

To:	Lucie Turner	From:	Drainage Team (Arun Govind T)
------------	--------------	--------------	-------------------------------

Planning App Ref:	PL/2026/01249
Service Ref:	Drainage
Date:	30/04/2026

PROPOSAL

Full planning permission

Construction of Bellmouth Access to Melksham Substation from Westlands Lane.

SITE LOCATION

Land at Westlands Lane, to the North of Melksham Substation, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 7QF

SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTEE POSITION

Object	
Holding Objection: Further information required	X
Support	
No comment	
No objection	
No objection subject to conditions	
Consultation not required	

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- Application Form (*Feb 2026*)
- Existing Site Plan (*Feb 2026*)
- Planning Statement (*Feb 2026*)
- Proposed Site Plan (*Feb 2026*)
- Site Location Plan (*Feb 2026*)
- 33kV Grid Park Drainage Layout & Sections (*April 2026*)
- Surface Water Calcs (*April 2026*)

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

Context

In planning terms, flood risk refers to the potential for development to increase the likelihood or severity of flooding on-site or elsewhere, while drainage considerations relate to the capacity of the site and surrounding infrastructure to manage surface water runoff in a sustainable and effective manner.

The local planning authority must be satisfied that the proposed development will not increase flood risk, either on-site or elsewhere, and that surface water will be managed in a sustainable and coordinated manner.

Where necessary, planning conditions or legal agreements may be used to secure the implementation, maintenance, and monitoring of SuDS and other drainage infrastructure.

Assessment

The proposal seeks permission to create a new vehicular bellmouth access from Westlands Lane to the Melksham Substation, replacing a small area of existing unsurfaced hardstanding with a tarmac-surfaced access arrangement to support safe and improved entry.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and there is a low level of risk from fluvial flooding. The site has a high level of risk from surface water (Figure 1) and ground water flooding (Figure 2).

The applicant has submitted a drainage plan proposing that surface water runoff from the bellmouth access will be directed to an infiltration swale. However, no infiltration testing data has been provided to demonstrate that this approach is viable. Additionally, supporting calculations have not been presented to confirm whether the proposed swale dimensions are sufficient. While some calculations are included within the “33kV Grid Park compound and access road drainage calculations” document, the referenced node and pipe numbers do not align with the drainage layout, and therefore the calculations are assumed to be outdated.

