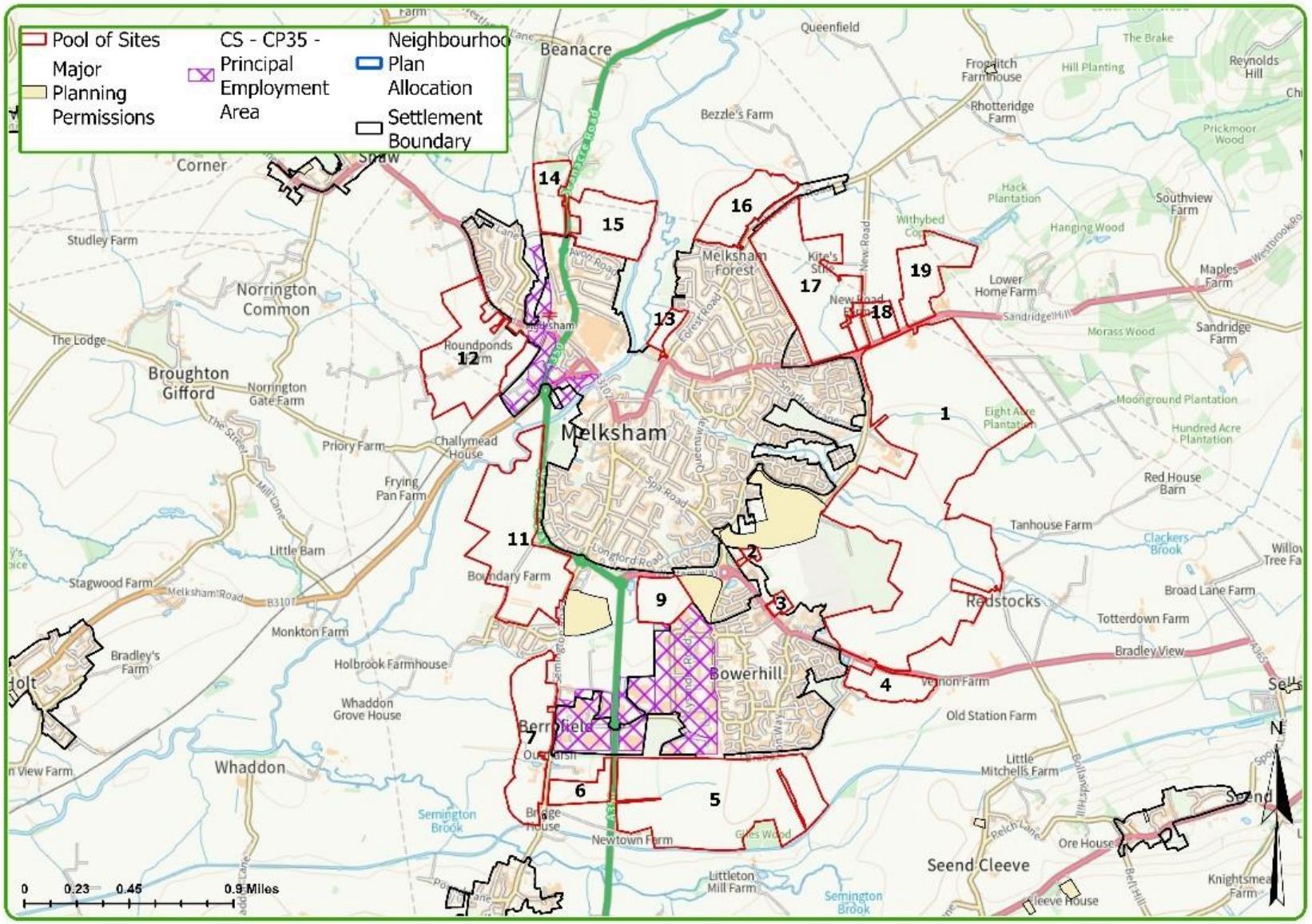
SA Annex 2.9 - Chippenham HMA: Melksham Sites Assessment



Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 1 (SHELAA sites 3123, 3525, 3552, 3678, 3683, 3692, 3701, 3704, 3752) **Site name:** Land to the east of Melksham **Site size:** 206.52ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 4442 - 6223 dwellings **Site description:** A large site located to the east of Melksham and Bowerhill. It is predominantly greenfield land, in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to the A3102, east to the MELW40 bridleway, south to Redstocks, Redstocks Lane and to the A365, and west to Eastern Way.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	This large site comprises a mixture of pastoral and arable fields of varying shapes and sizes with field boundaries largely consisting of low hedgerows with scattered hedgerows trees. Eight Acre Plantation is a small woodland within the northeast of the site. New, roadside tree planting has taken place on the embankment to the west of the site. Clackers Brook and a number of tributary watercourses flow through the site in a generally east-west direction. These are generally narrow streams. Clackers Brook and its tributaries are lined by riparian shrubs and trees. The watercourse through the north of the site is more open, along a hedgerow field boundary with occasional trees. Notable features on site of importance for bats, including Special Area of Conservation (SAC) bats (horseshoes), include the preponderance of grazed pasture, field patterns being relatively unchanged since late 1800's and fields bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow trees acting as potential roost sites. Brown's Lane, being present on maps since 1800s, represents a potentially important bat commuting route with this alongside Clackers Brook representing significant green infrastructure corridors connecting to the wider landscape. There also appears to be a large number of ponds on site, with some great crested newt records. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries of the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Indeed, there appears to be scope for significant house building alongside a landscape scale nature recovery scheme, including a focus on wetland habitats. Significant buffers should be provided (at least 50m, extending to 100m either side of Clackers Brook) to create GI corridors and assist net gain for biodiversity alongside protection/restoration and buffers around onsite ponds. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or SSSI's. However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly. For example, public rights of way lead from site to meadow and ancient woodland county wildlife sites so there is clear potential for development to lead to increased access and recreational pressure. In terms of priority habitat, the site includes numerous hedgerows, hedgerow trees and ponds. The southernmost portion of the site is immediately adjacent to land which is being considered for a strategic great crested newt habitat creation scheme with several ponds to be created and restored. In addition, land to the west of the southernmost portion of land has been enhanced for biodiversity as mitigation for the Melksham Oak School development and is now also managed for great crested newts. Several other ponds, in addition to those mentioned above, exist on the boundaries to adjacent and nearby fields thereby a network of ponds exists in the area providing suitable aquatic habitat for great crested newts.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • On site woodland • Hedgerow/tree boundaries and within the site • Clackers Brook and a number of tributary watercourses flowing through the site • Brown's lane • On site ponds • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional Green Infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • This large site comprises a mixture of pastoral and arable fields of varying shapes and sizes with field boundaries largely consisting of low hedgerows with scattered hedgerows trees. Notable on-site features also include woodland including Eight Acre Plantation, Clackers Brook and a number of tributary watercourses lined by riparian shrubs and trees, grazed pasture, Brown's Lane, having been present on maps since 1800s. There also appears to be a large number of ponds on site. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as hedgerows, watercourses, and ponds while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • Scope for integrated GBI include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees, enhancement of Clackers Brook and on-site ponds. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of the site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. Development density will be influenced by the large size of the site, extending out into open countryside, and any landscape mitigation required. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops along Eastern Way and along the A365 adjacent to the site which could potentially be extended to serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	The vast majority of this site consists of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	The vast majority of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. The main areas where contaminated land may exist are at the working farms within the site and unknown filled ground which is indicated within the site. The unknown filled ground could be potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. A more detailed assessment of the site would be required prior to any development coming forward. If subsequent evidence suggests the presence of land contamination, a remediation and mitigation strategy would be required.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 3 and partly of Grade 4 agricultural land which is not the highest quality agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Development of this site should seek to protect the better-quality agricultural land, where possible.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 2 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.

recycling infrastructure?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of the site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence • This site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Unknown filled ground which is indicated within the site will require further investigation but at this stage is not considered likely to have a significant impact on the developable area • Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 3 and partly of Grade 4 agricultural land. Given the size of the site, a significant amount of agricultural land would be lost to development • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Melksham has been identified by Wessex Water as a settlement which might encounter issues with water pumping stations if this site (site 1) to the east of Melksham is brought forward for development in the Local Plan. Extra investment might be needed to build an additional pumping station, and this is infrastructure that would need to be identified in Wessex Water's new business plan 2025 - 2030.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Melksham has been identified by Wessex Water as a settlement which might encounter issues with water pumping stations if this site is brought forward for development in the Local Plan. Extra investment might be needed to build an additional pumping station.	

• Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. There are working farms within the site, as such there is potential for adverse noise and odour from those premises. Parts of the site are also adjacent to the A365 and resultantly noise would be a major design consideration in terms of achieving acceptable amenity for dwellings. Additionally, the site is in close proximity to a multi-use games area (MUGA) which could cause adverse noise impact especially if the facility is used in the evenings. The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. With respect to light pollution, should the sports facilities adjacent to the site have external lighting and be luminated at night, future occupiers may be subject to adverse light disturbance, and this would require assessment and may require a design solution to address resident amenity. The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial uses during the design phase.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required. It is possible that a development of this size will be served by significant, dedicated new public transport services that will connect with the town centre, railway station and beyond, so there will be opportunities to mitigate possible increases in transport related emissions.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • There are working farms within the site, as such there is potential for adverse noise from those premises.	

• Parts of the site are adjacent to the A365 and resultantly noise implications would need to be assessed. • Noise impacts from the nearby multi use games area (MUGA) would also require suitable assessment. • Light pollution impacts from the sports facilities would also require assessment. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. • It is possible that a development of this size will be served by significant, dedicated new public transport services that will connect with the town centre, railway station and beyond, so there will be opportunities to mitigate possible increases in emissions. • Overall, it is not considered that development of this site will have significant adverse impacts on this objective. There is no AQMA currently designated in Melksham and no evidence that this is likely in the foreseeable future. A minor adverse effect is considered likely overall against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	It is considered possible for all new development at this site to be located within Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest significant watercourse to the site is Clackers Brook, which runs through the centre and north of the site, from east to west. The site borders and is traversed by 6 watercourses although they are not thought to present a flood risk. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of some developable land.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without	There is flood risk to some of the site associated with pluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The risk is associated with Clackers Brook, which runs from east to west through and branches across the site. The highest pluvial risk on site (3% chance of flooding each year) covers 15% of the site. There is a medium pluvial flood risk across 20% of the site. This means each year, there is a 1% chance of this area flooding, considering increased risk due to climate change. Finally, there is a low pluvial flood risk across 21% of the site. Each year, this area has 0.1% chance of flooding. The developable area may be further reduced by surface water flood

increasing flood risk elsewhere?	risk. The surface water drainage strategy will have to address low/medium/high flood risk to the site. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space, but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of pluvial flooding should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • There are areas of significant and moderate pluvial flood risk associated with Clackers Brook which runs from east to west across the site. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • There is minimal risk associated with groundwater. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space, and it is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • The size of this site may lend itself to renewable energy opportunity, however as it is a larger site, there is likely to be significant greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a larger site which is likely to produce significant emissions. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is considered possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the flood risk to some of the site, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is of a considerable size and as such presents significant opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. It is thought that energy demand from a site of this size would be significant and could require substantial investment to reinforce however any associated costs are likely to be proportionate to the development that comes forward. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore they could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore they could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic	There are few heritage assets within or near this site. Two assets that development could impact on are the Grade II Listed Blackmore Farmhouse and Grade II Listed Tanhouse Farmhouse to the east, although the relationship of the site to the historic land holding is unclear. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding agricultural hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. The north of the site wraps around Blackmore Farmhouse and mitigation would include locating new development so as to protect the setting of the farmhouse. The site is of a size that there is potential for appropriate mitigation e.g. by locating development in the western part of the site. Significant buffers are likely to be required to maintain the setting of the farmstead and via landscaping and layout likely to be required. Overall, there would be a minor adverse effect on the heritage and conservation assets.

Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The site has some medium to high value archaeological features including the former Medieval settlement of Snarlton (spreading into the mid-eastern site area) subsequent excavation found evidence of a linear medieval settlement and a second Medieval settlement inferred from earthworks (including building platforms, hollow ways, field boundaries, ridge and furrow, plough headlands and ponds) spread across the southern site area. Medium value features include four Roman pottery, animal bone, charcoal and iron findspots in pits and ditches at the centre of the northern site area. There are various features of low value including Medieval/Post Medieval ridge and furrow and two demolished 19th century farm buildings. There are extant farm buildings of Snarlton farm and Little Snarlton farm in the central western site area and an extant Medieval origin farmstead (Blackmore Farm) on northern boundary of the site. Further investigation is likely needed across the site during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching to identify the extent and significance of potential remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Also, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. There are post medieval to 21st century piecemeal and planned enclosure fields with little former character legible on site with amalgamated fields with some maintained former piecemeal field boundaries. And late 19th century to 21st century woodland plantation in the north-east of the site area with post Medieval to 21st century farmstead (Blackmore farm) on the northern boundary of the site which retains some original Medieval character. The northern and southern extent of the site comprise part of a wider network of strong continuity, where landscape character has remained stable since the late 19th century. The central portion of the site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Further research into the continuity of the landscape at the northern and southern areas of the site is likely required to evaluate the historic landscape sensitivity this holds. The site is not located near to any conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • There are few heritage assets within or in close proximity to this site. Overall, there would be a minor adverse effect on heritage and conservation assets. • The site has some medium to high value archaeological features. Further investigation is likely needed across the site and mitigation could include avoidance of any high value remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required or preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. • The historic landscape of the site is not considered likely to be significantly affected by development. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 7km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9.5km to the northwest. Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden lies approximately 2.7km to the northeast. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	This is a large site around the east of Melksham spanning the low-lying, gently undulating valley floor that is characteristic of the Clay Vale and Melksham's location on the River Avon. The landform rises more distinctly to the northeast of the site towards Sandridge Park. The wooded hills frame the site to the east. The rising linear landform at Sandridge overlooking the clay vale extends further north to include the western and southern edges of Spye Park (Grade II Listed Park and Garden) and further north to Bowden Hill a local highpoint extending up to 180m AOD at its highest point. Clackers Brook and a number of tributary watercourses flow through the site in a generally east-west direction. These are generally narrow streams. Clackers Brook and its tributaries are lined by riparian shrubs and trees. The watercourse through the north of the site is more open, along a hedgerow field boundary with occasional trees. A roadside embankment forms the west site boundary to Eastern Way. The site comprises of a mixture of pastoral and arable fields of varying shapes and sizes. The field boundaries are largely low hedgerows with scattered hedgerows trees, which creates an open, relatively large-scale landscape that is framed by the rising, wooded landform to the east. Eight Acre Plantation is a small woodland within the northeast of the site, which marks the transition between hedgerow trees typically found in field boundaries within the site, through the lower hill slopes with greater tree cover in form of plantations and established older and ancient woodland typical of the wooded hills rising to the northeast around Sandridge. Shrubs and trees along Clackers Brook combined with trees in hedgerows, contribute to treed skylines within the south of the site and a more enclosed landscape particularly around Redstocks. New, roadside tree planting on the embankment to the west of the site forms a soft, settlement edge to Melksham and contributes to the sense of separation between the existing settlement and the site. The landscape surrounding the site has undergone a number of recent changes including development west of Eastern Way that has significantly expanded Melksham to the east, and construction of a large solar farm to the east of the site at Sandridge Farm. However, the site maintains a generally strong rural character within the clay vale lowland landscape that separates Melksham from the rising greensand hills to the northeast and southeast. Redstocks is a small, rural hamlet on the east edge of the site. The site contributes to the strong rural character and sense of countryside separation from the edge of Melksham. The site is within an undesignated landscape. It is of moderate scenic quality, forming the low-lying, rural clay vale landscape that separates Melksham from the distinctive, rising wooded greensand hills to the northeast. Riparian vegetation along Clackers Brook and its tributaries is a feature that links through the south of the site from the foot of the wooded hills to the east. The site has maintained field boundary hedgerows frequented by mature hedgerow oaks that contribute to the rural separation of the town and outlying rural settlements. It also contributes to the countryside gap between Melksham and the two local geological greensand outcrops at Sandridge to the north and Seend to the south. The landscape is in generally moderate to good condition with occasional intrusive elements. Overall, the site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the east of the site due to its contribution to rural separation between Melksham and the wooded hills and rural settlements. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, which is reduced to the east of the site. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to be viewed as a conspicuous, large scale urban extension across the clay vale from the elevated greensand hills to the northeast including the southwest slopes of the hills at Sandridge (northeast) and Bowden Hill (north) and from the elevated hilltop settlement and footpaths at Seend to the south. • Potential for development to result in coalescence of the urban area of Melksham with the characteristic outlying rural hamlets and scattered farmsteads. • Potential loss of vegetation features including small woodlands, plantations low hedgerows and hedgerow/field trees that punctuate the large-scale, open landscape. • Potential alteration to the character and route of the River Avon tributary watercourses through the site, including Clackers Brook. • Potential change from a rural to urban context for users of the various rural footpaths through the site and surrounding landscape. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would form prominent urban sprawl in the low-lying clay vale, river landscape;

	• Introduce strategic green fingers through the development that incorporate new woodland and existing riparian planting, to help break up large scale urban massing, contain and soften the new settlement edge and provide an appropriate transition with countryside, especially where this supports landscape character guidance. • Limit development in the east of the site to prevent coalescence and retain the rural character and separate identity of the outlying rural settlements such as Redstocks and Sandridge Common/Sandridge. • Retain and enhance, small woodlands, plantations, hedgerows and hedgerow/field trees as part of a mature landscape framework that links between Melksham and the wooded hills to the northeast. • Limit development in proximity to the watercourses in order to maintain distinctive landscape features including the vegetated route of Clackers Brook and its smaller tributaries. • Retain rural character of key public rights of way and particularly along Clackers Brook.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There are a number of public rights of way through and around the site, which provide a number of rural links across the countryside including south to the Kennet and Avon Canal and northeast to the wooded hills. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 7km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9.5km to the northwest. Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden lies approximately 2.7km to the northeast. • A large site to the east of Melksham, the site largely consists of a mixture of pastoral and arable fields of varying shapes and sizes. The field boundaries are largely low hedgerows with scattered hedgerows trees. Eight Acre Plantation is a small woodland within the northeast of the site. Shrubs and trees along Clackers Brook combined with trees in hedgerows, contribute to treed skylines within the south of the site. • The site contributes to the countryside gap between Melksham and the two local geological greensand outcrops at Sandridge to the north and Seend to the south. The landscape is in generally moderate to good condition with occasional intrusive elements. • The site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the east of the site due to its contribution to rural separation between Melksham and the wooded hills and rural settlements. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, which is reduced to the east of the site. • Development is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	Although the developable area could be reduced to allow for a bypass at this site, it would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as any land required to be safeguarded for a future Melksham bypass), in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.

Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a less deprived area, adjoining some slightly more deprived areas. The development of this site would be unlikely to lead to new homes and jobs in an area subject to higher deprivation as it is not within an area or adjoining an area at risk of high levels deprivation and would be unlikely to result in social benefits in the area. The site has the potential to deliver up to circa 4840 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a significant level of affordable housing and the site could be capable of exceeding the current policy requirement for 30% affordable housing delivery. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 1.6km to the west of this site from the western boundary. Development at this site should look to enhance and promote sustainable transport modes and accessibility to all areas of the site. The introduction of a bypass on the site could be an opportunity or a constraint for accessibility through sustainable transport modes. A development of this size should take opportunities to incorporate amenity greenspace as part of development on this site. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 564 - 809 early years places, 1346 - 1929 primary school places and 955 - 1369 new secondary school places. In meeting early years needs each new primary school should accommodate a 60-place nursery and 4-5 additional 100 place full day care nurseries would be required. To meet the higher end of housing numbers, up to five primary schools on sites of at least 2ha would be required. Melksham Oak School is currently undergoing expansion. The new places arising from this site would need to be met on a separate site, potentially on adjoining land or as a satellite of Melksham Oak School. This would likely require a total of approx. 4000 homes to come forward at the town in all. Land and contributions would be required to support new provision. Spa Medical Centre is positioned less than 1km to the west of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 there are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact on delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The scale of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a sizable amount of formal and informal public space, alongside other community uses as part of a mixed-use development on this site. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW27, MELW26, MELW40, MELW30, MELW41, MELW22, MELW23, MELW24, MELW43 and MELW20. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local and district centres to serve the development are likely to be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. New onsite community, education and recreational facilities will be required to serve a development of up to circa 4840 homes in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents. These are like to be able to be delivered onsite, but where this is achievable, contributions should be sought.

4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site could lead to social cohesion benefits and would be capable of supplying a significant level of affordable housing. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite. • Enhanced connectivity within the site and from the site to the town centre and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of a future development. • This site is capable of delivering a very good level of public space and amenity greenspace to achieving social benefits onsite. • Development would be able to contribute to the reduction of rural isolation to some extent. • Overall, a major significant positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is considered sufficiently large enough to incorporate a wide-ranging mixed-use development that could include employment, education, retail and other community services and facilities. The site would be required to deliver on-site amenity capable of accommodating many day-to-day needs of occupiers. The site is positioned at the edge of an eastern node of Melksham, positioning it at the edge of the town and away from the principal highway network being the A350. The location would therefore be likely to result in car dominance as a result of the distance to the town centre, however the site is not adequately served to accommodate the significant car trip generation. Wiltshire Council are currently pursuing the delivery of an A350 relief road, which if positioned to the east of Melksham could provide adequate vehicular access opportunities for the development, however this is not the intention of the scheme and developments should be sustainably accommodated within the fabric of the existing town. However, the development scale as presented i.e. 4442 - 6223 dwellings, could not be accommodated by existing infrastructure and would be reliant upon new road infrastructure and is thus prejudiced by the satisfactory outcome of relief road funding decisions.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Access to the site is easily achieved via existing roundabouts on Eastern Way and A3102 and there are possibilities for access onto new highway infrastructure associated with the 14/06938/OUT / 18/04644/REM development to the south-west. **Local Constraints** The delivery of such a large site will require a significant level of transport infrastructure to include bus service and infrastructure provisions, walking and cycling linkages and traffic routes that directly link into the A3102, A365 and A350; the latter by avoiding impact upon the existing town. **Site Specific Mitigation** Improved and new cycle links to the Town Centre and Rail Station. Mobility hub, including bus and cycle infrastructure provisions on site and at destinations. A link road connecting the A365 and the A3102 to the A350 both north and south of Melksham. Bus service provision that accommodates at least 3 half hourly bus services. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation**

	Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy and or delivery of sections of Melksham bypass.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is positioned approx. 2km from the Town Centre and is hence considered difficult to walk to the amenities therein. There are food retail opportunities and a Primary school within close proximity to the site, however given the vast nature of the proposal such facilities should be provided on site; the site is of a scale that primary and secondary education facilities will need to be provided on site, along with retail and community provision and employment opportunities. With regards to cycling, Eastern Way provides cycle access around the periphery of Melksham, however, to access the town centre cyclists must use a network of quiet streets rather than dedicated infrastructure. To address this, the delivery of the site should be supported by the delivery of a LTN 1/20 compliant cycle path and footpath alongside Clackers Brook leading to the town centre. Beyond the Town Centre, it will be necessary to maximise access to the Railway Station along Bath Road and also Murray Walk; improvements to the former may be achievable with reduced town centre traffic as result of possible re-routing of the A350 – see below. Further to the above, a network of cycling infrastructure will be necessary for the site. **Bus:** The site is so vast that it will require a new network of bus service infrastructure provisions; it cannot rely upon existing services and will require new services at the outset. Based upon the 2011 census middle super output areas that encapsulate the towns urban areas (E02006678 and E02006680), the site will generate 166 commuting bus passengers in the peak hours and likely to be considerably more taking into consideration the vast array of potential commuting destinations. To address this, the site will require a mobility hub to operate as a satellite bus station, with opportunities to access alternative modes of transport in addition to the bus; EV car share, EV cycle hubs and direct connections to railway station. **Rail:** The majority of the site will be beyond 3km walk to the station, which is 1km more than the target distance. Whilst the distance cannot be shortened, it is important to provide as direct a link as possible and this should be accommodated by the provision of new walking cycling routes through the green spine of Melksham (Primrose Nature Area to King George V Park) and the provision of cycle hubs, including e-bikes, within the development site and at the station. **Service Vehicles:** Service vehicles will be catered for if a sufficient traffic access is delivered. **Car:** The site will deliver up to circa 3700 vehicles onto the existing road network in each of the peak hours. Given the industry accepted link capacity (each direction) of circa 1850 vehicles per hour, in addition to existing users, the site would be likely to overwhelm both the A365 to the south and the A3102 to the north and any onward links back to the A350. To address this, a site of the proposed scale will be directly reliant upon a re-routing of the A350, which it will require direct access to. The site is therefore reliant upon decisions and land control well beyond its influence and is thus prejudiced.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 11

- The site is considered sufficiently large enough to incorporate a wide-ranging mixed-use development that could include employment, education, retail and other community services and facilities.
- The development scale as presented i.e. 4442 - 6223 dwellings, could not be accommodated by existing infrastructure and would be reliant upon new road infrastructure.
- The location will result in increased car movements on local roads but would also be likely to be served by new public transport services not only serving this development but other development to the east of Melksham. This could help reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car.
- Access to the site is easily achieved via existing roundabouts and there are possibilities for access via other adjacent planning permissions.

Local Constraints

The delivery of such a large site will require a significant level of transport infrastructure to include bus service and infrastructure provisions, walking and cycling linkages and traffic routes that directly link into the A3102, A365 and A350; the latter by avoiding impact upon the existing town.

Site Specific Mitigation

Improved and new cycle links to the Town Centre and Rail Station. Mobility hub, including bus and cycle infrastructure provisions on site and at destinations. A link road connecting the A365 and the A3102 to the A350 both north and south of Melksham. Bus service provision that accommodates at least 3 half hourly bus services.

Necessary Strategic Mitigation

Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy and or delivery of sections of Melksham bypass

- Overall, given the size of the site and likely significant increases in car-based travel on the local highway network, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.

SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approx. 1.6km to the west of this site from the western boundary. There is the possibility of good accessibility to the town centre from this site through sustainable transport modes, and development at this site should look to enhance and promote sustainable transport modes and accessibility to all areas of the site to ensure that development can support the town centre. This is a very large site and areas to the west will be better related to the centre and areas in the north-west will have better access to the train station. Overall, given the size of the site and the significant number of new homes that could be provided, it would significantly benefit town centre vitality and viability through a large increase in population using local services and facilities and a larger local workforce for local businesses.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	A site of this size would be capable of delivering a significant employment element onsite as part of a mixed-use development. Employment land meeting wide ranging needs has the potential to be incorporated into a scheme on this site, including for higher skilled employment uses to help diversify the local economy. Land at this site could also support the expansion of existing businesses. Employment in this location could easily be made accessible by sustainable forms of transport, including active travel, as a site of this size would be served by public transport services to all parts of the site, and walking and cycling routes could link with development to the west and to the south. This employment would complement other nearby existing employment at Bowerhill and Hampton Park West which are easily accessible via Eastern Way. Efforts should be made to ensure access to existing employment land through sustainable modes, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land. Active travel choices should be promoted by any development to reduce any reliance on private car for commuter journeys to and from the site.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site could provide a significant level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help significantly support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure. There is a possibility that land at this site will be required to bring forward an eastern bypass at Melksham and this possibility should be taken into account in the design and layout of any new development, including through the provision of any green infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement, and internal and external roads. The size of this site suggests there would be significant opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. It is also noted that this site is adjacent to a large solar farm and there may be opportunities to link with that in terms of energy supply.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment	A site of this size could provide significant mixed-use development that includes a balance of employment and residential land to meet a wide range of needs, including those arising from existing residential development to the west of Eastern Way. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.

development to help reduce travel to work distances?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • There is the possibility of good accessibility to the town centre and local services and employment areas from this site through sustainable transport modes. • Given the size of the site and the significant number of new homes that could be provided, it would significantly benefit town centre vitality and viability through a large increase in population using local services and facilities and a larger local workforce for local businesses. • A site of this size would be capable of delivering a significant employment element onsite as part of a mixed-use development and this could complement other nearby existing employment areas at Bowerhill and Hampton Park West which are easily accessible via Eastern Way and Western Way. • This site could provide a significant level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment, community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help significantly support the local economy and economic growth, including through new transport infrastructure. • There is a possibility that land at this site will be required to bring forward an eastern bypass at Melksham (it is located on one of a number of possible routes being assessed) and this possibility should be taken into account in the design and layout of any new development. • There could be significant opportunities to provide energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources onsite, but the proximity of the adjacent large solar farm may also provide opportunities to link with that in terms of energy supply. • Overall, given the extent of economic benefits likely from development of this site, major positive effects are considered likely against this objective.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 2 (SHELAA site 3249) **Site name:** 398a The Spa **Site size:** 1.12ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 28 - 39 dwellings **Site description:** A small site located to the south-east of Melksham. It is a greenfield site situated to the rear of residential properties that run along The Spa. Approved planning application 18/04644/REM for 447 dwellings is adjacent to the site to the north.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	This modest site consists of generally flat, low-lying land comprising private garden and small field behind existing residential properties. The site is bound by mature hedgerow boundaries with trees and consists of mown/grazed pasture. Protection, maintenance and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. An essential pre-requisite will be retention of the perimeter habitat (tree belt / hedgerow / grassland) creating minimal breaches for ecological access. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. The requirement for buffers against the northern and eastern hedgerows will reduce the housing capacity at the site, as will the requirement for biodiversity net gain. The pond offsite in the north-western corner of the site is a notable feature holding potential biodiversity value requiring mitigation, accordingly, anticipated at 25m buffer.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the effects of increased recreational pressure, due to the lack of recreational opportunities locally, upon identified protected species, habitats and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.

sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerow boundaries and trees In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • This modest site is characterised by flat and low-lying land bound by mature hedgerow boundaries with trees and consists of mown/grazed pasture. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site will not be able to deliver appropriate densities considering the proximity of the site to other low density residential development to the south and being within the setting of listed buildings at The Spa.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	Most of this site consists of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.

