



Planning Update Statement

Land East of Eastern Way, Melksham
Lidl Great Britain Ltd

Application Number: PL/2026/02458

Site Address: Land East of Eastern Way, Melksham

Proposal: Construction of a new food store (Class E) with associated parking, landscaping, drainage and servicing. The proposed development incorporates a single storey building with a total floor space of 2184m², 132 car parking spaces including 6 disabled bays, 9 parent and child spaces and 2 electric vehicle charging spaces, comprehensive landscaping scheme and SUDS drainage scheme.

Applicant: Lidl Great Britain Ltd

Town / Parish Council: Melksham Without Parish Council

Electoral Division: Bowerhill

Grid Ref: 392232E 164224N

Type of Application: Full Planning Application

Case Officer: Russell Brown

1.0 Purpose of Statement

This Planning Update Statement has been prepared to accompany the submission of revised plans to support the above referenced planning application. The Statement summarises the consultation responses received to date and the applicant's response to the points raised.

The Statement then sets out the planning considerations and concludes that the application should be approved without delay.

2.0 Consultation Summary

Melksham Without Parish Council welcome the additional retail provision on the eastern side of Melksham alongside the employment opportunities but raised points regarding highway improvements and operational questions. These are responded to in detail in later sections of this Statement. Melksham Town Council does not object to the principle of the development and support the comments made by Melksham Without Parish Council.

There is a strong majority support for the proposed development based on the letters received by members of the public. 25 letters of support from members of the public and interested parties have been received and 13 letters of objection. 4 letters were received that neither expressed support or objection but logged comments and observations on the application.

The most common point of support was that:

- Residents on the eastern side of Melksham currently have limited access to major supermarkets
- The existing Lidl is too small and has outgrown its current site
- A larger store would provide a wider product range and improved shopping experience

The development would lead to better accessibility for Eastern Melksham with many respondents stating that:

- The proposal would respond to rapid housing growth in eastern and southern Melksham
- Eastern Melksham has experienced significant housing growth but lacks retail facilities; and
- The proposal would be within walking distance of new housing developments

Other benefits of the proposal referenced by the public letters of support were:

- The creation of new jobs and additional economic activity in the eastern area of the town
- Reducing traffic congestion in the town centre and spread shopping trips more evenly across Melksham
- The potential use of solar infrastructure and green technology

Planning issues raised for consideration of the proposal are:

- Principle of development
- Highway safety and parking provision
- Loss of undeveloped agricultural land
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Town centre impact
- Residential amenity

3.0 Site Description

The application site extends to 1.89ha, comprising a relatively flat parcel of agricultural land bounded by the A3102, Sandridge Common to the north and Eastern Way to the west. The site is situated approximately 1.8km to the east of Melksham and is bordered by detached residential dwellings on the north eastern boundary of the site, extending along Sandridge Common, and open fields to the east, with a farm and associated barns beyond.

Land immediately to the east of the site benefits from Outline Planning Permission for a large residential-led mixed use development.

The site is considered out-of-centre for the purposes of relevant retail planning policy.

4.0 Planning History

The site is not subject to any recent planning applications, however, there are a number of planning applications that have been submitted in the immediate vicinity. These are:

- W/04/01895/OUTES: Comprehensive mixed use urban extension comprising residential development of 670 dwellings and associated ancillary facilities and works including local centre, primary school, sports and recreation facilities and distributor road. Approved 06/08/2008
- PL/2023/11188: Demolition of agricultural buildings and development of up to 500 dwellings; up to 5,000 square metres of employment (class E(g)(i)) & class E(g)(ii)); land for primary school (class F1); land for mixed-use hub (class E / class F); open space; provision of access infrastructure from Sandridge Common (A3102); and provision of all associated infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of the site (Outline application relating to access). Approved 12/05/2025

5.0 The Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a Class E food store with associated parking, landscaping, drainage and servicing. The proposed development incorporates a single storey building with a total floor space of 2,184m² (GIA) including a net sales area of 1,529m², 134 car parking spaces including 6 disabled bays, 9 parent and child spaces and 2 electric vehicle charging spaces, a comprehensive landscaping scheme and SUDS drainage scheme. The new store would replace the existing store in Melksham.



The application is supported by revised details listed in the covering letter and the following documents:

- Pell Frischmann Response to Wiltshire Council Highways Comments
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Constraints Plan
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Assessment
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment
- Landscape Management Statement
- Energy and Sustainability Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Waste Management Plan
- Geophysical Survey Report
- Geo-Environmental Investigation Report
- Planning and Retail Impact Assessment

During the course of the application, minor amendments have been submitted primarily to respond to the requests of the Highway Authority to accommodate changes to the access proposal and wider network improvements to promote active travel. The landscaping strategy has also been amended to increase tree canopy cover and positively respond to consultation comments.

