30<sup>th</sup> meeting

[Link to copy of August minutes](#)

Adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Rolf Brindle, seconded by Shirley McCarthy. All were in favour and the Minutes were duly signed.

## 5. Matters Arising

Nick Westbrook expressed the opinion that all of the Steering Group's Minutes fail to show clear resolutions. He proposed that we should consider a resolution to rectify this at a later point in the Agenda.

Nick Westbrook gave the example of the AECOM report, which has not been formally adopted. Teresa Strange pointed out that the AECOM report hadn't been adopted at the July meeting because the Steering Group had asked that the report be sent back to the Housing Group to be commented on prior to acceptance.

Cllr. Richard Wood expressed the opinion that it was possible that votes have been taken at meetings but not always recorded in the minutes.

## 6. Finance Report

### 6.1 Payments for Approval

6.11 To consider the August 2017 invoice from MCAP reference 17/P/008 sum: £290.00

link: [August Invoice](#)

Cllr. Richard Wood proposed from the chair that invoice 17/P/008 was accepted. Cllr. Paul Carter seconded, and all were in favour.

### 6.2 Current Budget – amount spent to date

Steve Gray stated that the amount spent to date was £11873.36

## 7. To note the revised draft Site Assessment report from AECOM

Teresa Strange explained that the Housing Task group and Officers had gone through the report in great detail. Concerns about highways issues regarding land south of Western Way were explained to them more fully, and they have noted that there are significant restraints with regard to land to the west of Semington Road.

Nick Westbrook proposed that we accept the AECOM report with the caveat that clarifications are still required.

Cllr. Richard Wood seconded the proposal.

A vote was taken and all were in favour. **Resolved:** *The AECOM report was formally adopted with the caveat that clarifications were sought on two points within the report.*

## 8.1 To note correspondence from Anthony Northcote

The meeting considered a letter from Anthony Northcote of Neighbourhood-Plan.co.uk. Unfortunately Anthony's business colleague had to have emergency surgery with a 4 - 6 month recovery period and would be unable to work. He stated that he had to give priority to plans on which he had already carried out work and as such he no longer had the capacity to undertake work on Melksham's Plan. He apologised for this situation and wished the Steering Group well with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Richard Wood expressed the opinion that this was obviously very unfortunate. Cllr. Wood proposed that we write and thank Mr Northcote and wish him well. Nick Westbrook seconded the proposal and all were in favour. **Resolved:** *The Steering Group write a letter of thanks to Anthony and wish his colleague well.*

## 8.2 To receive verbal update on progress on site allocations, grant funding and consultations

**8.2.1 Site Allocations.** Lorraine McRandle explained that there had been some significant changes since the Housing Task Group initially looked at site allocations. Wiltshire Council now had its 5 Year Housing Land Supply and Melksham had fulfilled its housing allocation. Additionally, site assessment criteria had changed in that the proposed Canal Development and potential Eastern Bypass would not be brought forward within the Plan period, and sites were now being considering against any proposed community gain. Following consultation with David Way (Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning Officer), the Officers advised reassessing all the initial 60+ sites against any proposed community gain rather than just assessing the 22 that had been identified in the AECOM Report in order that all sites had undergone an equal assessment process and thus the methodology would be robust if it was challenged at examination stage.

Cllr. Richard Wood proposed that we approve of revisiting the 60+ sites. Rolf Brindle seconded the proposal. All were in favour and the proposal was duly adopted. **Resolved:** *The Officers revisit the initial 60+ SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) sites against the criteria of community gain.*

**8.2.2 Grant funding.** Teresa Strange explained that officers had applied to Locality based on the quotes from Anthony Northcote & Lemon Gazelle agreed at the previous meeting, and that this had been partially recommended by Locality to DCLG (Dept of Communities & Local Government) for approval. Not all had been recommended for approval as they had some concerns as to whether all work outlined could be completed by the end of March 2018. As Anthony Northcote was now unable to write the plan,, a revised grant application would need to be submitted once an alternative consultant had been sought and a quotation agreed upon

**8.2.3 Consultations.** Lemon Gazelle proposed a range of consultation processes by varying mediums. A Doodle Poll for potential dates for the consultation events for which the public could physically attend had been circulated which included the availability of possible venues. Cllr. Richard Wood proposed that we hold the consultations the weekend of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Cllr. Paul Carter seconded, and all were in favour. **Resolved:** *The Steering Group inform Lemon Gazelle that they wish the consultation events to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.*

### 8.3 To approve quotation from Lemon Gazelle

Following the withdrawal of Anthony Northcote, the Officers had sought quotes from other consultants in preparation for this evening's meeting. They reported that they had sought quotes from four other consultants when they initially looked in November 2016 including AECOM, and only Lemon Gazelle, whose quote was tabled this evening, had the capacity to write the Plan. AECOM had no plan writers available at present, but could carry out a "Health Check" in the role of "Critical Friend" to review the Plan prior to Regulation 14 submission (Local consultation); this could be undertaken as a Technical Support package from AECOM

Nick Westbrook expressed concern over the Quotation from Lemon Gazelle. The Steering Group had not asked Lemon Gazelle to submit a quotation. The officers have asked them. He would prefer to defer formal acceptance of this until the next meeting, and so proposed.

There was no seconder for Nick Westbrook's proposal, and no vote was taken.

The Officers explained that there were very strict rules with regards to the grant funding from Locality in that it had to be spent within six months and definitely before March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 (end of the financial year) and applied for before appointment of a consultant. Therefore, if a decision over appointing Lemon Gazelle was deferred, the application for grant funding would be delayed only allowing for the plan to be written in 5 months. Locality have already expressed concerns over the tight timeframe for writing the plan.

