

SEMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2017 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall

Present.

Councillor Robert Oglesby (Chairman) and Councillors P Bowyer, K Lockwood, S Rimmer, W Scott, P Smith, B Smyth, C Wade and the Clerk, Roger Coleman.

There was one members of the public present.

1. Apologies.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Wiltshire Council, Cllr. J Seed and PCSO Simon Partington of the Community Policing Team.

2. Declaration of Interests.

There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 4 January 2017.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

4. Community Policing.

The Clerk stated that PCSO Simon Partington had sent a written report to the Clerk prior to the meeting that the Clerk had sent to all councillors. The Clerk stated that the report confirmed that there had been no incidents in Semington.

5. Adjournment.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

The Chairman invited members of the public present to raise any points of interest and concern.

Kevin Reed and Barbara Gray attended on behalf of Wiltshire Air Ambulance and addressed the Parish Council in respect of the progress of establishing a new headquarters at Semington.

The Chairman then reconvened the Parish Council meeting.

6. Wiltshire Council Report.

In the absence of Cllr. Seed no report was given.

Councillors noted the presentation by representatives of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance during the Adjournment and commented that the retention and relocation of the existing 'bus gate' was essential and strongly supported by the parishioners of Semington. Councillors observed that the only access to the Air Ambulance station should be from the North and not from the South; the latter appeared to be favoured by Wiltshire Council and Air Ambulance for convenience but it would mean increased traffic through the village and a 'concession' for Air Ambulance vehicular traffic to ignore the restrictions of the 'bus gate'. Councillors argued that if access from the south were permitted the value of the 'bus gate' would be lost and would lead to a progressive erosion of the advantages that the 'bus gate' had brought to the village. Disappointment was expressed that Cllr. Seed had not prosecuted this case more robustly with Wiltshire Council and it was **resolved** that the Clerk writes to Cllr. Seed requesting stronger support for the retention/relocation of the 'bus gate' and to secure his agreement to work with Wiltshire Council, Air Ambulance and the Parish Council to find a solution that is acceptable to the Parish Council and the villagers of Semington. Meanwhile, Cllr. Scott agreed to draft a letter to the Chair of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Trustees emphasizing the importance of retaining and relocating the 'bus gate' to the

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parishioners of Semington and seeking support from the Trustees for a viable solution to be proposed and implemented.

Cllr. Smith stated that he had emphasized the importance of retaining/relocating the 'bus gate' to the Air Ambulance representatives during the Adjournment and that they were in grave danger of losing support for the Air Ambulance station from local residents if they failed to recognise the importance of retaining/relocating the 'bus gate'. He added that the Parish Council will remain resolute in its campaign to retain/relocate the 'bus gate'.

7. Planning.

a. The Council noted the status of extant planning applications thus:

16/06564/OUT	Land North of 554 Canal Bridge	Outline application relating to access – Erection of two detached dwellings and new access.	Refused
16/09699/FUL	Land opposite Outmarsh Farm, Semington Road	New home for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust including administrative office space, operational offices, multifunctional training facilities and associated ancillary spaces etc.	Approved
16/10848/FUL	Plot 3, Lansdowne, Littleton	Erection of Day Room	Approved
16/11634/FUL	Land Adjoining 14 The Knapps	Construction of a 4 Bed Bungalow with Attached Garage (Resubmission of 15/01251/FUL)	Refused

b. There were no planning applications relating to Semington received after 28 December 2016.

c. The Council noted the following planning application and decided on the actions shown:

16/06956/OUT – Land to the North of St Georges Road.

The Council noted that Framptons had lodged an appeal (Appeal Reference: APP/Y3940/W/16/3164255) against the decision of Wiltshire Council to refuse this planning application.

Cllr. Scott explained that following consultation with councillors he had prepared a written statement supporting the decision of Wiltshire Council that detailed the arguments why the appeal should be dismissed and he proposed that the Parish Council should consider sending this statement to the Planning Inspectorate. The Council **resolved** that this statement be sent to the Planning Inspectorate forthwith. This statement is shown as Appendix A to these minutes.

It was noted that the Planning Inspectorate had stated that this appeal and that relating to Richborough Estates would be heard together.