A written response to Wiltshire Council Highways Comments has been prepared by Pell Frischmann on behalf of the applicant and confirms the following:

- Physical splitter island on the northern side of the right turn lane has been added to the access design
- The crossing on the splitter island on the southern arm of the roundabout at Sandridge Common has been widened to 3m to accommodate cyclists.
- The northeast connection is for pedestrians only. Any cyclists travelling from the east on Sandridge Common will be able to utilise the proposed pedestrian / cycle connection to the south east of the roundabout.
- The crossing distance at the access junction is approximately 12m which is typical of similar access and crossing dimensions accepted by Wiltshire Council in Royal Wootton Bassett, Calne and Chippenham.
- A financial contribution of £35,000 to deliver bus stops will be secured through a legal agreement

6.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Policy S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy S5: Principle of development outside settlements

Policy CC2: Mitigation of climate change

Policy CC3: Adaptation to climate change

Policy E2: Meeting the need for business land and premises

Policy TC3: Main town centre uses outside town centres

Policy TC4: Assessing the impact of development on town centre

Policy DP3: Key principles for well designed places

Policy DP4: The design process

Policy TR3: Located development in sustainable locations

Policy TR4: Street design, access and parking

Policy TR6: Assessing transport impacts

Policy HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development

Policy P2: Ground conditions

Policy P4: Impact of development on existing activities



Policy P5: Maintaining public safety and security
Policy F4: Assessing flood risk for decision making
Policy F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding
Policy F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
Policy N2: Improving the natural environment
Policy N3: Trees in new development

Wiltshire Local Plan: Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015)

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 3: Infrastructure requirements
Core Policy 15: Spatial Strategy: Melksham Community Area
Core Policy 38: Retail and Leisure
Core Policy 41: Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy
Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Core Policy 51: Landscape
Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure
Core Policy 55: Air Quality
Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment
Core Policy 60: Sustainable transport
Core Policy 61: Transport and new development
Core Policy 62: Development impacts on the transport network
Core Policy 65: Movement of goods
Core Policy 67: Flood risk
Core Policy 68: Water resources

Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 (adopted August 2025)

Policy 1: Sustainable design and construction
Policy 11: Sustainable transport and active travel
Policy 17: Trees and hedgerows
Policy 20: Locally distinctive, high-quality design

7.0 Consultations

The applicant team has made a revised proposal to respond to representations made and consultation responses received following consideration of the initial application documentation. A summary of the consultation responses is provided below along with the applicant's response.

Consultee	Nature of Comment	Applicant's Response
Archaeology	Advised the applicant to commission a geophysical survey of the site and present a report on the results to Wiltshire Council for review and approval. The results of the geophysical survey were submitted in August and the Archaeologist commented that the survey identifies a number of linear and curvilinear features that will require further investigation in order to establish their date, extent and character. This	The applicant continues to challenge the request for trial trenching to be undertaken prior to the determination of the application. Instead, the applicant proposes that the investigation works can be secured by an appropriately worded pre-commencement planning condition. The condition will have the same effect, that no development will commence until the works have been completed and signed off by the Council's archaeologist.



	investigation will involve a trial trench evaluation of the site, with trenches located across the possible linear features, while further trenches are spread across the site in an array in order to locate and identify any features that may have been missed. It is requested that this investigation is carried out prior to the determination of the application.	The site to the east (PL/2023/11188) was approved with a condition requiring an Archaeological Management Plan to be submitted and implemented prior to any ground disturbance works on site and the applicant considers a similar approach should be proposed for this application.
Arboriculture	No objection. An Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan must be added as a pre-commencement condition to ensure the appropriate methods and materials are used for construction, and that the trees on site are sufficiently protected.	The applicant agrees to the recommended pre-commencement condition.
Councillor Nick Holder	Given the amount of planned development in this area, there should be an opportunity to fully consider cumulative impact of developments at planning committee.	The application is likely to be determined after the introduction of the National Scheme of Delegation. The application was proceed through the gateway procedure to determine whether attendance at planning committee is necessary.
Lead Local Flood Authority	Object. A final discharge point has not been presented. Two are shown on the drainage strategy plan. The current drainage approach does not prioritise source control features and solely relies on pipe to tank system with an interceptor to provide water quality. Connection to highway drainage system is not encouraged and other methods of surface water disposal should be considered first.	The applicant has submitted a detailed response to the LLFA comments in a 'Technical Note' prepared by Mayer Brown.
Melksham Without Parish Council	The Parish Council welcomes the additional retail provision on the eastern side of Melksham, and employment opportunities but raise the following points. • Pedestrian and cycle connectivity should be provided between the proposed food store and	We note that improvements to the existing Public Right of Way (PROW) MELW27 that connects to Eastern Way south of the site will be provided via S106 contribution from the Blackmore Farm development to the east. The footway along the southern side of Sandridge Common to the east will also be



