



Statement of Community Involvement

New Road Farm, Melksham

October 2024

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Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) summarises the process of public consultation that has been undertaken prior to the submission of planning for 295 homes and land set aside for a nursery.

Over the course of the past year, the project team engaged a variety of stakeholders including, local politicians, representative groups and over 1,400 residents and businesses living near to the site. This was through a variety of methods including telephone, email, letter, online meetings and an in-person consultation event.

Policy requirements

The consultation was carried out in accordance with central Government guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), which recommends the involvement of the local community in planning matters (Paragraph 4.39). It has also been informed by Wiltshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2020) and Guidelines for Pre-Application Involvement, and forms part of the supporting documentation for the planning application. Wiltshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement (Paragraph 1.2) states that, for major applications, applicants should seek to engage with the community before submitting their application:

“We need residents, businesses and other organisations to use local knowledge and expertise to help shape places and provide ideas as to what works well and what doesn't work as well so that we understand what you feel is best when making decisions in Wiltshire.”

The site



Above: The site plan.

The application site is located within the unitary authority of Wiltshire Council. The site is bounded by Sandridge Common to the south, housing to the west, open land to the north and New Road to the east.

Summary of consultation activities

The following table outlines all the consultation activities undertaken for the proposals:



Letter outlining the proposals and inviting residents to an in-person consultation events sent to 1,440 addresses near the site (see appendix III).



The provision of telephone helpline number and dedicated email address for enquiries.



Public consultation website content including the provision of an online questionnaire.



An in-person consultation event held at Melksham Community Campus in September 2024, attended by 61 people.



Correspondence with stakeholders via email.



In person and online meetings held between the project team and stakeholders.

Ensuring effective consultation

Having considered the requirements of Wiltshire Council, we have completed a programme of engagement which is considered appropriate for the proposed development of this site.

The project team carried out a full consultation, including an in-person event with open to all to ensure that stakeholders could share their views and have questions answered directly by the project team. We also had a public consultation website where members of the public could view our plans and get in touch.

At all times, we have considered how to make the material presented accessible, including ensuring language barriers are removed by producing communication material in clear, concise English, with technical terms explained in non-technical language.

Consultation activities

Engagement with the local community

We sought to reach a substantial number of residents and businesses deemed appropriate for the development proposed. To this end, we sent a letter (Appendix III) inviting residents to the public consultation event, held on 23 September from 3pm – 7pm at Melksham Community Campus. This was sent to 1,440 addresses. The aim of this event was to allow residents and other stakeholders the opportunity to engage with the plans, provide feedback and ask questions to the project team. The consultation event was also promoted via social media on Melksham without Parish Council's Facebook page. The event was attended by 61 people.

Throughout the entire timeline of the project, we have hosted a website which has been updated as more information has become available. Members of the public could use the website to leave feedback using the form provided and get in touch with the project team using the dedicated freephone number and email address.

Engagement with political and community stakeholders

Over the course of the project's development, we have engaged with various stakeholders, discussing the proposals at multiple stages in meetings and inviting input. A list of those we have engaged with can be seen below:

- Melksham without Parish Council
- Melksham Town Council
- Cllr Nick Holder
- Cllr Mike Sankey
- Cllr Phil Alford

From outset, the applicant has taken a proactive approach to engagement, in accordance with policies set out in the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. To this end, the applicant ensured that the Parish Council was kept informed throughout the project and met at regular intervals, the first such meeting being in June 2023. These meetings helped to overcome issues or concerns about the plans and allowed ideas and suggestions from members to be incorporated into the emerging proposals from an early stage.

Consultation responses and feedback

Summary

A total of 12 pieces of feedback were received both via paper feedback forms and the online version (both having identical questions). As summary of the responses to each question can be seen below:

What do you think of the proposal at New Road Farm?

- There is a need for more homes in Melksham, particularly affordable homes.
- Melksham has a lack of facilities for existing residents such as GPs and dentists. This problem could be exacerbated by the proposals for new homes.
- Sandridge Common is affected by high levels of traffic at present and more cars from the New Road Farm site could make this problem worse.

What are your views on the proposals for 295 new homes as part of the plans?

- The overall layout was viewed positively with stakeholders noting the need for sizeable areas of open green space for children to use.
- 295 homes could be too many for the site when brought forward in conjunction with other proposals in the area.