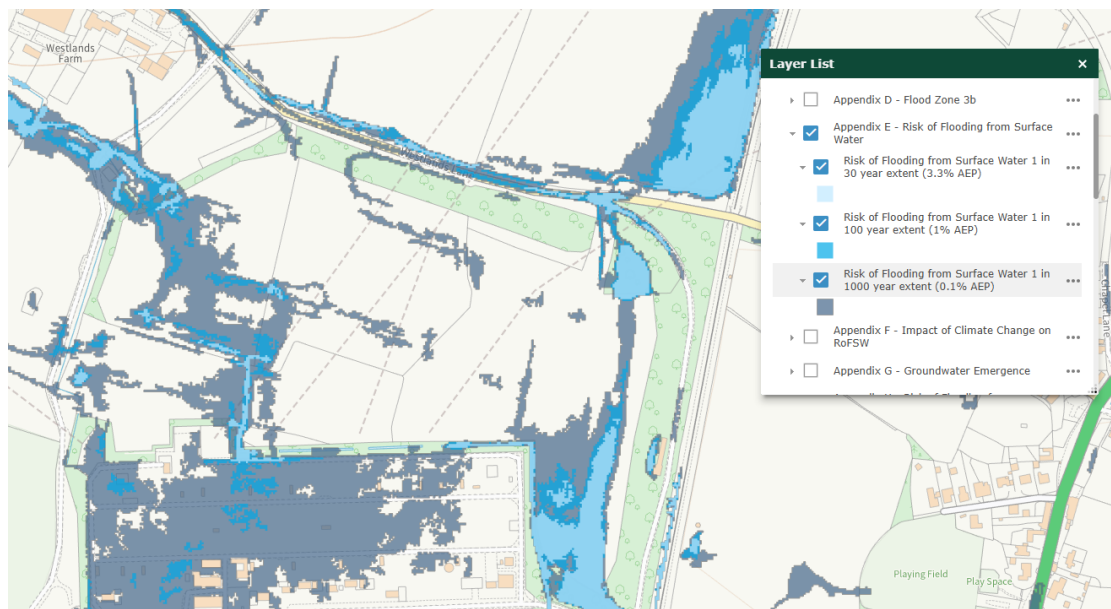


Figure 1

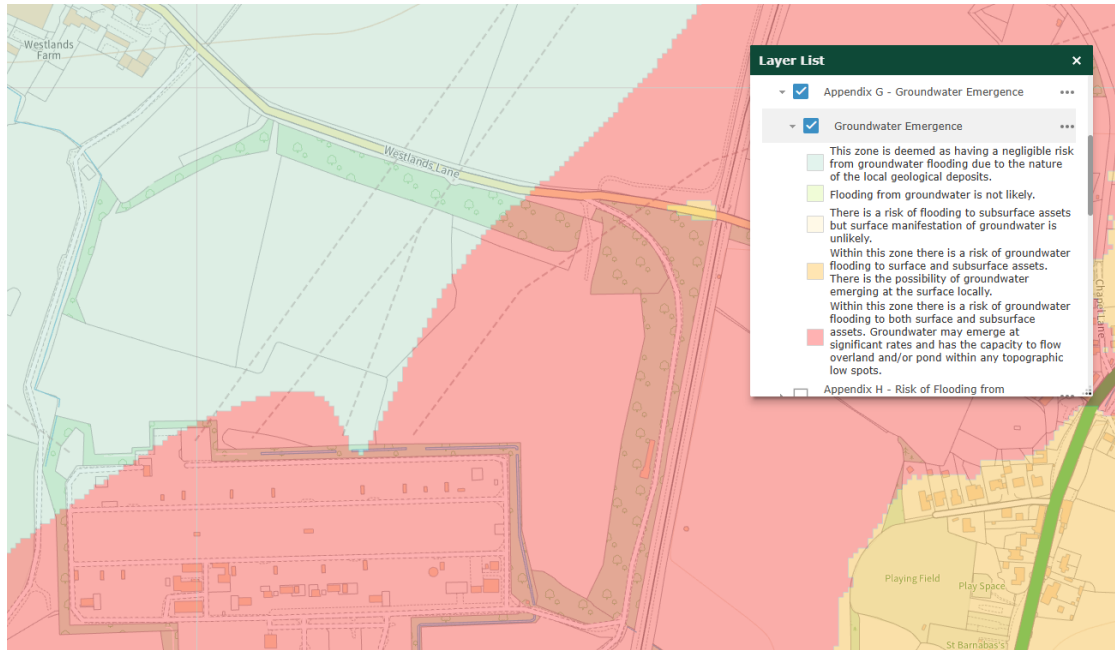


Figure 2

RECOMMENDATION

Holding objection as further information required

At this stage, a full assessment cannot be completed due to insufficient information. The following documents/information are required to enable a proper review of the drainage and flood risk aspects of the proposal:

- Calculations that demonstrate that the infiltration swale is appropriately sized to manage surface water flows originating on the access road.
- Evidence of soil infiltration tests undertaken in accordance with BRE 365, together with the results of seasonal groundwater monitoring, and soakaway calculations that demonstrate the infiltration swale has been designed in accordance with soakaway guidance.
- Pre and post development exceedance routing that demonstrates flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- Details of how the proposed drainage features on the site will be maintained and managed after completion.
- Evidence that the proposed drainage design provides a sufficient level of water treatment.

INFORMATIVES

- The EA's standing advice for minor extensions will apply.
- All new drainage will need to comply fully with Building Regulations Part H (and they should engage with the building control department in order to ensure this).
- In line with the NPPF and National Standards for SuDS, the applicant should seek to use SuDS wherever practicable as part of the surface water drainage strategy.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [NPPF December 2024 Link](#)
Planning and Flood Risk (Paras 170–182)

Wiltshire Core Strategy – Adopted January 2015 [Wiltshire Core Strategy Link](#)
Core Policy 67 requires that all new development must address flood risk from all sources and not increase flood risk elsewhere. It supports the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and requires that developments demonstrate how surface water will be managed sustainably.

Wiltshire Local Plan (emerging) [Local Plan Review Link](#)
Development must avoid high flood risk areas using the sequential approach. Proposals require a Flood Risk Assessment, Surface Water Drainage Strategy, and Groundwater Assessment where relevant. All schemes must include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), with major developments achieving a 30% reduction in runoff compared to greenfield rates, following the surface water discharge hierarchy.

Culverting and building over watercourses is discouraged, and natural drainage features should be retained or restored. Drainage strategies must ensure safety during extreme flood events (1-in-100-year + climate change) and provide safe access/egress. SuDS should also deliver biodiversity, amenity, and water quality benefits.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Wiltshire Council Drainage Betterment Strategy (2024) [SPD Link](#)
This technical guidance outlines expectations for surface water discharge hierarchy, attenuation, exceedance routes, water quality, and post-development monitoring.

Wiltshire Design Guide (March 2024) [SPD Link](#)
Includes principles of good design, including integration of SuDS and flood resilience.

Other Relevant Policies and Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Flood Risk and Drainage [Guidance Link](#)
Covers detailed expectations for flood risk assessments, SuDS design, discharge hierarchy, sequential testing and climate change allowances.

Wiltshire SFRA (2024) [SFRA Link](#)
This document underpins the Sequential and Exception Test application and provides site screening evidence.

Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports [Section 19 Reports Link](#)
These documents summarise investigations into significant local flood incidents and establish what caused the flooding, how authorities responded, and actions needed to prevent future floods.

National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) June 2025 [Guidance Link](#)

Establishes mandatory criteria for runoff destination hierarchy, interception, flood resilience, water quality, amenity, biodiversity, and long-term maintenance for all new developments in England.

SuDS Manual (CIRIA C753)

This document set outs design principles, especially where attenuation, exceedance routing, and water quality are discussed.

Infiltration drainage design must be supported by ground investigations, including infiltration testing in accordance with *British Research Establishment (BRE) Digest 365 – Soakaway Design*, and groundwater level monitoring that accounts for seasonal variation.