



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

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

Date: **Wednesday 11th January 2017**

Start: **6pm**

Present:

Cllr. Richard Wood (Chairman) (MWPC)
Teresa Strange (MWPC)
Cllr. Rolf Brindle (MWPC) (Transport lead)
Nick Westbrook (Health lead)
Cllr. David Pollitt (Area Board)
Lorraine McRandle (MTC)
Cllr. Paul Carter (MWPC)
Colin Goodhind (MCAP)
Richard Wiltshire (MTC)
David Way (Wiltshire Council)
Terri Welch (Town Mayor)
Shirley McCarthy (Environment Lead)

Plus two members of the public

Notes: Phil McMullen, MCAP

1. Welcome and apologies

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Phil reported that Steve Gray (MTC) and Cllrs. John Glover (MWPC) and Cllr. Andy Hinchcliffe (MTC) had given their apologies for this evening's meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

There is a standing declaration of interest in MCAP from Colin Goodhind, Nick Westbrook Shirley McCarthy and Phil McMullen. Nick Westbrook also has a standing interest in a company named Envolve Technology Ltd. Teresa Strange, as a trustee of Young Melksham, has an interest in any discussions regarding the Canberra.

3. Public Participation

Richard asked members of the public if they'd like to speak, which nobody present wished to.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

4.1 Agree October 26th Minutes

[Link to copy of minutes](#)

All present were in favour that the revised minutes were signed as representing a true record.

4.2 Agree 30th November Minutes

[Link to copy of minutes](#)

RB proposed and CG seconded and all were in favour that the minutes showed a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising this evening.

6. Finance Report

6.1 Payments for Approval

6.11 To consider the November 2016 invoice from MCAP reference 16/P/011 sum: £290.00

[MCAP timesheet for November](#)

RB proposed, PC seconded, all were in favour.

6.2 Current Budget

Steve Gray reported via email that the current budget is £8735.81

7. Update on technical support

7.1 AECOM informed us that they would be providing an update in time for the January meeting (i.e. that scheduled for Wednesday 25th January)

7.2 Lorraine stated that AECOM had recommended that we apply for funding in February 2017. Teresa confirmed that you are only allowed to apply for funding 4 times. The Locality funding has to be used within 6 months or by the end of the financial year. For the job to be done properly, it was simply not achievable by the end of March. We can apply in February so we are ready to go in 1st April. Once elections are over in May, we can then go out to Reg. 14 consultation during June.

8. Draft Neighbourhood Plan

8.1 Discussion regarding the draft Neighbourhood Plan followed.

David Way raised the point of the definition of a policy as opposed to an objective.

David explained that starting from page 15 through to page 32, there is a long list of policy numbers. In the draft plan, you need to have a manageable and succinct list of policies, two or three per theme, so that when the planner comes to assess the planning application he doesn't have 32 pages of policy numbers to go through. Also when you read them, they are more objectives than policies e.g. "we wish to establish a lorry park", and then the policy sets out how you are going to achieve that objective, the size of it and so-on. Normally you would have an objective and then you would set out background information and evidence.

Policies in the Core Strategy or in other neighbourhood plans give examples of how to set out policies. Anthony Northcote will be able to help with this.

Teresa stated that her understanding was that we give Anthony Northcote all of the evidence and he edits it, organises it and puts it into context. Richard Wiltshire confirmed that the Town Council shared the hope that the final document that goes before the public would be very much condensed. Terri Welch agreed, saying that she felt the draft was very wordy. It needed to be split down into bite-sized pieces.

David Way reiterated that it is the task of the sub groups to work out what their issues are, what the objectives are, and their policies.

Nick Westbrook remarked that there are 70 or so objectives because that's what the public have told us they want.

Nick Westbrook stressed that the document needs to be set out in terms that the general public understand. They are going to expect to see what people have told us they want. It needs to be readable and easy to understand, but it must not let developers off the hook.

David Way stressed he wasn't asking for the document to be watered down in any way, but simply restructured. There is an introduction, an executive summary and then you are into a huge table which is the beginning of the plan. There is no background to the plan, no background to Melksham – that appears in part 2, where you might normally have housing, transport, landscape; a series of objectives, preamble and policies.

Colin Goodhind said that in his opinion we have to listen and change based on David Way's experience.