What do you think of our plans to improve local infrastructure, such as new pedestrian and cycling connections and land for a nursery?

- The plans for a nursery are welcome as this infrastructure is very much needed in Melksham.
- New cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is welcomed but needs to be connected to existing routes.
- Sandridge Common must be slowed down to 30mph from the roundabout entrance to the site until the town centre.
- More infrastructure such as GP surgeries and dentists is needed in the area to cope with more housing.

If you have any other comments on the proposals, please write them here.

- Local wildlife must be taken into account when formulating the proposals.
- Some residents mentioned the number of brownfield sites in Melksham that they felt should be developed before green field sites are considered.

How we have responded to feedback

People told us	Our response
Principle of development	
Some respondents did not feel that green field development should be considered in Melksham at the present time.	Whilst we agree that brownfield sites should be prioritised for development where possible, Wiltshire does not have enough such sites to satisfy housing demand. The site at New Road Farm is allocated for development in the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review and the applicant has worked hard over sustained period to involve local stakeholders in the plans as they have developed.

Housing composition	
Some residents commented that affordable homes are needed in Melksham and asked what sort of homes these would be.	The applicant recognises the need for quality, affordable homes in Melksham and as part of the plans for 295 homes, 40% will be classed as affordable. This number will be split between three types: First Homes, social rent and affordable rent. This will ensure that the housing mix will provide for as many people as possible. The affordable homes will be spread throughout the site and will not clustered in one area. All of the affordable homes will be indistinguishable from those sold on the open market.
Local infrastructure	
Some respondents expressed concern that local infrastructure such as GP surgeries and dentists might not cope with more homes being built in the area.	We are currently in discussion with officers at Wiltshire Council regarding Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions to improve local infrastructure. The funds collected through these agreements would be earmarked for specific purposes outlined in an agreement between the applicant and Wiltshire Council, such as necessary infrastructure and amenities that require improvements. Wiltshire Council will then consult on these plans, which will include how they wish to spend the Section 106 and CIL funding that the applicant will provide. As part of the plans, the applicant will provide land for use as a nursery, in response to a local identified need. This will be then built and operated by a private provider.
Traffic and pressure on infrastructure	
Some respondents commented on the impact of more cars using roads in Melksham.	From the beginning, the applicant has sought to maximise the sustainable location of the New Road Farm site. The site is well connected to the centre of Melksham by walking and cycling with its access road opening onto the A3102 and near Eastern Way. Local public transport routes are therefore accessible to future residents. The applicant will deliver new walking and cycling infrastructure as part of the scheme, ensuring a safe and accessible option for travel other than the private car.
Construction management	

Some respondents questioned the construction impact that the development would have on neighbours.	Whilst disruption is unavoidable during construction, the planning application will be supported by a Construction Management Plan, which will be approved by Wiltshire Council. The plan will ensure that the impact of construction is minimised where possible to avoid unnecessary levels of disturbance to the surrounding community. This will include minimising the effects of noise, construction times and dust throughout the construction process.
Noise	
Some neighbours questioned the impact of noise on the area.	As part of our proposals, we have conducted a full noise assessment that will ensure that this will not be an issue.

Conclusion

The consultation strategy detailed within this document demonstrates how we have sought to engage with political and community stakeholders.

By engaging with the community, we provided an opportunity for stakeholders to voice their opinions on the development proposals and to engage with members of the project team. We have demonstrated that they have proactively fulfilled the requirements set out within Wiltshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2020), the Guidelines for Pre-Application Involvement, and the requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

As this report sets out, since the start of the consultation programme we have met with key stakeholders and provided the opportunity for neighbours to engage with the project team, either via telephone, email or via a face-to-face public consultation event.

Where concerns or issues have been raised or requests for additional information sought, we have been prompt to respond.