	the major residential developments to the east of the site. • New footpath on the east side of Eastern Way was welcomed • Concerns regarding vehicular access arrangements and support expressed for exploring a left-in/left-out arrangement • Request for a contribution towards bus provision and bus stop infrastructure • Request for Construction Management Plan prior to approval of the application • Clarification on lighting, refrigeration and delivery impacts e.g. times of operation • Request for Wiltshire Council's Economic Development team to review and comment on the application	widened as part of the Blackmore Farm development. These improvements, in conjunction with the proposed facilities on Eastern Way will provide connectivity between the proposed foodstore and the residential development to the east. Wiltshire Council Highways have confirmed they are happy with the principle of the proposed access arrangement with an all-movements junction. It should also be noted that an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit was carried out on the proposed arrangement and no issues were raised. It has been confirmed that Lidl are willing to provide a financial contribution towards bus stop provision on Eastern Way. A Construction Management Plan has not been requested by Wiltshire Council Highways, and would usually be conditioned. Details on lighting, refrigeration, delivery impacts and times of operation are all included in the submitted documents, notably the Energy and Sustainability Statement and Transport Assessment. Relevant restrictions can be secured by planning condition.
Melksham Town Council	Does not object to the principle but supports the comments of Melksham Without Parish Council on road layout, turning, footpath, cycle ways, bus stop, real time traffic info. Objects on design, materials and landscaping.	The applicant has increased the number of mature trees and foliage on site in recent applications. Design and materials has been discussed with the case officer who has supported the approach in the context of existing and planned development in the area.
Landscape	Enclosed a marked up drawing as to where I believe an additional 16 tree planting locations could be included. These locations would in addition to boosting canopy cover also deliver ecosystem services benefits in terms of reducing the urban heat island effect, provide shade to vehicles and pedestrians, and reduce the	Revised landscaping strategy submitted that responds to the suggestions of the landscape officer.



	peak surface water run off from the hard surfaces of the scheme in line with National SUDS guidance where currently most of the proposed trees in the existing scheme do not perform these important functions. If these could be of medium sized canopy species such as Acer campestre 'Elstijk' as listed in your canopy calculator schedule that would provide an additional 1256m² of canopy cover across the scheme without impacting on the design layout. This would raise the overall mature canopy cover of the scheme at 25 years to 15.5% which is much closer to the strategic Wiltshire Council targets as well as the tree planting actually delivering the full range of ecosystem services required of it under the WDG. I would recommend each tree planting position is reviewed to see whether a larger species could be delivered in that location.	
Highways	The principle of the development is accepted in highway terms. The principal access arrangements are accepted in terms of geometry and capacity for the new food store, subject to a physical splitter island being provided. The access arrangements will require further assessment if additional development served through this access comes forward. The additional pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is welcomed, but additional works/connections are required. • Provide splitter island within hatching to North of RTL. • Show existing refuge crossing South of the Sandridge Common roundabout widened to 3m (both dropped kerbs and refuge) • Provide dropped kerb on Sandridge Common for	Splitter island included. Existing refuge crossing South of the Sandridge Common roundabout is proposed to be widened to 3m. Cyclists will not be using the northern link so dropped kerb not required. Changes to the site access are not proposed as these would either move away from the desire line for pedestrians or result in a significantly larger junction. No issues were raised on the proposed junction arrangement in the independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. Bus stops will be provided through a financial contribution to secure their delivery. Car parking spaces have been extended, and this has no implications on vehicle tracking. It is not considered necessary to require green travel vouchers for Lidl staff as active travel is already promoted by Lidl. The travel vouchers will not make an

	cyclists leaving the carriageway. • Reconsideration of ped/cycle crossing options at site access • Provide two new bus stops on Eastern Way • Extend length of all car parking spaces to 4.8m (redraw delivery vehicle swept paths to ensure access not impeded). • Update Staff Travel Plan for inclusion of £300 travel vouchers.	otherwise unacceptable development, acceptable, which is a principle test of a planning obligation.
Ecology	No objection subject to conditions.	The applicant accepts the recommended conditions although the wording will need to be amended to reflect revised plans that have been submitted.