Cllr. Scott confirmed that an explanatory letter had been delivered to all households by the Parish Council giving details of the forthcoming Appeal.

In respect of the Great Lees Village Green application, Cllr. Scott reported that the Village Green Group had sent comments to Wiltshire Council on 23 January 2017 in respect of the objections voiced by the affected landowners.

d. Councillors reported that properties at Palmer Grove and The Orchard continue to suffer from sewage and foul water overflows – thought to be due to inadequate main drainage. The Clerk was asked to write to Wessex Water and to ask what has been the result of their various investigations into the problem – a problem that was originally reported some years ago and has since been the subject of further complaints to Wessex Water by householders and the Parish Council.

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8. Finance.

a. The Clerk reported that the current financial position at 8 February 2017 was as follows:

Lloyds A/C 2149025

Bank Statement 30 November 2016	£	15,578.83
Total:	£	15,578.83

Credits (1 December 2016 to 31 December 2016):

HMRC PAYE Month 8	£	116.40
Total:	£	116.40

Debits (1 December 2016 to 31 December 2016):

Clerk's Salary (November)	£	290.94
Clerk's Expenses (October)	£	20.81
HMRC PAYE Month 7	£	116.40
HMRC PAYE Month 8	£	116.40
Southview Nurseries	£	196.00
Total:	£	740.55

Balance at 31 December 2016:

£ 14,954.68

Credits (1 January 2017 to 31 January 2017):

HMRC PAYE Month 9	£	116.40
Total:	£	116.40

Debits (1 January 2017 to 31 January 2017):

Clerk's Salary (December)	£	290.94
Clerk's Expenses (November)	£	8.55
Clerk's Expenses (December)	£	19.65
HMRC PAYE Month 9	£	116.40
W Scott	£	25.20
Total:	£	460.74

Balance at 31 January 2017:

£ 14,610.34

Credits (1 February 2017 to 8 February 2017):

None	£	-
Total:	£	-

Debits (1 February 2017 to 8 February 2017):

9 February 2017

Roger Coleman
Clerk to Semington Parish Council

Chairman's Signature _____

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Clerk's Salary (January)		£	290.94
	Total:	£	290.94

Balance at 8 February 2017:		£	14,319.40
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Minus Semington War Memorial Monies Remaining:		£	375.99
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Parish Council Balance at 8 February 2017:		£	13,943.41
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Lloyds A/C 7754288

Bank Statement 30-Sep-16		£	7,602.48
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Credits

Pennine Magistrates		£	9.03
Interest		£	0.32
Interest		£	0.31
Interest		£	0.31
Interest (Approx)		£	0.30
		£	10.27

Debits

None		£	-
		£	-

Balance at 8 February 2017:		£	7,612.75
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Total Balance in Hand at 8 February 2017:		£	21,556.16
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Payments to be authorised (8 February 2017).

Clerk's Salary (February)		£	290.94
Office Expenses (January)		£	15.92
R P Coleman HMRC/PAYE (Month 10)		£	116.40
	TOTAL:	£	423.26

Donations/Subscriptions to be considered (8 February 2017).

None		£	-
	TOTAL:	£	-

The Clerk reported that Healthcare 2000 had donated £75 to the Parish Council in recognition of the Parish Council granting permission for the advertising banner to be displayed at the Tennis Court until the end of March 2017.

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b. The Council **resolved** to make all the payments under 'Payments to be authorised' above including a donation of £50 to Victim Support.

9. Wessex Close Play Area.

Cllr. Lockwood confirmed that he had surveyed the Play Area and play equipment and had concluded that everything needed a good clean to remove algae etc and that this could be achieved with a power washer. He commented that following this cleaning some of the equipment needed repainting. He stated that he would take action to effect this cleaning.

Cllr. Smyth commented that Wiltshire Council is seeking to transfer responsibility for the maintenance of various assets to Parish Councils in order to reduce its financial liabilities and that the Parish Council must be alert to any such proposals. The Chairman confirmed that the cost to the Parish Council in taking over the Wessex Close Play Area from Wiltshire Council could be very high and should be resisted.