3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is located on greenfield land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be significantly contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. However, if subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource, but the size of the site suggests this will not be significant.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. However, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of the site will not deliver appropriate densities given proximity to sensitive receptors. • This site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be significantly contaminated, but further assessment will be required. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land, but given the small size of the site, any loss will not be significant. • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area.	

• Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. • Overall, given the relatively small size of this site, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. Minor water and foul network infrastructure crosses the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • Minor water and foul network • Infrastructure crosses the site. Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering improving capacity at Melksham sewage treatment works may be required. A minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this small site is not likely to increase levels of environmental pollution significantly. However, there is likely to be a minor increase to environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. The potential for noise from external sources is considered to be low. The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. Minimal effects likely given the size of the site and surrounding land uses.

2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required. Minimal effects likely given the size of the site and location.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this small site is not likely to increase levels of environmental pollution significantly although there is likely to be a minor increase to environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The potential for noise from external sources is considered to be low. • The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment. • Impacts on air quality are likely to be minor. • Overall, given the size of the site and its location, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers

2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	All of the site is located in Flood zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest watercourse to the site is Clackers Brooke, more than a km north-east of the site.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is significant flood risk to some of the site associated with pluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest pluvial risk on site (3% chance of flooding each year) covers 20% of the site. This is in the north-west corner of the site. There is a medium pluvial flood risk across 89% of the site. This means each year, there is a 1% chance of this area flooding, considering increased risk due to climate change. Finally, there is a low pluvial flood risk across 92% of the site. Each year, this area has 0.1% chance of flooding. It is thought to be unlikely that development could avoid these areas and could worsen the flood risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is minimal risk associated with groundwater. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located approximately 1km from the town centre, which could enable active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of pluvial flooding should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1.	

• There are areas of significant and moderate pluvial flood risk across much of the site. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • There is minimal risk associated with groundwater. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land and the pluvial flood risk associated with the site, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from renewable sources from developers for example, solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than a larger site. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and,	The site would impact on Grade II Listed Buildings in the Spa. These are high status dwellings constructed as speculative 'spa' development to rival Bath following discovery of mineral springs. The rural setting was an important as part of selling point for development. Mitigation would be very difficult on this small site. Land would be required to maintain some sense of status and rural setting to listed dwellings in Spa. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. The site has medium value features including pits and ditches of unknown date and low value features including medieval ridge and furrow earthworks identified by geophysical survey extend across the site. A roman settlement in the north-east buffer area to the site indicates potential for further Roman remains extending into the site. Further investigation is likely needed in the form of further geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching to reveal the extent of potential roman remains spreading into the site. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where relevant. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The post medieval to 21st century hamlet (The Spa) character comprises the western extension of the site and post Medieval to 21st century piecemeal fields with some remaining legibility of former character- with some ridge and furrow earthworks potentially remaining visible. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Th surviving ridge and furrow earthworks are highly sensitive. Further research is likely needed to identify survival

where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	and extent of ridge and furrow earthworks on the site, possibly via site survey. Mitigation strategy could also include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. If ridge and furrow earthworks survive across the entirety of the site, mitigation may not be possible. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate, however, following the results of site survey this risk could reduce.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The site would impact on Grade II Listed Buildings in the Spa. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • Overall: A major adverse effect is considered likely against this objective	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB boundary is approximately 7km to the northeast with the Cotswolds AONB approximately 10km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the south of Melksham and north of Bowerhill, at the rear of properties on The Spa. Land to the north of the site is consented for residential development of 450 new homes, alongside a new linking section of distributor road and new roundabout between Spa Road and Eastern Avenue, which is currently under construction. Land opposite The Spa to the west of Bath Road also has planning consent for new large scale residential development and outline planning for a new primary school and is currently under construction. Land to the east of the site has been approved for informal public open space (POS), necessary as ecological compensation for the recent school and sports pitch applications. The site is located on flat, low-lying land that is characteristic of the clay vale and Melksham's location on the River Avon. Comprising an existing residential property, private garden and small field historically used as a paddock, the site is bound by mature hedgerow boundaries with trees. The site forms part of a smaller scale, tight landscape comprising of large rear gardens and small fields that encompass properties on The Spa. Whilst the site is part of land pertaining to a residential property on The Spa, it is generally enclosed and separate from existing built form. Recently consented residential development to the north will alter this. There are six distinctive, three-storey Georgian properties to the south of the site, set within linear plots of land with substantial tree planting. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains some locally distinctive features. It is a generally simple landscape with limited sense of place or scenic quality. The site forms the backdrop to the distinctive Georgian properties, which have some susceptibility to change. Overall, the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to alter the character of the existing well-integrated settlement edge and be conspicuous in the rural landscape. • Potential for built form to break treed skylines and alter the landscape setting of the Georgian properties on The Spa. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that define the small-scale landscape and provide a buffer to the existing residential settlement. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid tall development that would break the treed skyline in context with the existing settlement and particularly the Georgian properties on The Spa. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to existing buffers to the settlement edge.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	Two public footpaths cross the field (which will form a new area of POS as part of the adjoining consented development) to the east of the site, linking between The Spa and north, through new development to the shallow valley of Clackers Brook. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • Lying to the south of Melksham and north of Bowerhill, the site is located on flat, low-lying land that is characteristic of the clay vale and Melksham's location on the River Avon. Comprising an existing residential property, private garden and small field historically used as a paddock, the site is bound by mature hedgerow boundaries with trees. • Two public footpaths cross the field to the east of the site, linking between The Spa and north, through new development to the shallow valley of Clackers Brook. • It is a generally simple landscape with limited sense of place or scenic quality. The site forms the backdrop to the distinctive Georgian properties, which have some susceptibility to change. • It is considered that the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a small number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.

2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a relatively small number of new homes, albeit there will still be opportunities to meet needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a small number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have some benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the different housing needs of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this smaller site could bring forward a small amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a less deprived area. The development of this site would be unlikely to lead to new homes and jobs in an area subject to higher deprivation as it is not within an area or adjoining an area at risk of high levels deprivation and would be unlikely to result in social benefits in the area. The site has the potential to deliver up to circa 40 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered able to deliver some affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 1.1km to the northwest of this site. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, including enhancements where possible. This site would be less likely to support onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. The site is 0.5km from recreational greenspace at Burnet Close. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 4-5 early years places, 9-12 primary school places and 6-9 new secondary school places. A new primary school on land South of Western Way has been secured. Financial contributions would be required to ensure that this could meet both early years and primary needs arising from the site. In meeting secondary school needs it is likely that places could be met through the expansion of the existing school. Financial contributions would also be required for this. Spa Medical Centre is positioned approx. 0.2km to the north of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and	The scale of this site would be less able to support a mixed-use development including public space and community uses, but opportunities to link the site to existing public space and community facilities should be incorporated as part of any scheme proposed at this site. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW19.

community functions?	
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide some affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site would be unlikely to achieve benefits of social cohesion at it would not directing development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision is unlikely to be achieved on a site of this size. • The site has good existing accessibility to the town centre and health facilities and these should be further enhanced where possible. • This site would be less likely to bring forward a development that could incorporate onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make only a small contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is considered too small to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. The site is approximately 1200m from the town centre and thus considered within a commutable distance, but beyond a walkable retail trip. Employment opportunities are further provided at Bowerhill Industrial Estate served from Lysander Road, and both primary and secondary education facilities are within 1km walk; all destinations are well served by footway provision and controlled crossings, albeit the latter are not always on desire lines.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	**Local Constraints** Distance to Railway Station. Junction between The Spa and Spa Road. **Site Specific Mitigation** Possible works at the Junction between The Spa and Spa Road **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.

3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is approximately 1200m from the town centre and thus considered within a commutable distance, but beyond a walkable retail trip. Employment opportunities are further provided at the Industrial Estate served from Lysander Road, and both primary and secondary education facilities are within 1km walk; all destinations are well served by footway provision and controlled crossings, albeit the latter are not always on desire lines. The site is less well served by cycle infrastructure, with no facilities towards the town centre along Spa Road, although there are opportunities to use the quiet street network. The site is not of a scale that could provide direct meaningful mitigation in this manner, but should this site be progressed then the supporting transport strategy should seek to address this deficiency. **Bus:** The site is within very close (less than 400m) proximity to bus stops serving the 273, 555, SB2 and U2 services. The 273 provides a 2hour frequency service between Devizes, Melksham and Bath. Whilst this frequency remains unattractive, there are opportunities for this service to accommodate traditional working hours in each of the destinations. The remaining services would not sufficiently support the site, with the 555 providing a principally school bus service, the SB2 providing a Seend shuttle with 1 bus in each direction and the U2 providing a single bus between Bath and Urchfront. For this site to be considered sustainably served by bus, it would need to be delivered alongside other developments on the A365 corridor to maximise patronage and hence commerciality to a regular service between Devizes and Melksham Town Centre; alternative destinations may be achieved with a wholesale change to Melksham service provision, following delivery of a re-routed A350 (see site 1). **Rail:** The rail station is approximately 3km from the site and hence too far to walk. The station is accessible by cycle and access is considered relatively attractive, but convoluted, joining up with the Millennium Path to cross the river Avon at Murray Walk. The site is on the peripheral edge of Melksham, and it would be unlikely to attract rail patronage without significant community wide interventions. **Service Vehicles:** The site is considered accessible by service vehicles; however, The Spa is relatively narrow and has a poor junction with Spa Road. **Car:** The site is of a scale that is a low vehicle trip generator and hence would be unlikely to materially impact upon existing congested areas. Notwithstanding this, the junction between The Spa and Spa Road is incorrectly laid out, with a diverge auxiliary lane (or long taper) serving a simple junction. Additional demand at this junction would need to be assessed for any safety implications and the remedial mitigation may be out of scale and context to the proposed development.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The site is considered too small to incorporate a mixed-use development. • The site would be a low vehicle trip generator and hence would be unlikely to materially impact upon any existing congested areas. • The site is approximately 1200m from the town centre and thus considered within a commutable distance. Both primary and secondary education facilities are within 1km walk; all destinations are well served by footway provision and controlled crossings. **Local Constraints** Distance to Railway Station. Junction between The Spa and Spa Road. **Site Specific Mitigation** Possible works at the junction between The Spa and Spa Road. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres,	Melksham town Centre is approx. 1.1km to the northwest of this site. The site is well connected to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, including enhancements where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a smaller site, which is not very well related to the train station. This suggests that the ability of the site to support facilities in the town would be limited.

built up areas, station hub)?	
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	This site would be less likely to be able to support a mixed-use scheme due to the size. Employment land at the site is less likely to be able to support wide ranging needs. The site is assessed as being very well connected to existing employment land and is situated approx. 0.5km to the north-east of Bowerhill Industrial Estate and approx. 1.1km to the north-east of Hampton Business Park. This site is therefore more likely to be able to help support existing employment areas. Nonetheless, efforts should be made to improve and promote sustainable access to existing employment land, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site would be less likely to support a high level of new housing, employment land and community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. But development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size is less likely to support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet wide ranging economic needs. The site could be a able to support smaller scale employment, meeting employment needs arising from southern Melksham and Bowerhill or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the south-west. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is less well connected to the railway station and would only be able to support a smaller development, however it is well related to the town centre and could bring forward some benefits of supporting it. • The site would be less capable of bringing forward a mixed-use development but could be able to support housing or employment land onsite. • New housing is likely to be able to help support existing employment areas at Bowerhill, to which the site is assessed as being very accessible.	

• Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 3 (SHELAA sites 3219, 1034) **Site name:** Land adjacent to Woolmore Manor **Site size:** 1.72ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 43 - 60 dwellings **Site description:** A small site located to the south-east of Melksham and north of Bowerhill. It is a greenfield site. The site is adjacent to the Grade II* listed Woolmore Farmhouse, the A365 and residential properties alongside the A365. Melksham Oak School and Woolmore Farm are in close proximity to the east of the site. Opposite the site across the A365 are residential areas associated with Bowerhill.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	Lying to the south of Melksham, the site is located on generally flat, low-lying land comprising farmland formed of a small field adjoining the A365 and part of a larger field to the east. There are small field ponds in the northeast of the site, which are encompassed by trees. There is also an open drain through the centre of the site, which is defined by associated riparian planting. The site is largely bound by hedgerow boundaries with trees. A strong tree belt has been established to the east of the site while there is also substantial tree boundary vegetation along the north edge of the site around the ponds and continuing south along the drain. The site is located immediately adjacent to land in Council ownership which is allocated for informal public open space and ecology compensation for development elsewhere in Melksham. The pond on site is a high value great crested newt pond with good population in the northern corner of site and shared with adjacent fields in Council ownership. Meanwhile, the northern boundary of site connects with woodland habitat offsite which is important supporting habitat for the pond. The pond must be retained and significantly buffered with new habitat to protect pond from recreational pressure. Indeed, the site is likely too small to provide effective mitigation for the great crested newt pond. It would be necessary to retain, buffer and enhance the entire northern boundary ensuring no road crossings of the central hedgerow in the northern half of site. Indeed, protection, maintenance and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within/along the boundaries of the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The development of the site for housing would have the potential to increase public access to designated/non-designated biodiversity features. This may lead to a detrimental increase in recreational pressure on identified protected species and habitats in the local area.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • On site/boundary hedgerows and trees • On site/boundary ponds • Open drain through the centre of the site, which is defined by associated riparian planting. • Strong tree belt to the east of the site • Tree boundary vegetation along the north edge of the site around the ponds • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure, making suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • This modest site consists of a small field adjoining the A365 and part of a larger field to the east. There are small field ponds encompassed by trees in the northeast of the site, an open drain through the centre of the site which is defined by associated riparian planting while hedgerow boundaries with trees bound most of the site. Albeit a strong tree belt has been established to the east of the site while there is also substantial tree boundary vegetation to the north. • The pond(s) on site is a high value great crested newt pond with good population in the northern corner of site and shared with adjacent fields in Council ownership. Meanwhile, the northern boundary of site connects with woodland habitat offsite which is important supporting habitat for the pond. • The pond must be retained and significantly buffered with new habitat to protect pond from recreational pressure. Indeed, the site is likely too small to provide effective mitigation for great crested newt pond. • Protection, maintenance and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Integrated GBI should include the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees/tree belts, on site/boundary ponds, open drain through the centre of the site and associated riparian planting. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site may not be able to deliver appropriate densities given the proximity of the Grade I listed Woolmore Manor and the other residential properties on this side of the A365 are all low density with large gardens.

2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is located on greenfield land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. However, if subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource, but the size of the site suggests this will not be significant.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. However, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of the site will not deliver appropriate densities given its location and proximity to sensitive receptors. • This site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated, but further assessment will be required. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land, but given small size of site, any loss will not be significant. • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area. • Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. • Overall, given the relatively small size of this site, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering improving capacity at Melksham sewage treatment works may be required. A minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise,	Development of this small site is not likely to increase levels of environmental pollution significantly. However, there is likely to be a minor increase to environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant.

light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Minimal effects likely given the size of the site and surrounding land uses.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required. Minimal effects likely given the size of the site.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this small site is not likely to increase levels of environmental pollution significantly although there is likely to be a minor increase to environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The potential for noise from external sources is considered to be low. • The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment. • Impacts on air quality are likely to be minor. • Overall, given the size of the site and its location, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such	As this is a small site in Melksham, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies

as district heating?	opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest watercourse to the site is Clackers Brooke, which is approximately 1km to the north-east of the site.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There are minimal patches within the site which present a pluvial flood risk however this is below 4% of the site and should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is minimal flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land and thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from renewable sources from developers for example, solar panels and energy efficiency measures • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than a larger site. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and,	This site is in the immediate setting of the Grade II* listed building Woolmore Manor and development of the site is likely to significantly impact upon it. Woolmore Manor is an important house designed to be dominant in the landscape to be viewed (and viewed from) all aspects with principal elevations all round. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated asset. The significance of the impacts, given the proximity of the building and number of houses proposed on this site mean that mitigation measures are unlikely to be achievable. Effects are considered to be significant major adverse with no mitigation measures likely to be able to offset the impacts. Site may be inappropriate for development given the significance of the building and of the impacts. This site has low archaeological potential. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Mitigation strategy could include preservation by record, i.e., watching brief, if relevant. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is very low. Further research is likely needed to identify survival and extent of ridge and furrow earthworks on the site. Mitigation strategy could include retention of surviving historic landscape elements such as ridge and furrow earthworks within the design of future development. Mitigation strategy could also include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate, however, following the results of site survey this risk could reduce.

where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • This site is in the immediate setting of the Grade II* listed building Woolmore Manor and development of the site is likely to significantly impact upon it. Woolmore Manor is an important house designed to be dominant in landscape to be viewed (and viewed from) all aspects with principal elevations all round. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated asset. The significance of the impacts, given the proximity of the building and number of houses proposed on this site mean that mitigation measures are unlikely to be achievable. Effects are considered to be significant major adverse with no mitigation measures likely to be able to offset the impacts. Site may be inappropriate for development given the significance of the building and of the impacts. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is very low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • Overall, a major adverse effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northeast while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9km to the northwest of the site. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

and AONBs and their settings?	
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the south of Melksham and north of Bowerhill, accessed from the northern side of Bath Road (A365) between existing residential properties. Land to the west of the site and Bath Road has planning consent for new large scale residential development and outline planning for a new primary school and is currently under construction. The site is located on generally flat, low-lying land that is characteristic of the clay vale and Melksham's location on the River Avon. There are small field ponds in the northeast of the site, which are encompassed by trees. There is also an open drain through the centre of the site, which is defined by associated riparian planting. Comprising farmland formed of a small field adjoining the A365 and part of a larger field to the east (the remainder of which has a consented change of use to informal POS as ecological compensation for the recent Melksham Oak Community School and the sports club / pitch development south and east), the site forms part of the small-scale pastoral field network that adjoins the existing settlement edge. The site is largely bound by hedgerow boundaries with trees. A strong tree belt has been established to the east of the site, along the boundary to the new school complex (Melksham Oak Community School). There is also substantial tree boundary vegetation along the north edge of the site around the ponds and continuing south along the drain, separating it from adjoining residential properties. The site shares an open boundary with the area of informal POS to the east, separated from the site by a former farm track. Melksham Manor is a distinctive, Tudor farmhouse with prominent roofline to the south of the site. Properties to the north of the site are generally detached properties in substantial single depth private plots, extending along the northern side of Bath Road that are encompassed by mature trees and are well-integrated as part of the Spa hamlet. Properties to the southwest are largely set back from Bath Road, behind roadside hedge and tree boundaries. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains some locally distinctive features. It is a generally simple landscape that that is influenced by suburban settlement edge features including conspicuous lighting columns and screening tree belts. There is some localised sense of place associated with the farm to the south, although this is in a declining condition. The site has local scenic value, although it contributes to the rural landscape that separates Bowerhill from Melksham. Overall, the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to alter the character of the existing well-integrated settlement edge and be conspicuous in the rural landscape. • Potential for built form to break treed skylines and further alter the landscape setting of the Tudor farmhouse and the adjoining area of informal public open space. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that define the small-scale landscape and provide a buffer to the existing residential settlement. • Potential loss of ponds, open drain and associated riparian vegetation. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Limit the scale and density of development, in-keeping with the rural qualities of The Spa hamlet and to protect the amenity value of informal open space adjoining the site to the east. • Avoid tall development that would break the treed skyline in context with the existing settlement and particularly the Tudor farmhouse. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to existing buffers to the settlement edge. • Retain existing pond, drain and riparian vegetation as landscape features and functioning connective blue/green infrastructure.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	A public footpath passes through the site, providing a link from the adjoining farm, north towards the shallow valley of Clackers Brook. Opportunities should be sought to incorporate public footpaths as part of proposed development, to maintain links to the informal POS and rural landscape between settlement areas. There is no public open space or common land within this site
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northeast while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9km to the northwest of the site. • Lying to the south of Melksham, the site is located on generally flat, low-lying land and consists of farmland formed of a small field adjoining the A365 and part of a larger field to the east. The site is largely bound by hedgerow boundaries with trees.	

• A public footpath passes through the site, providing a link from the adjoining farm, north towards the shallow valley of Clackers Brook. • It is considered that the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a small number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a relatively small number of homes, albeit there will still be opportunities to meet different needs for house types or tenures in Melksham. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a small number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have some benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this smaller site could bring forward a small amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a less deprived area. The development of this site would be unlikely to lead to new homes and jobs in an area subject to higher deprivation as it is not within an area or adjoining an area at risk of high levels deprivation and would be unlikely to result in social benefits in the area. The site has the potential to deliver up to circa 60 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver some affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town Centre is approx. 1.35km to the northwest of this site. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, including enhancements where possible. This site would be less likely to support onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Recreational greenspace is located within 1km of the site at Bowerhill, including greenspace at Martlet Close and Hornchurch Road. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 6-8 early years places, 14-20 primary school places and 10-14 new secondary school places. A new primary school on land South of Western Way has been secured and would be able to accommodate early years places to meet needs arising from this site. This school is unlikely to be able to support needs from this site in addition to those arising from sites 2, 4 and 9 and so new provision may be required in meeting all needs arising in this part of the town or the number of homes in this area would need to be capped at 460. The new primary school would be able to accommodate primary needs. In meeting secondary school needs it is likely that places would need to be sought from new provision. Financial contributions would be required in supplying places to meet all of these needs.

	Spa Medical Centre is positioned approx. 0.4km to the north-west of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's Surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The scale of this site would be able less able to support a mixed-use development including public space and community uses, but opportunities to link the site to existing public space and community facilities should be incorporated as part of any scheme proposed at this site. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW18.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide some affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site would be unlikely to achieve benefits of social cohesion as it would not be directing development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward some affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision is unlikely to be achieved on a site of this size. • The site has good existing accessibility to the town centre and health facilities and these should be further enhanced whether possible. • This site would be less likely to bring forward a development that could incorporate onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make only a small contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in	The site is considered too small to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. The site is within close proximity to site 2 and is served by the same infrastructure. The site has good links with local education facilities (both primary and secondary) and employment opportunities at Bowerhill; the site is further accommodated by an existing controlled pedestrian crossing of the busy A365 (Bath Road). The site is further from the town centre than site 2 but is still within the maximum commutable distance of 2km.

accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	The site can achieve a sufficient vehicular access with appropriate visibility splays, in part as a result of the nearside footway, cycleway. **Local Constraints** Distance from town centre and railway station. **Site Specific Mitigation** Priority of school children passage across the delivered access junction. Loss of frontage vegetation. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is within close proximity to site 2 and is served by the same infrastructure. The site has good links with local education facilities (both primary and secondary) and employment opportunities at Bowerhill; the site is further accommodated by an existing controlled pedestrian crossing of the busy A365 (Bath Road). The site is further from the Town Centre than site 2 but is still within the maximum commutable distance of 2km. The Rail Station is beyond walkable distance, but accessible by cycle. Bath Road accommodates off road cycle infrastructure, but this is not continuous into Melksham town; opportunities to use the quiet street network is however available but increases journey distance but also improves attractiveness. Like Site 2, the site is not of a scale that could provide direct meaningful mitigation in this manner, but should this site be progressed then the supporting transport strategy should seek to address this deficiency. **Bus:** The site is within very close (less than 400m) proximity to bus stops serving the 273 service. The 273 provides a 2hour frequency service between Devizes, Melksham and Bath. Whilst this frequency remains unattractive, there are opportunities for this service to accommodate traditional working hours in each of the destinations. For this site to be considered sustainably served by bus, it would need to be delivered alongside other developments on the A365 corridor to maximise patronage and hence commerciality to a regular service between Devizes and Melksham Town Centre; alternative destinations may be achieved with a wholesale change to Melksham service provision, following delivery of a re-route A350 (see site 1). **Rail:** The rail station is approximately 3.5km from the site and hence too far to walk and the peripheral edge of regular cycling commute. The site is on the peripheral edge of Melksham, and it would be unlikely to attract rail patronage without significant community wide interventions. **Service Vehicles:** Bath Road is designed with a high capacity and Service Vehicle access is achievable. **Car:** The site can achieve a sufficient vehicular access with appropriate visibility splays, in part as a result of the nearside footway, cycleway. However, the footway cycleway accommodates a significant number of school children accessing the local secondary school and the junction will need to be designed to provide priority to cyclists across the junction and subservient car manoeuvres; guidance is provided in CD 195 of DMRB.

	The site should also be designed with a street presence to create activity and reduce vehicular speeds on Bath Road. This will necessitate the loss of significant landscaping and hedgerow.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The site is considered too small to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. • The site is within close proximity to site 2 and is served by the same infrastructure. The site has good links with local education facilities (both primary and secondary) and employment opportunities at Bowerhill. **Local Constraints** Distance from town centre and railway station. **Site Specific Mitigation** Priority of school children passage across the delivered access junction. Loss of frontage vegetation. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town Centre is approx. 1.35km to the northwest of this site. The site is well connected to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, including enhancements where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a smaller site, which is not very well related to the train station. This suggests that the ability of the site to support facilities in the town would be limited.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	This site would be less likely to be able to support a mixed-use scheme due to the size. Employment land at the site is less likely to be able to support wide ranging needs. The site is assessed as being very well connected to existing employment land and is situated approx. 0.5km to the east of Bowerhill Industrial Estate and approx. 1km to the north-east of Hampton Business Park. This site is therefore more likely to be able to help support existing employment areas. Nonetheless, efforts should be made to improve and promote sustainable access to existing employment land, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment uses.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to	This site would be less likely to support a high level of new housing, employment land and community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. But development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy.

promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size is less likely to support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet wide ranging economic needs. The site could support smaller scale employment, meeting employment needs arising from southern Melksham and Bowerhill or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the west and south-west. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is less well connected to the railway station and would only be able to support a smaller development, however it is well related to the town centre and could bring forward some benefits of supporting it. • The site would be less capable of bringing forward a mixed-use development but could be able to support housing or employment land onsite. • New housing is likely to be able to help support existing employment areas at Bowerhill, to which the site is assessed as being very accessible. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, when taking account of the size of the site in bringing forward economic benefits, a minor positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 4 (SHELAA sites 3345, 3331) **Site name:** Land to the east of Bowerhill **Site size:** 10.46ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 261 - 366 dwellings **Site description:** A medium-sized site located to the east of Bowerhill. It is a greenfield site, in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to the A365, east to residential properties along Carnation Lane and west to Bowerhill Lane. To the south lies further residential properties along Bowerhill Lane and open countryside. Footpath MELW35 runs east to west to the south of the site.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises small fields bound by hedgerows with occasional trees, with two of the hedgerows cutting across the site being on historical maps. The line of the dismantled railway to the south of the site, not adjoining, is a distinctive linear feature identified by a strong hedgerow and tree belt along the field boundaries. The site is part of a wider area extending to Bowerhill, Vernon Farm and the dismantled railway which may support a metapopulation of great crested newts. Agricultural buildings to the north and south of the site may support bat roosts and bats may use existing hedgerows across the site for commuting. Furthermore, there seem to be three ponds on site, two of which appear on historical maps.