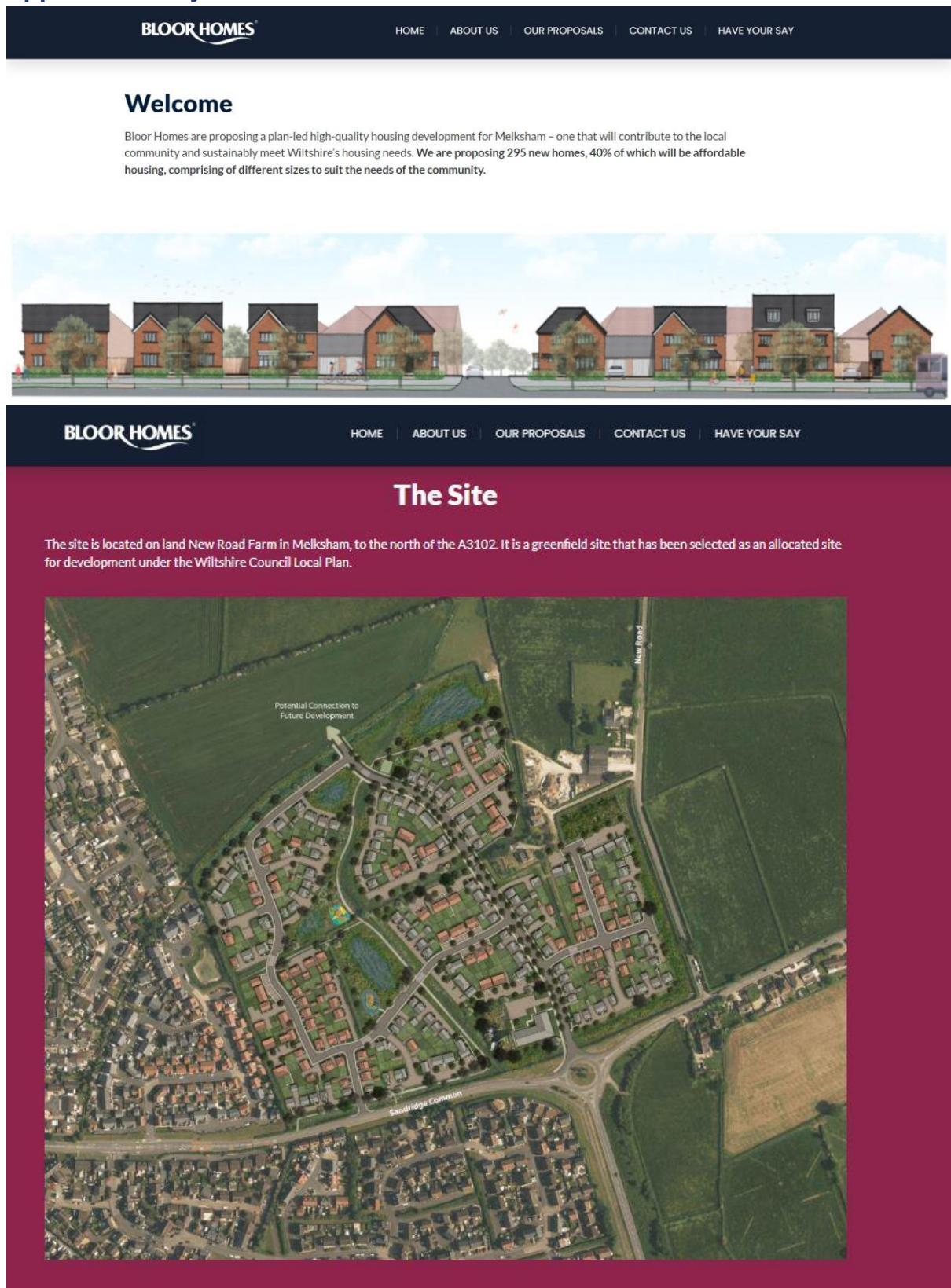
We are continuing to engage with stakeholders as the application progresses through the planning process.

Next steps

- Updates to stakeholders following submission of planning application.
- Continue to respond to queries received by the project inbox and phonenumber as they arise.

Appendices

Appendix I: Project website



Consultation

Melksham Community Campus, Market Place SN12 6ES on 23rd September from 3pm-7pm.



We will be submitting our full planning application for the New Road Farm site to Wiltshire Council for approval. Before we submit, we want to hear your views on our plans during our consultation this September. As part of our consultation, we are hosting an in-person event at the Melksham Community Campus, Market Place SN12 6ES on 23rd September from 3pm-7pm. You will be able to meet our project team, ask questions and provide feedback on the proposals. If you are unable to join us on the 23rd September, you can learn more about the proposals by calling the team on 0800 130 3270 or emailing us at newroadfarm@jbp.co.uk.