10. Highways/Environment.

a. There were no specific highway/environmental issues reported.

b. In the absence of Cllr. Robinson, no report was given in respect of the safe crossing across the A361 road. However, it was understood that Cllr. Robinson had met with Wiltshire Council officials to discuss this matter and that the CATG awaited a final costing from Wiltshire Council before progressing the project further.

c. Cllr. Scott reported that a Fire Hydrant cover located opposite to the Tennis Court was broken. Cllr. Smyth stated that he would report it via the 'Wiltshire App'.

11. Melksham Community Area Board/Community Area Transport Group Meetings.

There was nothing reported.

Cllr. Smith reported that he and Cllr. Scott had attended the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (MNPSG) Meeting held on 11 January 2017. He gave a full report of that meeting – a summary of which is shown at Appendix B to the minutes. A statement of the Vision and Core Objectives for Melksham – a briefing note handed out at that meeting – is shown at Appendix C to the minutes. He expressed his concern that the MNPSG appeared not to be prepared to address any issues that may affect neighbouring parishes.

12. Wilts & Berks Canal.

There was nothing reported.

13. Tennis Court.

The Clerk reported that Healthcare 2000 had requested permission from the Parish Council to allow the advertising banner to remain on the Tennis Court fence until the end of September 2017 and had indicated that it would be willing to make a further donation to the Tennis Court Management Fund of £100. The Council **resolved** that the Healthcare 2000 Chiropractor Surgery can have permission to erect an advertising sign on the Tennis Court fence until September 2017.

Councillors reported that as a result of hard work by them with the valued assistance of a number of parishioners the overgrown hedge at the Tennis Court had been cut back to an acceptable level. The Council **resolved** that particular thanks be recorded for the assistance given by John Masters and Hirebase and to the parishioners who willingly gave their time to assist in the operation. It was noted that some maintenance work at the tennis Court is now required to bring it back to its original standard and the Council **resolved** that Neil Newport is invited to provide a quotation for undertaking the necessary work. It was agreed that the maintenance tasks identified by Cllr. Smyth would act as a basic template but that Mr Newport be requested to contact Cllrs. Smyth and Wade to agree the exact work package. Cllr. Rimmer proposed that a formal 'relaunch' of the Tennis Court be undertaken once the maintenance tasks have been completed.

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14. Any Other Business.

- The Great British Spring Clean – 4/5 March 2017. Cllr. Smyth stated that he would organise this for Semington to take part.
- The Chairman stated that he is awaiting definitive information regarding the forthcoming Parish Council elections.
- Cllr. Rimmer stated that he had identified a possible source for future Christmas trees.
- Cllr. Smyth asked the Clerk to 'chase up' British Telecom regarding adopting the telephone box in the High Street.

15. Date of Next Meeting.

The Council noted the dates of the following meetings thus:

- 8 March 2017, commencing at 8pm – Ordinary PC Meeting.
- 12 April 2017, commencing at 8pm – Ordinary PC Meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.58pm.

R A Oglesby
Chairman, Semington Parish Council

8 March 2017

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Appendix A

Semington Parish Council response to the Planning Inspectorate Appeal: APP/Y3940/W/16/3164255

Land North of St George's Road, Semington, Wiltshire, BA14 6GA

This comment comes from Semington Parish Council. We ask you to reject the appeal by Framptons / Oxford Law against Wiltshire Council's refusal of planning permission for housing development in a field to the west of the village at the end of St Georges Road. We ask you to do this broadly (though not exclusively) for the reasons given by Wiltshire Council.

Although the Parish Council has commented in depth on the original proposals, in what follows we take a broader view of the issues which are informed by our desire for Semington to retain the character of a small village community and to stay the sort of place where people like to live.