	Protection, maintenance and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. Mitigation should integrate buffers against hedgerows of at least 10m minimum plus, factoring in survey findings. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features and the provision of open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the effects of increased recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • On site and boundary hedgerows and trees • Incorporation of the ponds into development along with associated green infrastructure corridors and buffers The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows, trees, water features and the addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • This site is characterised by fields bound by hedgerows and trees, both bounding the site and cutting across. On site ponds, agricultural buildings and hedgerows/trees all represent potentially significant features of ecological importance. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat.	

• Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as hedgerows and water features while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerows, trees and water features. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that the development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. Higher density development would be more appropriate in the west of the site adjacent to existing higher density development. Melksham and Bowerhill contain a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops along the A365 adjacent which could serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is located on greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. However, if subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource through development, but the size of the site suggests this will not be significant. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.

6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1.5 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that the development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. • This site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated, but further assessment will be required. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land, but the size of the site suggests any loss to development will not be significant. • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, given the lack of significant impacts noted, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network infrastructure, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Any development should follow the surface water hierarchy: 1. into the ground (infiltration); 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer. Where infiltration is not a viable option then flows being released from the site would need a controlled discharge and to be agreed with the council on a site-by-site basis. Flows from greenfield sites should aim for 20% betterment over pre-developed discharge rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network infrastructure, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but improving infrastructure capacity is likely to be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. This site is located east of Bowerhill village and extends out into open countryside along the A365. Most surrounding land uses are rural. The site is also adjacent to a groundwork construction business as such there is potential for adverse noise. The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial uses during the design phase.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is adjacent to a groundwork construction business as such there is potential for adverse noise. • The developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial uses during the design phase. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. There are no significant watercourses close to the site.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There are minimal patches within the site which present a pluvial flood risk however this is minimal and should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.

4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is negligible flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this isn't one of the larger sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. As there will be fewer buildings on this site, than some of the larger sites, demand will be lower. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and

	• identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from renewable sources from developers for example, solar panels and energy efficiency measures.	

• New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site isn't as large as others, energy demand will be less than a larger site. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	Development at this site would impact on Grade II Listed Building Loves Farmhouse. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. The site forms the immediate setting to the listed Loves Farm. Whilst mitigation is possible the requirement to preserve the setting of the listed Loves Farm is likely to severely reduce site capacity leading to moderate adverse effects. The site has medium to high value features including medieval settlement, comprising building platforms, hollow ways, field boundaries and ponds, is visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar in the eastern half of the site. There are various features of low value including medieval ridge and furrow and associated plough headlands and field boundaries are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar, likely associated with the medieval settlement. Further investigation is likely needed specifically in the eastern site area, where medieval settlement remains are inferred. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, potentially the eastern site area. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Alternatively, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. There are post medieval to 21st century piecemeal enclosure fields with no former character legible. The site comprises part of a wider network of strong continuity, where landscape character has remained stable since the late 19th century. It may be desirable to retain the historic landscape character due to its unusual continuity. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 7 • This site would impact on a Grade II Listed Building. Whilst mitigation is possible the requirement to preserve the setting of the listed Loves Farm is likely to severely reduce site capacity leading to moderate adverse effects. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8km to the northeast of the site with the Cotswolds AONB approximately 10km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the east of Bowerhill, to the south of Bath Road (A365), between the existing settlement edge and a small cluster of properties on Carnation Lane. Sitting on generally flat land, which forms part of the low-lying valley landscape that is characteristic of Melksham's location on the River Avon, within the site the landform very gently slopes down to the south, towards the Kennet and Avon Canal. Comprises three small fields bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees, the site forms part of an irregular pattern of small, pastoral fields to the east of Bowerhill, between Bath Road and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The line of the dismantled railway to the south of the site is a distinctive linear feature, identifiable by a strong hedgerow and tree belt along the field boundaries. The site has a strong, open rural character, which has a sense of separation from the adjoining suburban residential development at Bowerhill on Kenley Close/Hendon Place. Robust hedgerow boundaries along Bowerhill Lane, a narrow rural road forming the western boundary of the site, contribute to this sense of separation and generally well-integrated existing settlement edge to the east of Bowerhill. There are clusters of rural properties to the northwest, southwest and east of the site, comprising terraced cottages on Bowerhill Lane, small, stone-built farmsteads on Bath Road/Bowerhill Lane and variety of detached and semi-detached residential properties on Carnation Lane. The properties are generally dispersed and well-integrated by hedgerow and tree boundaries and are not prominent in the low-lying landscape or from the elevated hilltop settlement and elevated footpaths at Seend, to the south of the canal. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains some locally distinctive features including the tree-lined, linear dismantled railway and Kennet and Avon Canal to the south of the site. It is part of the locally distinctive, low-lying, rural landscape that is framed by the low hills to the south of the canal. The landscape is in generally good condition with limited intrusive elements and moderate scenic value. Overall, the site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development due to the strong, open rural character and sense of separation from the existing settlement. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to alter the character of the existing well-integrated settlement edge and break treed skylines. • Potential for development to result in prominent urban sprawl extending from Bowerhill into the surrounding, open rural landscape. • Potential to alter the characteristic panoramic views over the clay vale from the elevated north facing slopes at Seend.

	• Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that define the small, irregular fields and contribute to the assimilation of rural properties in the landscape. • Potential for loss of characteristic rural landscape features and separate identity and rural character of settlement along Bowerhill Lane. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would break the treed skylines and form a conspicuous settlement edge. • Avoid development that is uncharacteristic of the rural landscape scale, pattern and vernacular materials to the east of Bowerhill. • Retain and enhance hedgerows, trees, open drains and ponds as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to an integrated settlement edge within the treed valley floor. • Retain the character of rural settlement to the west of the site along Bowerhill Lane.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	A public footpath passes along the east and south of the site, linking with various footpaths through the rural landscape, between Bowerhill and south to the Mid Wilts Way long distance route along the Kennet and Avon Canal and north towards Clackers Brook. There are numerous rural footpaths across the north facing hillside at Seend, from which there are panoramic views north over the clay vale valley towards Sandridge. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • Lying to the east of Bowerhill, the site comprises three small fields bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees. The site has a strong, open rural character with clusters of rural properties to the northwest, southwest and east of the site. • A public footpath passes along the east and south of the site, linking with various footpaths through the rural landscape. • The landscape is in generally good condition with limited intrusive elements and moderate scenic value. • The site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development due to the strong, open rural character and sense of separation from the existing settlement. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a moderate number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a good number of homes, suggesting that there will be a good level of opportunities to meet a range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as any land required to be safeguarded for a future Melksham bypass), in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a good number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have a number of benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	

Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), this medium sized site is capable of bringing forward a moderate amount of affordable housing as part of any development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of high-quality house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a less deprived area. The development of this site would be unlikely to lead to new homes and jobs in an area subject to higher deprivation as it is not within an area or adjoining an area at risk of high levels deprivation and would be unlikely to result in social benefits in the area. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 370 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.1km to the northwest of this site. There is some accessibility from this site to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, particularly in enhancements where possible. This site may be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 34-48 early years places, 82-114 primary school places and 58-81 new secondary school places. A new primary school on land South of Western Way has been secured and would be able to accommodate early years places to meet needs arising from this site. This school is unlikely to be able to support needs from this site in addition to those arising from sites 2, 3 and 9 and so new provision may be required in meeting all needs arising in this part of the town or the number of homes in this area capped at 460. The new primary school would be able to accommodate primary needs. In meeting secondary school needs it is likely that places would need to be sought from new provision. Financial contributions would be required in supplying places to meet all of these needs. Spa Medical Centre is positioned approx. 1.2km to the north-west of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development of some form, which includes public space and community uses. These opportunities may not be vast onsite and so opportunities to create linkages to existing facilities, particularly through sustainable transport modes, should be taken. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW34, MELW35 and MELW36.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation,	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.

including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site would be unlikely to achieve significant benefits of social cohesion at it would not be directing development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision is unlikely to be achieved at this site. • The site has some existing accessibility to the town centre and is well connected to nearby health and education facilities and these should be enhanced where possible. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is considered large enough to incorporate some form of mixed-use development. The site is within relatively close proximity to the local secondary school, however pedestrian facilities along the A365 are either non-existent, overgrown and on the opposite side of the road or narrow and poor. Access to the primary school is better and accommodated by attractive routes through the adjacent residential estate in Bowerhill. Access to employment within Bowerhill is also within a commutable distance of 2km, however all other facilities (Town centre etc.) are beyond walking distance, with the town centre at the extreme edge of cyclability, but with little or no supporting infrastructure; the Rail Station is inaccessible.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	This site is not supported by the Local Highway Authority. The site cannot be accessed from Bowerhill Lane or Hornchurch Road and hence it will need to be delivered direct from the A365, in a location where traffic flows are high with high recorded speeds. **Local Constraints** Location to the extremity of the town and access to amenities by sustainable modes of transport. **Site Specific Mitigation** Pedestrian and cyclist access to Bowerhill Lane and infrastructure delivery/improvements along the A365. Access delivery and speed control measures. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is within relatively close proximity to the local secondary school, however pedestrian facilities along the A365 are either non-existent, overgrown and on the opposite side of the road or narrow and poor. Access to the primary school is better and accommodated by attractive routes through the adjacent residential

infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	estate in Bowerhill. Access to employment within Bowerhill is also within a commutable distance of 2km, however all other facilities (Town centre etc.) are beyond walking distance, with the town centre at the extreme edge of cyclability, but with little or no supporting infrastructure; the Rail Station is inaccessible. **Bus:** The site is within very close (less than 400m) proximity to bus stops serving the 273, and SB2 services, however this access will need to be improved to accommodate pedestrian access. The 273 provides a 2hour frequency service between Devizes, Melksham and Bath. Whilst this frequency remains unattractive, there are opportunities for this service to accommodate traditional working hours in each of the destinations. The SB2 provides a Seend shuttle with 1 bus in each direction per day. For this site to be considered sustainably served by bus, it would need to be delivered alongside other developments on the A365 corridor to maximise patronage and hence commerciality to a regular service between Devizes and Melksham Town Centre; alternative destinations may be achieved with a wholesale change to Melksham service provision, following delivery of a re-route A350 (see site 1). **Rail:** The site is not considered accessible to the Rail Station and occupiers would be unlikely to drive to the station for a change of mode. **Service Vehicles:** If a car access can be achieved, Service Vehicles will be accommodated. **Car:** The site cannot be accessed from Bowerhill Lane or Hornchurch Road and hence it will need to be delivered direct from the A365, in a location where traffic flows are high with high recorded speeds. Such an access would be likely to require 240m visibility splays in both directions, which would present the access central to the allocation and at a significant distance from the urban areas of the town. The proximity of the principal access from the urban fabric of the town, despite ped connectivity through the adjacent areas, would be likely to result in significant car trip generation, i.e., above the highway assessment calculation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This site is not supported by the Local Highway Authority. • The site cannot be accessed from Bowerhill Lane or Hornchurch Road and hence it will need to be delivered direct from the A365, in a location where traffic flows are high with high recorded speeds. **Local Constraints** Location to the extremity of the town and access to amenities by sustainable modes of transport. **Site Specific Mitigation** Pedestrian and cyclist access to Bowerhill Lane and infrastructure delivery/improvements along the A365. Access delivery and speed control measures. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Given the issues noted above a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.1km to the northwest of this site. There is some accessibility from this site to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, particularly in enhancements where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a medium sized site. It is not very well related to the train station, situated 3.2km to the south-east. This suggests that the ability of the site to support facilities in the town would be limited.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support mixed-use development, incorporating employment uses. A housing development incorporating employment land would be less likely be able to meet wide ranging economic needs on this site and there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. It is likely that a site of this size, in this location, could meet demands by local businesses to expand. The site has limited connectivity to existing protected employment land through sustainable modes of transport. Bowerhill Industrial Estate is positioned approx. 1km and Hampton Business Park is approx. 1.3km to the west of

higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	the site. This site is therefore limited in its ability to help support existing employment areas. Nonetheless, efforts should be made to improve and promote sustainable access to existing employment land, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment uses.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could be able to support some employment needs arising from the local Bowerhill population or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the west. In order to support existing employment land, enhancements to create better accessibility between the site and protected employment areas, the town centre and railway station would be required.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site lacks a good level of accessibility to the town centre and Melksham Railway Station • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development, which includes employment uses, to the site. • Employment land at this site could meet a range of needs but would be less like to support wide ranging economic needs. Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent. • The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development, associated infrastructure, including a bypass for the town. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 5 (SHELAA sites 1005, 1006, 3603)
Site name: Land to the south of Bowerhill