[Read more about The Proposal](#)

Potential Timeline



Contact us

You can get in touch by emailing newroadfarm@jbp.co.uk, calling 0800 130 3270 or by leaving your details below, and we will make sure you're kept up to date with the project.

☐ I agree to be contacted about the proposals for New Road Farm. We will keep your information on file until the development is complete. We will not pass your details to any third party and you can be removed from the mailing, by informing a member of the project at: newroadfarm@jbp.co.uk

Send

About Us

Since John Bloor built our first home in 1969, we've established a reputation for building quality homes that stand the test of time.

The Bloor family still owns and runs the business today, ensuring high standards are maintained over 50 years later.

Today, our team from planners and designers to tradespeople and customer services, brings together a wide range of skills with a shared personality trait: we care about building quality, well-designed homes we'd be proud for our own families to live in. It's why we're proud to be a five-star housebuilder with 98.6% of customers who would recommend Bloor to family & friends. And why we're dedicated to creating better life experiences. One home at a time.



Finding the right location

It takes a considerable amount of time, research, expertise and planning to create spaces for our communities to thrive in and a choice of home designs to suit everyone's lifestyle.

Whether that includes the convenience of nearby shops, schools and transport links, open-plan public spaces for all to enjoy, easy access to a doorstep walk, or ample parking space.

Creating homes that integrate with the local area

We thoroughly consider the areas we propose to build in, designing welcoming settings with a variety of home types and space.

We make every effort to preserve natural features and the conservation of wildlife.

[Read more about The Proposal](#)

Our Proposals

We propose 295 high-quality and sustainable new homes and are committed to ensuring that 40% of these are affordable.

Our current masterplan proposals would create a residential developable area of approximately 10.07 hectares, with an average density of 38 dwellings per hectare, in accordance with the existing built form in the area. This would comprise a mix of homes in accordance with relevant policies from the Wiltshire Local Plan and Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.

The mix and resulting density will vary across the site. In some areas there may be higher concentrations of terraces, maisonettes and flats, in others more detached, larger homes. The mix will vary, partly aiming to assist in creating character areas within the site.



Benefits of Bloor's New Road Farm proposal

Our proposals are more than just a housing development – they are a proposal that follows Wiltshire Council's strategy for sustainable growth in Melksham's. We are determined to make sure that the infrastructure sustains our proposals to support it, integrate sensitively with the character of Melksham and positively contribute to the wider community.



Provide Melksham with a new nursery

We will provide land for a nursery on the site, contributing to the community's needs.



High quality, future proof housing

In accordance with emerging build standards, provision of gas-free energy supply through the use of photovoltaics, air source heat pumps and electric vehicle charging points.



Sustainable travel

Bicycle parking, electric vehicle charging and ensuring opportunities to facilitate active travel in/out of the site are secured.



Connecting to the local area

The site is well connected to the centre of Melksham for pedestrians, cyclists and by car, with its access road opening onto the A3102 and near Eastern Way. Local public transport routes are therefore accessible to future residents of the site.



Enhancing the local environment

Tree planting along the site boundary, a main avenue of street trees, providing an attractive area for existing and new residents that fits in with the local environment.



Houses designed to integrate with Melksham

The style of housing proposed will be in keeping with the character of surrounding housing and Melksham character. This is also in accordance with the principles of the Melksham Design Guide, and Wiltshire Design Guide.