We wish to begin by reminding the Planning Inspectorate that, in 2016, Semington was the focus of three applications to build houses in the village. These were from Framptons / Oxford Law [16/06956], Richborough / Savills [16/05783], and Hannick Homes [16/01678]. In total these proposed to construct 171 new properties [75 + 72 + 24]. Had permission been granted by Wiltshire Council for all three, this would have increased the number of dwellings in the village by some 45%. This figure rises to 50% if only the core housing stock of the village is taken into account. Either way, the Parish Council takes the view that such increases could not be considered as sustainable development, especially as village facilities are so few, the primary school is near capacity, public transport is limited, and there is, in effect, no employment that does not require a commute (sometimes a long one). Further to the unsustainable nature of what was proposed, Wiltshire Council says that only some 130 new houses are scheduled to be built in all of the villages in the Melksham housing district. As such, we see no good reason why 132% of that target figure should be built in one village.

Although what follows is a comment on the proposal and appeal by Framptons / Oxford Law, we think that this cannot be properly understood unless all three proposals are taken into account. It is important to differentiate between the three proposals. The Hannick Homes proposal for 24 houses in a field (also along St George's Road) was brought forward following extensive consultation with the Parish Council and village. This began in April 2011 with an initial approach from Hannick Homes to the Council to gauge opinion. As the village was at that time discussing an application by the Orders of St John Care Trust [09/03542] for a care home development in fields adjacent to the High Street (now approved but not yet built), the Council suggested that the developer postpone their plans. They did so and discussions resumed in October 2013 when Hannick Homes made an informal presentation to villagers attending a well-attended Parish Council meeting. Subsequent to this, in November 2014, there was a public exhibition to provide villagers with a better idea of what type and scale of scheme Hannick Homes was proposing. The 12-month delay between these meetings was to allow the Parish Council to work with Wiltshire Council on a village housing needs survey in order to get an accurate idea of the need for new housing in the village, and also to get a feel for the scale of development people wanted and their preferences for different types of housing. There was a very good response from villagers to this survey and the report is available here: ow.ly/7Lae307AFP1. Hannick Homes took the results of the housing needs survey (and village feedback) into account when developing their proposals. All this culminated in a proposal (now approved by Wiltshire Council) which not only completely meets the housing need in the village (as determined by the 2014 survey), but also provides long sought after allotments for the village.

We provide all this detail in order to provide evidence that neither the village nor the Parish Council are against appropriate development. Quite the reverse is the case as other successful planning proposals also illustrate; for example, the development of the old hospital along St George's Road,

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and the affordable housing development at the Turnpike. All these are examples of how the village has grown organically and steadily over time in appropriate ways in order to meet need. This is what we think of as sustainable development.

Our experience with the other two developers was quite different and much less positive. Neither proposal offered anything of value to the village, and each proposed building on fields that were regularly used by villagers, as other evidence to you illustrates. Framptons / Oxford Law did come to a meeting with villagers, although long after their proposal had been received by Wiltshire Council. Their proposal did not offer anything for the benefit of the village, and their main argument was that we should support their plans as this provided our best chance to defeat the proposals by Richborough / Savills. It was not an argument that we found appealing or convincing.

In the end, there were 99 responses by villagers to Wiltshire Council about the Frampton / Oxford Law proposals (and 170 to the Richborough / Savills one). Over 99% of these made cases against the proposals. We think it is significant that many of the arguments used by villagers were essentially those used by Wiltshire Council planners to refuse the applications. These were that the proposed development by Framptons / Oxford Law is inappropriate because:

- a. the site lies outside of the limits of development defined for the village in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and therefore conflicts with core policy 2.
- b. the proposal, by reason of its scale and location, would be wholly out of scale and a disproportionate addition to the existing village. It would not be sustainable development and would be contrary to core policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy
- c. development on agricultural land would have a have a harmful impact on the appearance of the countryside, creating a large urbanised expansion beyond the existing built-up area of the village. This conflicts with core policies 51 and 57.
- d. If both developments were allowed, the village school would not be able to take all the children and some would have to travel to Melksham. This conflicts with core policy 3

You will see from the letters sent to Wiltshire Council that a number of other issues were raised by the Parish Council and villagers. We shall not repeat all these here, but should like to stress two of them: [i] the narrowness of St George's Road whose traffic flow has been increased significantly because of the Hannick Homes development, and [ii] drainage and sewerage problems.