Site size: 76.85ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 1921 - 2690 dwellings **Site description:** A large site located to the south of Bowerhill. It is a greenfield site, in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to Brabazon Way and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, east to bridleway SEEN13, south to the Kennet & Avon canal and west to the A350. Bridleway SEEN17 and footpath MELW42 run through the site.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises relatively large, arable fields with three smaller, pastoral fields in the east around a small woodland (Giles Wood). The fields are predominantly bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees, although boundaries to the smaller fields contain more trees along with more significant tree cover being found along the west boundary of the site. Hedgerow and tree vegetation lines the Kennet and Avon Canal and towpath that runs along the southern site boundary. The site lies between the disused railway line on the northern boundary and Kennet and Avon Canal on the southern boundary, both likely to be important wildlife corridors, potentially of significance for bats commuting. Species records include water vole, bats, badger, and reptiles while a pond on site may hold great crested newts. Giles Wood lying along the canal is relatively recent, not on historical maps. The Kennet and Avon (K&A) canal is likely to be of significant ecological value, with opportunities present to enhance this corridor and create connections utilising and enhancing existing hedgerows. Key hedgerows are likely to be those that extend beyond the site to Semington Brook, which appears to be an important wildlife corridor, and farm buildings off site such as Littleton Mill. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features, such as the K&A canal, and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Good scope for mitigation and enhancement at this site. An essential pre-requisite will be retention of the valued habitat (K&A canal corridor / hedgerows) creating minimal breaches for ecological access. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), although the Kennet and Avon canal county wildlife site runs along the site's southern boundary. Development of the site may have the potential to increased recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

(LGSs) from development?	
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Existing hedgerows • Buffer along the Kennet and Avon canal and green corridors linking to/from this ecological asset • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises relatively large, arable fields with three smaller, pastoral fields in the east around a small woodland (Giles Wood). The fields are predominantly bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees, although some boundaries contain more trees. • The site lies between the disused railway line on northern boundary and Kennet and Avon Canal (County Wildlife Site) on southern boundary, both likely to be important wildlife corridors. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as the Kennet and Avon (K&A) canal corridor while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries/corridors through the site, trees and the K&A canal corridor. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. A higher density would be more appropriate in the north of the site adjacent to Bowerhill village and the industrial estate. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops serving Bowerhill and the industrial estate adjacent which could potentially be extended to serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This majority of the site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, unknown filled ground is indicated within the site and as such would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. Suitable assessment to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. There will be a significant loss of Grade 3 agricultural land through development, given the size of the site. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that the development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. • The majority of the site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, unknown filled ground is indicated within the site and as such would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There will be a significant loss of Grade 3 agricultural land through development, given the size of the site. • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a long offsite connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. There are potential links with southern sites 4,6 and 7. With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Any development should follow the surface water hierarchy: 1. into the ground (infiltration); 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer. Where infiltration is not a viable option then flows being released from the site would need a controlled discharge and to be agreed with the council on a site-by-site basis. Flows from greenfield sites should aim for 20% betterment over pre-developed discharge rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a long off site connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. There are potential links with southern sites 4,6 and 7. • With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. • Overall, given that the site does is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering the significant infrastructure improvements required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located adjacent to Bowerhill industrial estate and the main A350 road. In addition, the site is adjacent to industrial estate sources. The Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located opposite the site, west of the A350. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses, and employment uses may be more readily accommodated. A noise assessment will be required to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation. Relevant standards are WHO and BS8233:2014. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase coupled with appropriate acoustic treatments to achieve outdoor and indoor amenity requirements.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located adjacent to Bowerhill industrial estate and the main A350 road. The Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located opposite the site, west of the A350. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses, and employment uses may be more readily accommodated. • It is likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase coupled with appropriate acoustic treatments to achieve acceptable outdoor and indoor amenity requirements. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.	

• Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest significant watercourse to the site is the Kennet and Avon canal, which runs along the south of the site. Semington Brook run approximately 200m south of the canal. The site borders and is traversed by 2 small watercourses although they are not thought to present a flood risk. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of some developable land.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There are minimal patches within the site which present a pluvial flood risk which should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space,

temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is negligible flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is one of the larger sites in Melksham and so presents opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required.

	It is thought that a site of this size could require future investment to reinforce the grid to cope with the increased demand, and this may entail significant costs. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	

SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The site would possibly have some impact on the Kennet and Avon canal, Littleton Mill Farm and Seend Park Farm which would require further assessment. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. Given the site's size there is potential for mitigation via careful siting of development. Impact on canal could also be mitigated by design and would require further assessment on the impact on the GHQ Line Blue (WWII defensive system). The site has medium to high value features including medieval settlement in the southern area of the site, comprising various building platforms, hollow ways, field boundaries and ridge and furrow earthworks and second area of medieval settlement evidence in the north-east area of the site, comprised of ridge and furrow earthworks, networked hollow ways and a building platform. There are various features of low value including ridge and furrow earthworks across the site and demolished 19th century farm building at the centre of the site. Further investigation is likely needed. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be constrained by archaeological remains. Mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, specifically in the southern and north-eastern areas of the site, where Medieval remains may be concentrated. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Also, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. There are 21st century amalgamated and reorganised fields comprise the landscape character of the site, with former piecemeal field character remaining legible through field patterns. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • Likely adverse conservation effect is low. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is low.	

• The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the south of Bowerhill, east of the A350 between the southern settlement edge and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The site is on relatively flat, low-lying land, which slopes down slightly towards the Kennet and Avon Canal along the southern site boundary and Semington Brook beyond. It forms part of the low-lying clay vale valley landscape between the River Avon and Semington Brook. The Kennet and Avon Canal passes along the southern boundary of the site, linking between Devizes (east) and Trowbridge (west). The site comprises relatively large, arable fields that are dissected in the east by a private farm access track and bridleway (excluded from the site area). There are three smaller, pastoral fields in the east of the site, around a small woodland (Giles Wood). The fields are predominantly bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees, although boundaries to the smaller fields contain more trees, which link from the woodland. There is also more significant tree cover along the west boundary of the site along the A350 and along the western side of the north boundary to the trading estate. Hedgerow and tree vegetation lines the Kennet and Avon Canal and towpath, which is a distinctive linear feature along the southern boundary of the site. Bowerhill Industrial Estate lies to the northwest and suburban residential settlement lies to the northeast, both to the north of the disused railway. The residential settlement edge is formed by a relatively wide landscape buffer of informal green space with scattered trees (planted along the line of the disused railway), an access road and a hedgerow along the sites northern field boundary. The residential development is generally well-integrated and forms a soft settlement edge. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The Kennet and Avon Canal with associated vegetation and linking recreational routes, is a distinctive and valued landscape feature to the south of the site. The site contributes to the sense of separation between the existing settlement edge and strongly rural landscape to the south of the canal. It also contributes to the rural sense of place and tranquillity along the canal. Overall, the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the south of the site, along the Kennet and Avon Canal. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to be intrusive in the rural landscape setting and alter the rural and tranquil character of the Kennet and Avon Canal to the south. • Potential impact on alignment and features of the canal including the associated public footpaths and Sustrans route. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that provide linking features through the landscape, including between Giles Wood and the canal. • Potential loss of rural bridleways and footpath passing through the site, subsumed by urban development. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Limit development with appropriate stand-off to new built development in the south of the site, to retain the existing rural setting and character of the Kennet and Avon Canal as an important landscape feature, and to protect its tranquil rural amenity value and function. • Retain and enhance the value and function of the Kennet and Avon Canal as a strategic blue/green infrastructure corridor linking along the south of the site.

	• Retain and enhance hedgerows, trees and woodland as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to a soft, well-integrated settlement. • Retain the existing bridleway and footpath routes along their existing alignments to provide access to the canal and onward formal canal crossing points to countryside to the south from Bowerhill.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	Three public rights of way pass through the site, linking south from Bowerhill to the Kennet and Avon Canal. Two public bridleways extend from the end of Bowerhill Lane and are well-defined through the eastern part of the site along farm tracks following the edge of field boundaries, with the western bridleway passing through Giles Wood to the canal. The bridleways cross the canal via swing bridges to countryside south of the canal. They provide pedestrian and cycleway links with the Mid Wilts Way path and Sustrans Route 4 cycleway which share a route along the canal towpath. A public footpath also links from the Bowerhill Industrial Estate, south through Newtown Farm to the west of the site to join the canal towpath, and also crosses the canal via a swing bridge. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9.5km to the northwest. • Lying to the south of Bowerhill, the site comprises relatively large, arable fields with three smaller, pastoral fields in the east around a small woodland (Giles Wood). The fields are predominantly bound by low hedgerows with occasional trees, although boundaries to the smaller fields contain more trees along with more significant tree cover being found along the west boundary of the site. Hedgerow and tree vegetation lines the Kennet and Avon Canal and towpath. • Bowerhill Industrial Estate lies to the northwest and suburban residential settlement lies to the northeast. • Three public rights of way pass through the site, linking south from Bowerhill to the Kennet and Avon Canal. • The site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the south of the site, along the Kennet and Avon Canal. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as any land required to be safeguarded for a future Melksham bypass), in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9	

• Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in two areas subject to higher levels of deprivation, although these are not necessarily highly deprived areas. Despite not being subject to high levels of deprivation the site would be able to direct development in a more deprived area and development would therefore be capable of having greater social benefits. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 2690 homes of all types and tenures. This site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.2km to the north of this site which is not considered to be a reasonable walking distance. This site is located to the south of Bowerhill village and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, therefore divorced from the town whose housing needs it would be meeting. The site may only achieve access via Bowerhill, unless significant infrastructure commitments are made. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible. This site is likely to be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features, such as Giles Wood should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 250-350 early years places, 560-834 primary school places and 423-592 new secondary school places. This level of development would require the provision of two onsite primary schools on sites of at least 2ha. These would be able to incorporate two 60 place nurseries, but additional early years provision would be required from two 100 place full day care nurseries. New secondary provision would be required to meet the needs arising from this site. It is unlikely that this could be accommodated at the existing school site (Melksham Oak) and land will be required potentially on adjoining land or at a new facility, alongside maximisation of housing numbers to ensure viability. There may be an opportunity to operate this school as a satellite to Melksham Oak School if the current school cannot be expanded. Financial contributions, in addition to land, would be required in meeting all needs arising from the site in addition. Spa Medical Centre is positioned approx. 1.6km to the north of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development incorporating public space, alongside other community uses where necessary. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW42, MELW16, SEMI45, SEEN17, MELW45 and SEEN13. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local/district centres to serve the development are likely to be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. New onsite community, education and recreational facilities will be required to serve a development of up to circa 2365 homes in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents. These are like to be able to be delivered onsite, but where this isn't achievable, contributions should be sought.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation,	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.

including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site would be capable of leading to social benefits and would be capable of supplying a good level of affordable housing. • However, Melksham town centre is approx. 2.2km to the north of this site which is not considered to be a reasonable walking distance. This site is located to the south of Bowerhill village and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, therefore divorced from the town whose housing needs it would be meeting. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite. • Enhanced connectivity within the site and from the site to the town centre, health services and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of a future development. • This site is capable of delivering a good level of public space and amenity greenspace to achieving social benefits onsite. • This site could bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, and could provide an extension to Bowerhill Industrial Estate. • Development would be able to contribute to the reduction of rural isolation to some extent. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. However, in terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 2.2km from Melksham town centre and is located to the south of Bowerhill village and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, therefore divorced from the town.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Despite the site having a boundary with the A350, it is not considered appropriate to access this network due to the significant disruption that a further junction on this route would generate. Without access from the A350, the development is confined to access from Brabazon Way and hence will be limited by the capacity of residential junction capacities as routes lead to the A365 and Pathfinder Way respectively. **Local Constraints** The site may only achieve access via Bowerhill, unless significant infrastructure commitments are made. Notwithstanding this, the site may be preferable at a smaller scale that would impact less upon Bowerhill residential infrastructure and not be overwhelmed by the presence of the local industrial estate. **Site Specific Mitigation** Access via Bowerhill. Extension and enhancement of bus service access and provision. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.

3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** All pedestrian and cycle access would be via Bowerhill, which provides adequate access to primary and secondary schools, some retail opportunities and employment. However, the site is perceptively disassociated from Melksham (main) by the presence of the Bowerhill Industrial Estate; the presence of which would be likely to reduce walking and cycling due to lack of an attractive walking and cycling environment. This may be mitigated by reducing the scale of development, so that it fits within the east-west envelope of Brabazon Way which would form its access. **Bus:** The edge of the site is just beyond acceptable walking distance to the local bus stops, however a development of more than 400 dwellings may provide sufficient gravity to extends bus services closer to the site and hence reduce this walking distance. The local stops serve the 273 service which provides a 2hour frequency service between Devizes, Melksham and Bath. Whilst this frequency remains unattractive, there are opportunities for this service to accommodate traditional working hours in each of the destinations. **Rail:** The site is not considered accessible to the Rail Station. **Service Vehicles:** The site can accommodate service vehicles through Bowerhill. **Car:** Despite the site having a boundary with the A350, it is not considered appropriate to access this network due to the significant disruption that a further junction on this route would generate. Such access may be further prejudiced by junction spacing requirements as stipulated by DMRB and current policy designed to protect this network; it is important to note that even at 2622 dwellings, the development may not be of sufficient scale to justify the disruption to existing highway users, due to weight of existing traffic. Without access from the A350, the development is confined to access from Brabazon Way and hence will be limited by the capacity of residential junction capacities as routes lead to the A365 and Pathfinder Way respectively. Whilst such assessment has not been carried out, the limit to provide an alternative access route would suggest that a development of between 300 and 600 dwellings could not be exceeded. Notwithstanding this, should the A350 re-route be delivered (see Site 1), then an access form the current A350 may be achievable if the re-route bypasses the point of access.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The site is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. However, in terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 2.2km from Melksham town centre and is located to the south of Bowerhill village and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, therefore divorced from the town. • Despite the site having a boundary with the A350, it is not considered appropriate to access this network due to the significant disruption that a further junction on this route would generate. Without access from the A350, the development is confined to access from Brabazon Way and hence will be limited by the capacity of residential junction capacities as routes lead to the A365 and Pathfinder Way respectively. **Local Constraints** The site may only achieve access via Bowerhill, unless significant infrastructure commitments are made. Notwithstanding this, the site may be preferable at a smaller scale that would impact less upon Bowerhill residential infrastructure and not be overwhelmed by the presence of the local industrial estate. **Site Specific Mitigation** Access via Bowerhill. Extension and enhancement of bus service access and provision. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres,	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.2km to the north of this site which is not considered to be a reasonable walking distance. This site is located to the south of Bowerhill village and Bowerhill Industrial Estate, therefore divorced from the town whose housing needs it would be meeting. There is some accessibility from this site to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a large site and areas to the north of the site will have better accessibility to the town centre. Development should look to increase accessibility to the town centre from all parts of the site.