Cllr. Richard Wood stated that he wanted the group to accept this quote tonight. When we write to them we can say we would like to include an aspirational appendix, which may cost extra

Cllr. Tony Watts proposed that we accept the Chairman's suggestion that we accept the quote. Rolf Brindle seconded that proposal.

Teresa Strange proposed that we get an immediate response to the question of whether the aspirations document would incur an additional cost, if so what that cost might be, and to incorporate that extra cost into the grant application at the end of this week.

Voting on the proposal to accept the quote, the meeting was unanimously in favour.

***Resolved:*** *The Steering Group accept the quote from Lemon Gazelle for writing the Neighbourhood Plan, seek clarification over any potential additional cost for including an aspirational appendix, and apply to Locality for the quote amount plus any additional costs.*

## 9. To note Reports from Health Group

9.1 To note advice received from David Way on allocating Health sites.

Teresa stated that the six sites for potential health use had been given to the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group), however this information should not be in the public domain. Lemon Gazelle had advised that within the Plan any provision for Health Services should be criteria led rather than site specific. This information would form part of the evidence that led to site allocations and would be available to the public at Regulation 14 consultation. The advice from David Way and the recommendation from Teresa as a qualified Clerk is that the Steering Group merely note that six sites have been passed to the CCG.

Cllr. Richard Wood Proposed, Rolf Brindle seconded and the meeting was in favour that Teresa's advice was accepted. Nick Westbrook abstained from this vote

**Resolved:** *The Steering Group formally noted the professional advice from both David Way, Wiltshire Council Spacial Planning Officer and Teresa Strange, Clerk to Melksham Without Parish Council.*

9.2 To note meeting notes from Health Working Group

31<sup>st</sup> July - Link to [Meeting Notes](#)

16<sup>th</sup> August Link to [Meeting Notes](#)

Rolf Brindle proposed that we Noted them. The Chairman seconded and the notes were duly noted.

## **10. To receive an update from the Website Working Party**

Teresa Strange stated that Colin Goodhind and Colin Harrison had emailed asking that their outline proposal be shared with Lemon Gazelle, which Teresa had done. Sarah Martin (Lemon Gazelle) had responded favourably, saying that using short video clips to engage the public was a good idea. As neither Colin Goodhind or Colin Harrison was present at the meeting, this item was deferred to the next Steering Group meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

## **11. Wiltshire Council Draft Housing Site Allocations Plan**

11.1 To consider any submission to the consultation on (a) housing site allocations and (b) settlement boundaries

The Steering Group noted that both Town and Without Parish Councils had considered and responded to the consultations.

## **12. Update on Designation of Local Green Spaces**

Teresa Strange explained that most of what's coming forward is protected anyway – it's the anecdotal bits of land used by youngsters for informal games for example which need to be identified. Requests are still being mapped.

13. **Update on Timeline of Events** – to be updated next meeting.

## **14. Any Other Business**

Nick Westbrook proposed a resolution as follows:

By way of clarification for the avoidance of doubt, IT IS RESOLVED that all documents, drafts, engagement comments / feedback / informed opinion, presentations and reports produced by Task and sub Groups are considered to be evidence to inform Melksham Neighbourhood Plan decision making when they are reported for discussion by MNPSG members in public session; and they:

a) are deemed to be approved and any actions proposed in them authorised unless otherwise amended, deferred or refused; and they

b) should then be electronically linked to form part of the Minutes of such discussion.

Teresa Strange explained that Minutes on the website do not include active links. Only documents circulated to the Steering Group contain links; and that including links would put into the public domain a whole host of documents that were not appropriate at this stage of the Plan.

Nick Westbrook stated that he was happy to therefore exclude (b) from the Resolution under advice from Teresa Strange.

Teresa Strange stated that we are paying professionals to write a Statement of Evidence. Teresa expressed the opinion that she would feel very uncomfortable about adopting this proposal as it stands, as many of the documents produced were not agreed in their entirety, with omissions and additions, and therefore should not be agreed in a blanket format. Steve Gray concurred with Teresa, and considered that Lemon Gazelle as a professional consultant would give advice on this issue. Teresa considered that resolutions could be tighter in our minutes going forward; however, the agendas state "to receive, to note, to action, to agree" – and that is exactly what the Steering Group do. Shirley suggested that moving forward any Task Group meeting minutes make formal recommendations that are then approved by the Steering Group.

There was no seconder for the resolution proposed by Nick Westbrook. No vote was taken, and the issue was deferred pending advice from Lemon Gazelle.

**15. Date of Next Meeting of Steering Group:** Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Subsequent dates are: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017. There will be no meeting in December 2017, the group meeting once again thereafter on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

Meeting closed 8.15 pm

**Signed:**

**Chairman of MNPSG**

**Date:**

## Links to supporting documentation and relevant sites of interest

[CCG GOV/17/07/10 Strategic Outline Case \(SOC\) for Chippenham, Melksham and Trowbridge](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>

[LEP paper January 2016](#)

[Melksham Bowerhill SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Shaw SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Whitley SHLAA map Aug 15](#)

[Final Sustainability Scoping Report](#)

[Briefing Note 258 - WILTSHIRE HOUSING LAND SUPPLY STATEMENT 2015](#)

<http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/resources/documents>

<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>

[Wiltshire Council Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum](#)

***Common Abbreviations: MNPSG = Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group; MCAP = Melksham Community Area Partnership; CAP = Community Area Partnership; AB = Area Board; SCOB = Shadow Community [campus] Operations Board; SG = Steering Group; TC = Town Council; MTC = Melksham Town Council; MWPC = Melksham Without Parish Council; PC = Parish Council; WC = Wiltshire Council; JSA = Joint Strategic Assessment; JSNA = Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; MIN = Melksham Independent News; DPD = Development Plan Document***