Have Your Say

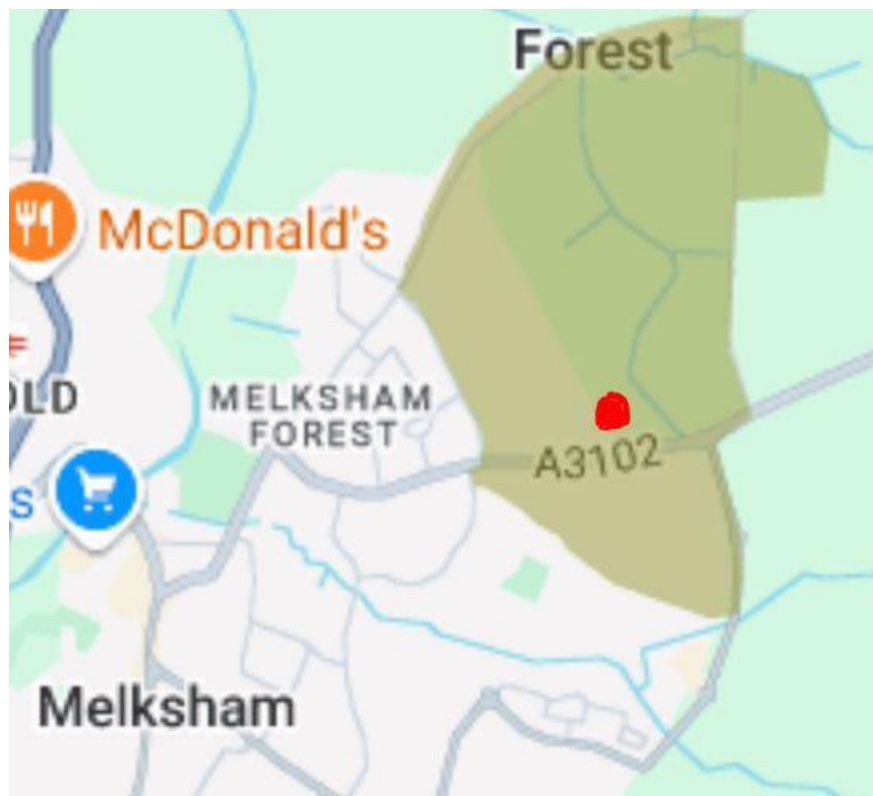
New Road Farm Feedback Form

Your feedback is helpful as we develop our proposals for New Road Farm. Please take a moment to share your thoughts by completing the form below. If you wish to discuss further, get in touch with us via our dedicated phone number or email address.

1. What do you think of the proposal at New Road Farm?

2. What are your views on the proposals for 295 new homes as part of the

Appendix II: Consultation mailing area



The site is denoted by the red dot

Appendix III: Consultation invitation letter



13th September 2024

Dear neighbour,

Re. Community drop-in session – learn more about proposed new homes for Melksham

I am writing to let you know that Bloor Homes is preparing a planning application for new homes on the land at New Road Farm (north of the A3102) Melksham. The site benefits from a draft allocation in the emerging draft Local Plan Review. We propose 295 high-quality and sustainable new homes with land for a nursery on the site, and we are committed to ensuring that 40% of these are affordable housing.

The site would comprise a mix of different sized homes, with the density of these varying across the site but in-keeping with existing surroundings. In some areas, there may be higher concentrations of terraces, maisonettes and flats; in others, there would be more detached, larger homes.

We are committed to listening to what people say about our proposals and how we could improve them. From 23rd September-7th October, we will hold a public consultation with the opportunity for people to have their say online and at a local drop-in session. You can meet our project team, ask questions and provide feedback.

Venue: Ground Floor at Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES.

Date and Time: 23rd September, 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

If you are unable to join us on the 23rd September, our website at www.newroadfarm.com will launch on 20th of September, containing details about our plans and an online survey form to feedback on our proposals. In the meantime, you can learn more about the proposals by calling the team on **0800 130 3270** or emailing us at newroadfarm@jbp.co.uk.

Your feedback is highly valuable in helping us develop our proposals ahead of our planned submission of a planning application in October 2024. All views are welcome, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Bloor Homes South West

Appendix IV: Consultation feedback form



New Road Farm Feedback Form

Your feedback is helpful as we develop our proposals for New Road Farm. Please take a moment to share your thoughts by completing the form below. If you wish to discuss further, get in touch with us via our dedicated phone number or email address.

What do you think of the proposal at New Road Farm?

A large, empty grey rectangular box intended for the respondent to provide their feedback on the proposal at New Road Farm.

What are your views on the proposals for 295 new homes as part of the plans?

A large, empty grey rectangular box intended for the respondent to provide their views on the proposals for 295 new homes.

What do you think of our plans to improve local infrastructure, such as new pedestrian and cycling connections and land for a nursery?

A large, empty grey rectangular box intended for the respondent to provide their thoughts on the plans to improve local infrastructure.

If you have any other comments on the proposals, please write them here:

About you

If you would like to be kept up to date about the developments progress, please share the following information:

Name

Email

Address

City/Town Post Code

Post Code

Phone Number

Please let us know whether you are happy for us to use your details to keep you updated:

Yes ☐ No ☐