Teresa said that in terms of grant funding, we are looking at appointing Mr Northcote effective 1st April as we are awaiting the AECOM report and because of purdah. Should we give it to him now to look at initially? Then we will have February and March for the task groups to revisit the document if necessary.

Teresa suggested that we ask Anthony Northcote to have a look and get back to us with some feedback in time for the January meeting in two weeks' time. We can then get it knocked into shape before the end of April.

Nick Westbrook asked that we obtain the report from AECOM as a matter of urgency.

David Way said that should be stated that the Neighbourhood Plan would support proposals for a North Eastern by-pass (Wiltshire Council had been unsuccessful in obtaining funding, incidentally)

Teresa wished to see it stated that all playing fields were supported; either list them all or make a generic statement (but not just King George V Playing Fields, for example). DW suggested one policy that supports the playing fields, and designates them all as local green spaces. David Way observed that the plan might have local green space sites, and then the appendices would give further details of each.

David Way also remarked that you should look at allocating one site for a health centre that you are sure can be delivered. Nick Westbrook said that there are several potential sites depending on the size of the site required – a requirement which the CCG would not be working on until March. It could be a primary care centre or potentially even a hospital.

Under themes, MWPC felt that brownfield exception sites should be listed separately (e.g. the library should be apartments and shops, etc). DW said that rather than one long list they should be put under themes. In your plan if you are saying it should be allocated for something else, you will have to justify that.

The town council had raised an additional principle, that alternative provision was made for community services before existing facilities were shut down.

David Way observed that his understanding of a recent judgement was that the housing supply policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to be out of date if there is a three year housing land supply.

Teresa proposed that we accept the tracked changes in the document as they stand. This was agreed to by all.

9. Landscape issues

9.1 To consider the attached Wiltshire Council map of land ownership

[Map of Wiltshire Council properties in Melksham](#)

Teresa said she had been asking for a list of Wiltshire Council sites for about six months. We have now received a 2013 plan from Mark Hunnybun. Some land had since been sold. The only properties identified for disposal at present are the Canberra and "Woolmore Farm" (presumably only the farm buildings).

9.2 To consider a response to the attached [approach from Seend NP](#)

Teresa said that she had questioned before whether we should potentially have a topic on landscape.

Terri observed that as Melksham is a flat area, we do not have the same issues as Seend do. David Way confirmed that that is a particular issue for them and not necessarily for us. We don't have to have a topic in our Neighbourhood Plan just because other areas do.

Richard Wiltshire said that we should be encouraging tree planting. Shirley agreed that trees that help ameliorate pollution issues should be planted.

David Pollitt said you cannot make a general statement that there should be no development along the K&A because it would impact the Marina further along.

Teresa observed that we have already identified specific SCHLAA sites to be protected. We are supporting non-encroachment.

Teresa took an action to draft a response to the enquirer from Seend NP.

10. Public Consultation(s)

10.1 Public Participation Group report

[Copy of report](#)

Nick Westbrook said the key issue was the two public engagement events coming up, one of which is on 24th January (at 6pm). This is at Berryfield Village Hall. Several people indicated that they would be there to support the event.

10.2 To consider when to hold a public consultation event in Forest & Sandridge School in East of Melksham. They can only do Saturday 18th February in the morning or any Saturday afternoon (only).

An alternative would be to hold it at the new rugby and football facility, however this wouldn't be available during a weekend daytime. It might be available during an evening.

Lorraine and Teresa were tasked with establishing a venue.

Lorraine said that AECOM might change things so questioned whether we should hold off holding further public consultations?

It was noted that the Our Community Matters event was being held on 18th January (this was a ticketed event) which representatives of the Steering Group would be at. David Pollit confirmed that the February 8th Area Board was being held at the new Oakfield stadium.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 [Invitation to NP event in Bath](#)

Nick Westbrook confirmed that he might potentially be able to attend this.

11.2 Lorraine mentioned an email that had been received requesting a copy of our Neighbourhood Plan, however the meeting confirmed that it's not yet in the public domain. Requests should be politely declined until such time as it's out for public consultation. Shirley said we ought also to assure people that we would be happy to contact them as soon as the plan is made public.

12. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 25th January 2017, followed by February 22nd 2017

Colin Goodhind and David Way both gave their apologies for the meeting on 25th January.

Signed:

Chairman of MNPSG

Date:

Links to supporting documentation and relevant sites of interest

[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