Finally, the Parish Council (and the village) hope that you will support Wiltshire Council's refusal of planning permission for this proposed development. We think that, on balance, the significant harm that will be done to the village community outweighs any marginal benefits which might count in support of development. As such the proposal cannot represent sustainable development, and a decision should be made in accordance with the development plan. We look forward to presenting and defending our arguments at the planning enquiry.

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Appendix B

Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (MNP)

Observations from MNP Steering Group meeting on u" January 2017-01-29

1. The plan is at very early draft stage.
2. The Steering Group will not release the plan to a wider readership, including neighbouring parish councils, until it goes out to consultation required by regulations. Before then, it will be refined and redrafted by a consultant - who will be appointed after 1/04/2017 when funding becomes available.
3. Pages 15 to 32 of the draft cover policies. The steering group are struggling to distinguish between policies, objectives and strategies.
4. There are a number of MNP sub groups (e.g. health and community) whose job it will be to write objectives and distinguish these from policies.
5. The following snippets suggest the MNP needs watching carefully:
 - "The neighbourhood plan supports the a North Eastern by-pass and we will not allocate sites for development that could scupper that potential route";
 - "The other half of the field next to the Air Ambulance development (28 acres mentioned) will go for housing, commercial or maybe health facility development" ;
 - "There should be no industrial development beyond a certain point south, to protect non-encroachment on the canal";
 - A request by Seend P.C. for Melksham Without PC to join it in seeking a development ban 300 metres either side of the canal was to be given a polite but non committal reply;
 - There is a public consultation meeting on 24th Jan at Berryfield Village Hall, which Bill Scott will attend.

The meeting at Berryfield was a Neighbourhood Plan Open Day Event jointly hosted by Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group (BASRAG) and the MNP steering group. It consisted of a display and a list of "major issues" such as:

- How many more houses would we wish to see built?
- Where should a Melksham by-pass run?
- The route of the Wilts and Berks canal and enabling development.

Visitors were encouraged to respond to these on post-it notes. There was a sheet with the heading *Vision and Core Objectives*. The "vision" reads like an aim, and there were

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no objectives set out.

A key statement seemed to be: "Use of the remaining site at Outmarsh Farm after the relocation of the Air Ambulance for other appropriate commercial use".

This would be further encroachment towards the village with the implications for traffic movement through the village.

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Appendix C

VISION AND CORE OBJECTIVES

What do we want for the future?

Our Vision for Melksham and its outlying villages in Melksham Without aims to ensure that future development within the Neighbourhood Plan area meets the housing, business, community health and wellbeing, education, retail and transport service needs for the increasing population in an integrated and environmentally sustainable way.

Over the Plan period the aim is to create a community that is a great place to live, to work, to play and to visit in line with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and other national targets.

Principles

A. The Neighbourhood Plan period covers the period 2016 - 2026, with provision for review as deemed necessary with extension for further periods to take account of evolving Wiltshire core development planning strategies.

B. As developments approved or in the pipeline at the time of plan preparation have already exceeded Wiltshire core strategy targets, to recognise that Melksham is already a high growth area.

C. Respond to the needs of the increasing Melksham population by ensuring that schemes for new housing development also include community, local employment, retail, health and wellbeing, education, play areas, planted open spaces, leisure, recreational, footpaths / cycle-ways, and public transport facilities. These should be developed in an integrated and environmentally sustainable way in line with local and national planning policies.

D. The Neighbourhood Plan and local Councils support Wiltshire Council's bid to secure Large Local Major Transport Scheme (LLMTS) Fund grant funding to identify and safeguard a dual carriage preferred eastern route for a Melksham by-pass.

E. Recognise that a route for the Wilts and Berks Canal is safeguarded in line with Wiltshire's core strategy; embrace and optimise the opportunities associated with enabling the canal development tied into associated community] health] housing, infrastructure and leisure facilities.

F. EITHER: Create separate built boundaries for Melksham and each of the villages of Beanacre, Berryfield, Bowerhill, Shaw and Whitley and along a potential Melksham Eastern Bypass; with land outside of these boundaries to be safeguarded as green field buffers.

OR: Create a built boundary encompassing Melksham, Beanacre, Berryfield, Bowerhill, Shaw and Whitley and along a potential Melksham Eastern Bypass as a single sustainable settlement of housing, community and health facilities and workplaces; with land to the outside of this boundary to be safeguarded as greenfield buffers.