8.0 Planning Considerations

The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale, known site constraints and the likely assessed impacts of development individually and cumulatively is not considered to constitute EIA development for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that:

“if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”

The relevant parts of the development plan include the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2.

Melksham is a Market Town in the Adopted Local Plan and therefore should be provided with the facilities and services so that it can be self-contained. Outside of the principal settlements, Market Towns form the highest level of the settlement hierarchy, and these town centres include a wide range of facilities and shops which meet most needs of the residents of the town and their hinterlands. It is therefore these locations that should be the focus for growth in retail offering as demonstrated by Core Policy 1.

Land to the west of the site was subject to planning permission for a mixed use comprehensive urban extension for 670 dwellings, a primary school, sports and recreation facilities and distributor road in 2008, followed by a reserved matters application in 2010. This included the development of Eastern Way. Land to the east of the site has recently been granted planning permission for the development of up to 500 dwellings, employment land, mixed use hub and primary school in May 2025. In addition, the site forms part of the proposals allocation under emerging Policy 18, for a mixed-use development. Figure 4.12 of the emerging Local Plan indicatively identifies the site for residential development.

These permissions and the emerging allocation demonstrate that the direction of growth for Melksham is on the eastern side of the town. The proposal will create new employment opportunities that support both existing and future residential growth in this part of the town, contributing positively to the local economy. The new store will also enhance the range of facilities available to residents and will sit comfortably alongside the amenities already secured through the Outline Planning Consent at Blackmore Farm, providing a complementary offering for the wider community.

In respect of retail impact, the existing store is trading well above its benchmark level, and the larger store Lidl wish to relocate to will help reduce the level of over trading, providing an improved shopping environment for customers and staff, as well as assisting with store operations and being a much more sustainable building. The majority of the proposal's turnover is expected to come from trade transferred from the existing store, although it has been assumed that 5% of the existing store's turnover will be captured by other stores. The improved store will provide some potential for an uplift in turnover, but this is expected to be minimal and no existing stores are expected to suffer a significantly adverse impact.

The application is supported by an Energy Usage and Sustainability Statement confirming that the development incorporates design strategies that take advantage of natural daylight to reduce dependency on electric lighting and enhanced fabric efficiencies to stabilise temperature fluctuations to reduce heat gains and losses. Heat recovery ventilation will reduce the energy loads associated with fresh air heat loss/gains and low energy lighting will be installed with suitable controls to ensure lights are not left on unnecessarily. This is in accordance with Core Policy 41.

Core Policy 50 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. Anticipated ecological impacts should be mitigated as far as possible and compensatory measures secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain as a mandatory requirement means that the proposal will provide at least a 10% enhancement over the existing baseline. Furthermore, dormouse boxes, habitat piles, and bat boxes are proposed as appropriate mitigation and enhancements.

Core Policy 51 states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character. The proposed store is set back from the road and incorporates significant areas of planting along Eastern Way to soften views towards the store. The proposed store will also be seen in the context of a large-scale mixed-use development proposed to the east. The site is not located within a designated landscape but seeks to respect the existing landscape character along Eastern Way, characterised by a wide highway corridor with planting.

A landscape management plan is submitted to ensure that components of Core Policy 52 are adhered to during construction and operation of the food store.

With reference to Core Policies 60, 61 and 62, the application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. Pedestrian and cycle connectivity to and from the proposed store will be enhanced through new shared-use paths along Eastern Way and the access road, linking to existing infrastructure. The existing uncontrolled crossing north of Skylark Road will be upgraded to a Toucan crossing, ensuring safe and inclusive access for pedestrians and cyclists.

The detailed assessment set out in Section 5.0 of the Planning Statement remains relevant to the revised proposal.

9.0 Conclusion

The site is not allocated for retail development in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy or the Emerging Plan, which is at a very early stage in its preparation. The site also lies outside of the defined settlement limit of Melksham, however, major development has been approved to the east of the site and the proposed foodstore is likely to be seen as an infill development, within a future expansion area of Melksham.

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the development plan in its strategic objectives related to settlement hierarchy and the spatial distribution of growth. Accordingly, the proposed development reflects the desires of the development plan to locate development in accordance with the hierarchy of centres, in this case the 'Market Towns' which Melksham is defined as. The site is sustainably located with access to existing and proposed public transport.

The retail impact assessment confirms that there will be no significantly adverse impact on any existing stores. The larger store will provide qualitative improvements and address the existing overtrading and a more sustainable building.

It is therefore considered that the application can be supported and planning permission be granted subject to the limited conditions necessary.