built up areas, station hub)?	
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	A site of this size would be capable of delivering employment land onsite as part of a mixed-use development. Employment land meeting wide ranging needs has the potential to be incorporated into a scheme on this site. Which is assessed as being well connected to protected employment areas in Melksham through sustainable modes of transport, with Bowerhill Industrial Estate and Hampton Park West adjoining directly to the north and west of the site. The site would therefore be capable of supporting existing employment areas, including through the provision of new types of employment land to meet the changing needs of existing businesses. An employment development could bring forward an extension to Bowerhill and would benefit from good access to the A350 and A361. There is some potential for this site to support higher skilled employment, aiding the diversification of the local economy. Efforts should be made to ensure access to existing employment land through sustainable modes, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land. This includes the promotion of active travel choices for those commuting to and from the site.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site could provide a high level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure. There is a possibility that land at this site will be required to bring forward a future bypass at Melksham. Despite the site having a boundary with the A350, it is not considered appropriate to access this network due to the significant disruption that a further junction on this route would generate. Even at 2622 dwellings, the development may not be of sufficient scale to justify the disruption to existing highway users, due to weight of existing traffic. Without access from the A350, the development is confined to access from Brabazon Way and hence will be limited by the capacity of residential junction capacities as routes lead to the A365 and Pathfinder Way respectively. Whilst such assessment has not been carried out, the limit to provide an alternative access route would suggest that a development of between 300 and 600 dwellings could not be exceeded. Notwithstanding this, should the A350 re-route be delivered (see Site 1), then an access from the current A350 may be achievable if the re-route bypasses the point of access. The size of this site suggests opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could provide mixed-use development that includes a balance of employment and residential land to meet a wide range of needs, including those arising from Bowerhill. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	

Summary of SA Objective 12
• The site is less related to the town centre and the railway station through sustainable transport modes. But it is subject to better connectivity to existing employment land. • The site may be capable of bringing forward employment land to meet a range of needs onsite. • The size of the site suggests that it could support mixed-use development, associated infrastructure, including a bypass for the town. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, a major significant positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 6 (SHELAA site 1004) **Site name:** Land South of Hampton Park **Site size:** 7.83ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 195 - 274 dwellings **Site description:** A small site located to the south of Hampton Park West Business Park. The northern part of this site has been developed for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ. The southern part of the site is greenfield and in arable use. The site boundaries extend north to the old railway line, east to the A350, south into open countryside and west to High St that leads into Semington. The former route of the Wilts & Berks canal runs along the western boundary.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises a large arable field bound by a combination of substantial hedgerows and tree belts. The former canal runs along the western side and is likely to be of ecological significance including for breeding great crested newts, with a significant buffer required when retaining this habitat. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or SSSI's. However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Retention of existing hedgerows and tree belts • The former canal corridor and associated buffer In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure, making suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises a large arable field bound by a combination of substantial hedgerows and tree belts. The former canal runs along the western side and is likely to be of ecological significance. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as the former canal route while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • Scope for integrated GBI include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not be able to deliver appropriate densities given the proximity of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and that any development would be separated from Hampton Park West due to the location of the HQ and the need to leave sufficient space due to noise impacts.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	The site consists entirely of agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	The site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. However, if subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.

4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource through development. However, given the size of the remaining developable area of the site, this will not be significant. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	Given the relatively small size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. However, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not be able to deliver appropriate densities given the proximity of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and that any development would be separated from Hampton Park West. • The site appears not to have been developed before, therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated, but further assessment will be required. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. However, given the size of the site, this will not be significant. • This site is not located within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area. • Given the relatively small size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that

	runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water and foul network infrastructure crosses the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water and foul network infrastructure crosses the site. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering improving capacity at Melksham would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located adjacent to Hampton Park West and the main A350 road. In addition, the site is adjacent to industrial estate sources. The Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located next to the site with regular helicopter movements. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses, and employment uses may be more readily accommodated. The proposed design of residential amenity should follow the principals of ProPG - Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise Guidance for new residential development and ensure noise impacts are incorporated into the early design stages. A noise assessment will be required to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation. Relevant standards are WHO and BS8233:2014. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase coupled with appropriate acoustic treatments to achieve acceptable outdoor and indoor amenity requirements.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also

sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located adjacent to Hampton Park West and the main A350 road. In addition, the site is adjacent to industrial estate sources. • The Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located next to the site with regular helicopter movements. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses, and employment uses may be more readily accommodated. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest significant watercourse to the site is the Kennet and Avon canal, which is about 200m to the south of the site. Semington Brook run approximately 200 m south of the canal. The west side of the site is bordered by an old canal although this is not thought to present a significant flood risk. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of some developable land.

Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is a low pluvial flood risk across 21% of the site. Each year, this area has 0.1% chance of flooding. This is along the west side of the site and is thought to be associated with the canal. It is thought that this could be addressed through an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The site is not considered vulnerable to flooding associated with high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of pluvial flooding should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is an area of low pluvial flood risk along the west side of the site, thought to be associated with the canal. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • There is minimal risk associated with groundwater. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change.	

• Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the pluvial flood risk to the site and loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this isn't one of the larger sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.

construction materials?	
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site isn't as large as others, energy demand will be less than a larger site. However, it is considered that there may be less opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production, so the site will likely still depend on the existing grid. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could struggle to cope with the increased demand of this site unless reinforcement works were carried out, however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated	The site would have some impact on setting on Grade II Listed Building Outmarsh Farm and the openness of site could impact on setting of Outmarsh Farm. Mitigation would be potentially possible via buffer to west. The route of historic Wilts and Berks canal runs through site which could be denoted within design. The impact on understanding of GHQ Line Blue - WWII defensive systems need to be taken into account and assessed. There are various features of low value including Roman Shrine at the centre of the site which indicates potential for further Roman activity extending out across the site. The Former Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal bounds the site to the west. Further investigation is likely needed during the planning application process to understand the nature and extent of possible remains, particularly in relation to the Roman Shrine at the centre of the site. This could take the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, potentially at the centre of the site. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Alternatively, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. There are 21st century amalgamated and reorganised fields with no former character legible. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. No mitigation strategy identified at this stage. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.

heritage assets and their settings?	
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse conservation effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of	The site lies to the southwest of Bowerhill, west of the A350 and east of Semington Road and south of the trading estate on Hampton Park West. It is separated from Bowerhill by the line of the disused railway. The site is on generally flat land, which forms part of the low-lying clay vale landscape between the River Avon and Semington Brook. The site comprises a large arable field, within which the Wiltshire Air Ambulance (WAA) base has recently been constructed. The site is bound by a combination of hedgerows and tree belts, which contribute to a generally enclosed site that is separate from adjoining land uses. The WAA base includes landscape bunds to the south of the building. A wide tree belt forms the north boundary with commercial units. This continues along the west site boundary to Semington Road.

buildings and the public realm?	There are a variety of property/building types adjoining and in proximity to the site, including large commercial units to the north, a farmstead (Outmarsh Farm) comprising various barns and outbuildings to the west, cluster of residential and small commercial barns to the southwest and the modern WAA building within the site. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The site is in generally moderate condition. It contributes to the sense of separation between the existing settlement edge of Bowerhill and the rural settlement of Semington and the rural setting of the Kennet and Avon Canal to the south. Overall, the site is of generally medium to low landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to form a conspicuous, new harsh settlement edge in the rural landscape setting. • Potential for development to form an isolated residential area, detached from both Bowerhill and Semington. • Potential loss of separating countryside between Semington and Bowerhill. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that provide linking features through the landscape and contribute to the generally well-integrated existing settlement edge. • Potential loss of remaining historic fabric of the Wilts and Berks Canal. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Create a strong landscape buffer to the south of the site, to create a soft well-integrated settlement edge and maintain rural separation between the site and Semington. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to a soft, well-integrated settlement. • Retain hedgerow and tree alignment along the west site boundary, which define the historic alignment of the Wilts and Berks Canal.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There are no public rights of way within the site. Public footpaths link from Semington Road to countryside to the west and south to the Kennet and Avon Canal. The tree belt along the west of the site marks the historic, overgrown route of the former Wilts and Berks Canal. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 9km to the northwest. • Lying to the southwest of Bowerhill, the site comprises a large arable field, within which the Wiltshire Air Ambulance (WAA) base has recently been constructed. The site is bound by a combination of hedgerows and tree belts. • There are no public rights of way, public open space or common land within this site. • The site is of generally medium to low landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a small number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a relatively small number of homes, albeit there will still be opportunities to meet needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could not deliver a small number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have a number of benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.

Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this smaller site could bring forward a small amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a more deprived neighbourhood. This area is not highly deprived, but development at this site would be likely to have social benefits through new homes and employment in an area subject to more deprivation. The northern part of the site has been developed as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and there are frequent helicopter take offs and landings. This development and associated noise impacts from helicopter movements may reduce the housing capacity at this site, reducing the level of new homes that can be provided. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.3km to the north of this site. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible. This site is less likely to be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 28-38 early years places, 66-92 primary school places and 47-65 new secondary school places. Early years and primary needs could potentially be met through new provision on site 5 if the two sites were to come forward together. Otherwise, provision onsite or other offsite provision would be required. New secondary school provision will be required and the creation of new places for all of the needs arising from this site will require financial contributions. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are both positioned approx. 1.7km to the north-east of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	A site of this size is likely to be able to support a mixed-use development of some form, which could include public space and community uses. These opportunities may not be vast onsite and so opportunities to create linkages to existing facilities, particularly through sustainable transport modes, should be taken. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW16 for recreational purposes.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation,	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.

including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site would be capable of leading to some social benefits and would be capable of supplying a good level of affordable housing. • The northern part of the site has been developed as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and there is frequent helicopter take offs and landings. This development and associated noise impacts from helicopter movements may reduce the housing capacity at this site, reducing the level of affordable homes that can be provided • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision is unlikely to be achieved at this site. • Enhanced connectivity within the site and from the site to the town centre, health services and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of a future development. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is not of a size that could realistically accommodate a mixed-use development. The site is beyond reasonable walking distance to either the town centre or rail station, however employment opportunities and Semington Primary School (subject to capacity) are within an accessible walking distance; access to the town is also along routes with poor residential supervision, which would be likely to dissuade use.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Site 6, like site 5, cannot achieve access from the current route of the A350. Unlike site 5, despite any potential re-routing of the A350, the site is not of a scale to justify an access on what will be the principal Melksham Town Centre serving route. Without access from the A350, the site would need to access the High Street, with forced direction of travel through Semington; this is as a result of bus gate provisions to the north of the access point. **Local Constraints** The site has good bus accessibility but is let down by being beyond walking and cycling distance from necessary amenity and infrastructure. The site is also subject to an imposed south bound only vehicular traffic movement, which would add traffic through the village of Semington. Access onto local roads would also conflict with the original alignment of the canal which will have landscape implications and possible heritage impacts. **Site Specific Mitigation** None **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is beyond reasonable walking distance to either the town centre or rail station, however employment opportunities and Semington Primary School (subject to capacity) are within an accessible walking distance; access to the town is also along routes with poor residential supervision, which would be likely to

transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	dissuade use. Access along High Street towards the Police Station is considered poor, with regards to infrastructure provision (one narrow footway), however due to the bus gate (see below), traffic flows are low, and the initial route considered attractive. Beyond the initial section, routes to employment would need to cross the A350, via a controlled crossing however, and this would be likely to dissuade employment-based walking commute. **Bus:** The site is within 400m of stops (at the Police Station) which serve the X34, which provides excellent high frequency accessibility between Frome, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham. This service is also subject to a bus gate, thereby maximising its journey time reliability. **Rail:** The site is considered beyond reasonable accessibility to the rail station. **Service Vehicles:** The site would require service vehicles to access through Semington and whilst this currently occurs for refuse vehicles etc., the site would generate an intensification. **Car:** Site 6, like site 5, cannot achieve access from the current route of the A350. Unlike site 5, despite any potential re-routing of the A350, the site is not of a scale to justify an access on what will be the principal Melksham Town Centre serving route, which would still accommodate circa 10-15,000 vehicles per day. Without access from the A350, the site would need to access the High Street, with forced direction of travel through Semington; this is as a result of bus gate provisions to the north of the access point. The bus gate provisions were made to avoid rat-running away from the A350 corridor and hence delivery of development forcing traffic through Semington would be considered contrary to this aim. With specific regard to access from the High Street, whilst provisions could be made geometrically, it is acknowledged that this would cross the alignment of the Old Canal, with significant impacts upon landscaping and possible heritage.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The site is not of a size that could realistically accommodate a mixed-use development. • The site is beyond reasonable walking distance to either the town centre or rail station, however employment opportunities and Semington Primary School (subject to capacity) are within an accessible walking distance; access to the town is also along routes with poor residential supervision, which would be likely to dissuade use. • Site 6, like site 5, cannot achieve access from the current route of the A350. Unlike site 5, despite any potential re-routing of the A350, the site is not of a scale to justify an access on what will be the principal Melksham Town Centre serving route. • Without access from the A350, the site would need to access the High Street, with forced direction of travel through Semington; this is as a result of bus gate provisions to the north of the access point **Local Constraints** The site has good bus accessibility but is let down by being beyond walking and cycling distance from necessary amenity and infrastructure. The site is also subject to an imposed south bound only vehicular traffic movement, which would add traffic through the village of Semington. Access onto local roads would also conflict with the original alignment of the canal which will have landscape implications and possible heritage impacts. **Site Specific Mitigation** None **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town	Melksham town centre is approx. 2.3km to the north of this site. There is some accessibility from this site to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a medium sized site. It is not very well related to the train station and is situated 3km to the south of Melksham Railway Station. This suggests that the ability of the site to support facilities in the town would be limited but opportunities to improve connectivity are likely to be apparent.

centres, built up areas, station hub)?	
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to complement employment development to the north through an employment or residential development. A housing development incorporating employment land would be less likely be able to meet wide ranging economic needs on this site, but there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. This would be boosted by the sites excellent access to the A350 and A361. The site has limited connectivity to existing protected employment land through sustainable modes of transport. Hampton Park West is directly north of the site and Bowerhill Industrial Estate is approx. 0.3km to the north-east. The site is assessed as being very well connected to existing employment areas, therefore opportunities for this site to be able to support existing employment is likely to be apparent.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. The northern part of the site has been developed as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and there are frequent helicopter take offs and landings. This development and associated noise impacts from helicopter movements may reduce the housing and/or employment capacity at this site, reducing the significance of any benefits from developing this site. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could be a able to support some employment needs arising from southern Melksham and local Bowerhill population or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the north. However, land to the north of the site has been developed as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and there are frequent helicopter take offs and landings. This development and associated noise impacts from helicopter movements will significantly reduce the housing and/or employment capacity at this site, reducing the significance of any benefits from developing this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site lacks a good level of accessibility to the town centre, Melksham Railway Station and existing employment areas. • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development, which includes employment uses, to the site. However, the north of the site has been developed as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ and there are frequent helicopter take offs and landings. This development and associated noise impacts may reduce the housing and/or employment capacity at this site, reducing the significance of any benefits from developing this site. • Employment land at this site could meet a range of needs but would be less like to support wide ranging economic needs. • Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent.	