MERGED:

Create a single settlement boundary encompassing the Neighbourhood Plan area, retaining greenfield

Melksham, Beanacre, Berryfield; Bowerhill, Shaw and Whitley to protect village identities, but allowing environmentally sustainable settlement of housing; community and health facilities and workplaces only within acceptable development areas; with other land both within and outside of this boundary to be safeguarded for agricultural Use or as greenfield buffers.

Housing

G. To avoid unrestricted housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan area, limit the maximum number of new houses to be developed over the Plan period; inclusive of the 1,430 dwellings covered by applications or planning appeals already in the pipeline and 650-690 enabling housing development in the Berryfield area needed to support canal developments. This maximum housing figure to be subject to review in 2026, or as needed.

H. Oppose applications for any other significant new housing development applications, except brown field small windfall opportunities, prior to 2026 in all other SHLAA listed and other unlisted sites within the Plan area as being unsustainable within community resources, retaining those sites for agricultural use.

I. If they cannot be retained for their current uses, designate the Melksham Hospital and Canberra sites for replacement alternate community, youth service or health purposes; or alternatively to establish and meet the need locally for appropriate housing for older people or those with specific challenges.

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J. Adopt design criteria to create small local communities with adequate off-road parking separated by planted green space, play areas and footpaths / cycle-ways within new housing developments in order to alleviate the stress and anxiety reported by local GPs.

Community, Health and Wellbeing

K. Plan and subsequently provide appropriate community, dedicated youth provision, health and recreational facilities for residents of all ages to meet the needs of an expected increase in local population to around 35,000 by the end of the Plan period.

L. Use the remaining site at Outmarsh Farm after relocation of Wiltshire Air Ambulance for other appropriate commercial use.

M. Identify land to enable Wiltshire CCG, Melksham GPs and Wiltshire Health and Care to meet locality needs for community and primary health care services during the Plan period replacing essential local NHS services; taking account of the Plan area's central location to surrounding urban settlements;

N. Provide extra land for a possible extra GP surgery local to new housing developments to the north of the town by the end of the Plan period.

O. Safeguard land to provide appropriate community hubs" and 'district retail' facilities as needed.

P. Provide sustainable additional secondary school places within the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area, and provide additional primary school places as needed.

Q. Promote public transport to support mobility in our rural community by lengthening the Melksham Station platform, improvements to train and bus interconnectivity, interchange facilities, revised/additional bus routes and seek to provide extending bus services from Melksham to local healthcare facilities.

Commercial, Employment and Retail

R. Significantly increase the amount of land available within the Neighbourhood Plan areas for business, commercial and retail purposes to create sustainable employment opportunities, which enable residents to work closer to their homes.

S. Use existing brown field and other sites in Melksham and its Town Centre, and adjacent to the A350 at Bowerhill and Hampton Park West for employment, commercial and retail park purposes, including liaising with owners of possible brown field sites to explore how these sites might be regenerated or relocated to other Melksham edge of town employment areas; and if significant commercial town centre relocations occur, to regenerate these sites for integrated development for community, retail and riverside housing use.

T. Provide land to create a secure lorry park within a commercial area.

Implementation

U. Contribute to the identification of schemes for inclusion in the Wiltshire infrastructure delivery plan.

V. Collaborate in partnerships with Councils, local landowners, developers and other appropriate organisations to achieve the Vision of the Neighbourhood Plan, including assistance to produce site development plans and businesses cases to facilitate implementation.

W. Explore with partners the creation and implementation of a Melksham Community Land Trust to support developers, community groups and social housing providers to acquire and lease land within the Neighbourhood Plan area to be used to achieve appropriate development of social and sheltered housing to buy and to rent, and for other community / health purposes for the benefit of the wider community.

¹ In the locality guidance for neighbourhood planning

² Wiltshire Council are submitting funding proposal to SWLEP for OFT grant which includes Melksham by-pass

³ A multi-purpose Community facility providing a range of high quality and cost effective services to the local community, with the potential to develop new services in response to changing community needs.