



MELKSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM ON 1ST JULY



EXAMINATION SUCCESS

It's been a long process, but finally all the hard work put in by local volunteers and officers at the Town Council and Melksham Without Parish

Council has culminated in a Neighbourhood Plan for the town and parish that has successfully passed the examination stage!

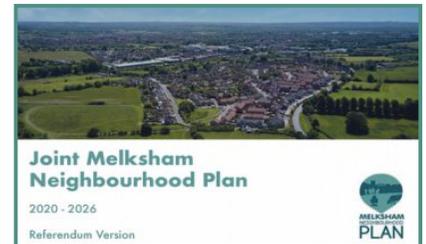
A PLAN FOR OUR COMMUNITY WITH REAL CLOUT

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced to enable local people to identify a shared vision and common goals for their area which have legal status in the planning system.

Steering Group Chair, Richard Wood comments "In recent years we've seen significant development pressure. By having a Neighbourhood Plan it enables us to gain more control over the planning system – it's already making a difference as the plan was quoted in a recent Wiltshire Council planning decision to refuse permission for a development of 50

dwelling to the rear of Townsend Farm, Semington Road."

It is important to note that the legislation does not allow Neighbourhood Plans to prevent development. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot say no to any more houses being built when there is a national and regional shortage of housing. Through our Neighbourhood Plan, however, we can set out where new development is appropriate and what we expect from any new development. And, importantly, what we want protected or need more of.



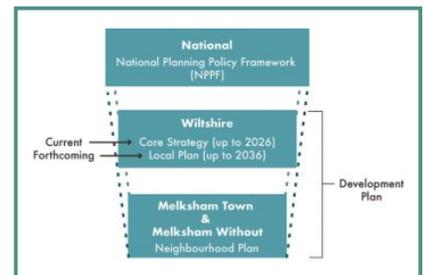
THE JOINT MELKSHAM PLAN AND WILTSHIRE

Neighbourhood Plans are required to operate within the context set by the National Planning Policy Framework and must also be in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy which sets out housing growth and environmental protection policies up to 2026.

Wiltshire Council is currently reviewing the Core Strategy which will be renamed the Wiltshire Local Plan. A review is required because the Government encourages local planning authorities to revisit their Local Plans every five years, and Wiltshire needs to be able to demonstrate that the county has enough housing land going forward.

This is particularly relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan because Wiltshire Council is set to allocate some development to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Area in their Local Plan review which will look ahead until 2036.

The Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead to 2026 – in connection with the current Core Strategy. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are already looking ahead to 2036 however and engaging with Wiltshire Council to make sure our Neighbourhood Plan sets the context not only for the next 5 years, but also looks ahead to the next Wiltshire Local Plan.



JOIN THE JOINT MELKSHAM STEERING GROUP!

As we look ahead to delivering the aspirations of the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, both within this plan period and to the next, we will quickly need to review this Plan to link into the Wiltshire Local Plan. We are, therefore, inviting people representing local groups and organisations to join the Steering Group. We are hoping for local people with a range of interests, such as environment or transport, green spaces or community facilities, or for people who represent parts of the town or the villages. The Steering Group meets monthly. Please contact either the Town or Parish Clerk to find out more.

WHAT'S IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

There are 19 planning policies presented in five sections through the Plan. The full Plan can be found online www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org, or alternatively, please contact the Town or Parish Clerk for a hard copy.

"It's vital that the Neighbourhood Plan supports diverse development that suits the needs of the community...which delivers real benefits for the local area"

A mini guide to the Neighbourhood Plan has also been produced; this will be available on the website and will be delivered with the next issue of the Melksham News.

1. Sustainable Development and Climate Change
2. Housing and Infrastructure
3. Shopping, working and getting around
4. Community Wellbeing and Nature
5. Natural and Built Environment

IT'S NOT OVER YET! WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Neighbourhood Plans need to gain the approval of a majority of voters of the neighbourhood plan area to come fully into force. If proposals pass the referendum, the local planning authority is under a legal duty to bring them into force. Voters in Melksham and Melksham Without will have their opportunity to vote on the Neighbourhood Plan on July 1st. Look out for your polling cards arriving in the post over the coming weeks.

With a positive referendum vote the Plan will become part of the Wiltshire Development Plan and will be used to make decisions on planning applications; in addition, there will be a higher proportion of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding from the developers coming directly to the town and parish council for projects in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

DROP-IN INFORMATION SESSION: Thursday 24th June 2pm To 7pm • Melksham Assembly Hall

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Neighbourhood Plans, and Planning in general, can be quite technical and the Steering Group have tried hard to explain this complicated subject in a variety of different ways. On the dedicated website www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org, are a series of videos by local people explaining what a Neighbourhood Plan is, and more importantly what it means to local residents. A mini guide is also being produced and will be delivered to every home in the Plan area before the Referendum. With the planned easing of lockdown restrictions on

21st June, the Town Hall and Parish Council office will be more open to the public, and so do ring or visit the two council offices if you have any queries. Restrictions allowing, there will also be a drop in session for residents to come along and ask questions, find out more information, and even pick up a hard copy of the Plan on Thursday 24th June between 2pm and 7pm at the Assembly Hall. Now that the Plan has reached this late stage in the Plan making process it is important to note that no changes to the Plan can now take place.

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