• The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development, associated infrastructure, including a bypass for the town. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 7 (SHELAA sites 1003, 1019, 1002) **Site name:** Land to the south of Berryfield **Site size:** 27.38ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 684 - 958 dwellings **Site description:** A medium-sized site located to the west of Hampton Park West Business Park and High St. The site is mostly greenfield and in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to Berryfield village, east to Semington Rd and High St, south to the Kennet & Avon canal and west into open countryside. The safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal runs through the site as do footpaths MELW8, MELW10 and MELW11.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises a variety of field types and sizes generally bound by low hedgerows and limited tree cover within the site. The embanked route of a dismantled railway is a distinctive feature highlighted by trees and shrubs growing along its length, that links west through the centre of the site, from Semington Road. Trees and shrubs around Outmarsh Farm are also present. The site spans between the Kennet and Avon Canal (south) and a tributary watercourse that flows around the south Berryfield. Another small watercourse rises in the south of the site near Outmarsh Farm, flowing south into Semington Brook. A ditch along northern boundary of site. Outmarsh Farm grazed fields, farm buildings and hedgerows provide good habitat with links off-site making this central part of the site particularly ecologically valuable, including being attractive to bats. A large pond at Outmarsh Farm is also present of unknown status for great crested newts. If newts are present in Outmarsh Farm pond, it would be preferable to retain in situ given its location next to dismantled railway. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Notably mitigation includes the importance of separate access to north and south parts of site and retention of trees and grassland in vicinity of Outmarsh Farm. Development should avoid creating an access between south and northern parts of the site in order to maintain as much habitat connectivity along the dismantled railway line as possible. This may affect site capacity and will require two separate accesses into the site. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Existing hedgerows and trees • Watercourses/features • Dismantled railway line notable for its ecological value and habitat connectivity • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure, improving habitat connectivity and providing new greenspace. In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises a variety of field types and sizes generally bound by low hedgerows and limited tree cover within the site. The embanked route of a dismantled railway is a distinctive feature of notable ecological importance. • The site spans between the Kennet and Avon Canal (south) and a tributary watercourse that flows around the south Berryfield. Another small watercourse rises in the south of the site near Outmarsh Farm, flowing south into Semington Brook. A ditch along northern boundary of site. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as the dismantled railway line while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • Mitigation should ensure the retention of trees and grassland in vicinity of Outmarsh Farm. Development should avoid creating an access between south and northern parts of the site in order to maintain as much habitat connectivity along the dismantled railway line as possible. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site may not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site is divorced from Melksham and Bowerhill and is more closely related to Berryfield village which may influence densities that could be achieved. The site will also need to factor in the safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal (Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 16) which would leave less land available for housing.

2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists almost entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few if any opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	The vast majority of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. The main areas where contaminated land may exist are at the working farmstead within the site. However, a more detailed assessment of the site would be required prior to any development coming forward. If subsequent evidence suggests the presence of land contamination, a remediation and mitigation strategy would be required. The site is also intersected by former railway land which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. A suitable assessment would be required to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 1 and partly of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Given the size of this site and likely loss of the highest grade of agricultural land, significant effects would be expected from development. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. The impact is likely to result in some sterilisation of the potential resource but constraints could be overcome through mitigation, such as extraction of mineral prior to development.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site could deliver appropriate densities. However, the site is divorced from Melksham and Bowerhill and is more closely related to Berryfield. The site also extends out into open countryside as far as the K&A canal and will need to factor in the safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal. • The vast majority of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the main areas where contaminated land may exist are at the working farmstead within the site and the former railway land which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require further investigation. • Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 1 and partly of Grade 3 agricultural land. Given the size of this site and likely loss of the highest grade of agricultural land, significant impacts would be expected from development. • The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, given the likely significance of impacts noted, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network infrastructure, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Any development should follow the surface water hierarchy: 1. into the ground (infiltration); 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer. Where infiltration is not a viable option then flows being released from the site would need a controlled discharge and to be agreed with the council on a site by site basis. Flows from greenfield sites should aim for 20% betterment over pre-developed discharge rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network infrastructure, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that infrastructure would require reinforcement to cope with capacity, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located adjacent to Hampton Park West and the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located next to the site with regular helicopter movements. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses, and employment uses may be more readily accommodated. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located adjacent to Hampton Park West and the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ is also located next to the site with regular helicopter movements. As such there is a potential for significant adverse noise impacts if considered for residential uses. Employment uses may be more readily accommodated. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport.

renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest significant watercourse to the site is the Kennet and Avon canal, which runs along the south side of the site. Semington Brook run approximately south of the canal. The site is traversed by 3 smaller watercourses although this is not thought to present a significant flood risk. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of some developable land.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is a low pluvial flood risk across 13% of the site. Each year, this area has 0.1% chance of flooding. This is associated with small watercourses on the site, particularly around Outmarsh Farm. It is thought that this could be addressed through an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. There is a moderate risk posed to 60% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This is across the north of the site. This means groundwater levels are between 0.025 and 0.5m below ground level. High groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space, but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site. Areas currently at risk of pluvial flooding should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The use of some SuDS may be inhibited by high groundwater levels.

Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There are areas of moderate pluvial flood risk, particularly around Outmarsh Farm. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • There is a moderate risk associated with shallow groundwater under 60% of the site. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods. • It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space, and it is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Development of this significant sized site has the potential to significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions due to emissions generated through the construction and occupation of the development. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, although future development is likely to increase emissions, it is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is considered possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the risk associated with high groundwater levels and the potential for development to worsen flood risk elsewhere, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is one of the larger sites in Melksham and so presents opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. It is thought that energy demand from a site of this size would be significant and could require substantial investment to reinforce the grid however any associated costs are likely to be proportionate to the size of the development that comes forward.

	According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	Development would have some impact on setting of on Grade II Listed Building Outmarsh Farm. Outmarsh Farm has legible layout and good survival of historic buildings. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. The southern area of the site wraps around farm and mitigation likely to be very difficult. Mitigation may be possible to north of former railway embankment which provides screening and separation from farm. There would be some impact on Grade II Listed Building Wharf Cottage and the Kennet and Avon canal. The impact on canal could be mitigated by design. The impact on understanding of GHQ Line Blue - WWII defensive systems also need to be considered and assessed. There are various features of low value including medieval ridge and furrow earthworks and associated field boundaries and plough headland identified by aerial photography across the site- no longer visible, 19th century agricultural building foundations revealed during groundworks, bronze age weapon findspot in the mid—east area of the site and an extant 19th century Outmarsh farmstead at the centre of the site. Further investigation is likely needed. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remain. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site has post medieval to 21st century piecemeal fields with no former character legible form most of the site area, post medieval to 21st century farm character (Outmarsh Farm), which may be described as having historic origins, is found at the centre of the site and 21st century re-organised fields comprise the southern site area's character. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. No mitigation strategy identified at this stage. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects is moderate. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	

SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the west of Bowerhill, west of Semington Road and south of Berryfield and sits on flat, low-lying landform that gently slopes west towards the River Avon. The site spans between the Kennet and Avon Canal (south) and a tributary watercourse that flows around the south Berryfield. Another small watercourse rises in the south of the site near Outmarsh Farm, flowing south into Semington Brook. The site comprises a variety of field types and sizes that form part of the open, low-lying clay vale landscape that extends west of Bowerhill towards the River Avon. Fields are generally bound by low hedgerows and there is limited tree cover within the site and surrounding landscape. The embanked route of a dismantled railway is a distinctive linear feature highlighted by trees and shrubs growing along its length, that links west through the centre of the site, from Semington Road. Trees and shrubs along the dismantled railway and around Outmarsh Farm, combined with smaller, irregular fields contribute to the enclosed smaller scale landscape in the south of the site. The site has a predominantly rural character, which is intruded on in part by adjoining commercial units to the northeast of the site on the opposite side of Semington Road (Hampton Park West Business Park). Residential properties stretching along Semington Road and the southern edge of Berryfield form a mixed settlement edge to the site without a particularly strong unifying vernacular or identity. The site contributes to the rural sense of separation between the edge of Bowerhill and Semington. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The Kennet and Avon Canal with associated vegetation and linking recreational routes, is a distinctive and valued feature to the south of the site. The south of the site has a more locally distinctive sense of place than the north, due to distinctive features including the dismantled railway route and canal along the south site boundary. Overall, the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the south of the site which contributes to the rural setting of the canal and also provides separation between Bowerhill and Semington. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development, with more limited capacity in the south of the site. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to be intrusive in the rural landscape setting and alter the rural character of the Kennet and Avon Canal to the south. • Potential erosion of rural village character of Semington. • Potential impact on alignment and features of the canal including the associated public footpaths and Sustrans route. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that provide linking features through the landscape and contribute to the generally well-integrated existing settlement edge. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Limit development in the south of the site, to retain the setting and character of the rural canal corridor and rural landscape to the south to maintain rural separation between the site and Semington. • Retain and enhance the Kennet and Avon Canal and associated vegetation as a strategic blue/green corridor linking along the south of the site. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to a soft, well-integrated settlement.
3. Protect and enhance rights of	Three public footpaths pass through the site, one to the north linking west to the River Avon and two in the south. The Kennet and Avon Canal forms the southern site boundary. A public footpath and Sustrans cycleway Route 4 follow the towpath along the canal, with a number of footpaths linking south and west to Semington and other

way, public open space and common land?	rural settlements. An alternative, realigned route of the Wilts and Berks Canal is protected and proposed along the west boundary of the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB sits approximately 8.5km to the northwest. • Lying to the west of Bowerhill and south of Berryfield, the site comprises a variety of field types and sizes generally bound by low hedgerows and limited tree cover. • The embanked route of a dismantled railway is a distinctive linear feature highlighted by trees and shrubs growing along its length, this vegetation also spreading around Outmarsh Farm. • Three public footpaths pass through the site. • The site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the south of the site which contributes to the rural setting of the canal and also provides separation between Bowerhill and Semington. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development, with more limited capacity in the south of the site. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. The capacity of this site may be reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes along the western edge of this site. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Wilts & Berks Canal), the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as any land required to be safeguarded for the Wilts & Berks Canal), in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Wiltshire & Berkshire Canal), this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • The capacity of this site may be reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a more deprived neighbourhood. This area is not highly deprived, but development at this site would be likely to have social benefits through new homes and employment in an area subject to more deprivation.

and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The site is considered able to deliver a very good level of affordable housing. However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approx. 1.6km to the north of this site. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible. This site is likely to be able to support opportunities for some onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible, including incorporation of the safeguarded Wilts and Berks Canal. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 89-125 early years places, 212-297 primary school places and 150-211 new secondary school places. A new onsite primary school would be required to meet primary needs arising from this site. This school should include a 60-place nursery. It is likely that an additional full day care nursery would be required and land for this could be provided by this. New secondary school provision would be required and financial contributions would be needed to ensure the creation of places for all education needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are approx. 1.3km and 1.5km to the north-east of the site, respectively. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	A site of this size is likely to be able to support a mixed-use development of some form, which could include public space and community uses. Opportunities to deliver these onsite should be pursued ahead of financial contributions towards offsite provision and accessibility through sustainable transport modes should be pursued. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW10, MELW11 and MELW16 for recreational purposes. The provision of new onsite or enhancements of local offsite community, education and recreational facilities are likely to be required to serve a development of this size and these will need to be in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and enhanced local community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site could be capable of leading to some social benefits and would be capable of supplying a good level of affordable housing.	

• However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite. • The site has some existing accessibility to the town centre. Enhanced connectivity to health services and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of future development. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The site is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. The site is considered more accessible than site 6, by being closer to the Town Centre, but suffers the same lack of sufficient infrastructure, lack of residential supervision for long lengths of the route and the need to cross the A350, making it unattractive. The site is also marginally further out of Semington than site 6 and hence is considered between urban fringes.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	**Local Constraints** Distance to the Rail Station and the need to cross the A350 for access to the Town Centre. **Site Specific Mitigation** Possible improvements to the design and condition of Semington Road. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is considered more accessible that site 6, by being closer to the Town Centre, but suffers the same lack of sufficient infrastructure, lack of residential supervision for long lengths of the route and the need to cross the A350, making it unattractive. The site is also marginally further out of Semington than site 6 and hence is considered between urban fringes. Whilst the delivery of this site, in combination with site 11 would address much of the walking route deficiency, adding security, activity and attractiveness, this would create a ribbon spur of Melksham that would be dominated by the road which it aligns rather than integrating with Melksham. **Bus:** The site is within 400m of stops (at the Police Station) which serve the X34, which provides excellent high frequency accessibility between Frome, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham. This service is also subject to a bus gate, thereby maximising its journey time reliability. **Rail:** The site is beyond reasonable walking distance to the Rail Station, but within cyclable distance. **Service Vehicles:** The site and its access may accommodate Service Vehicles. **Car:** Semington Road is a relatively narrow road (too narrow for a central white line), which is in a poor state of repair in some locations. This road may therefore not be considered adequate for the full build out of circa 900 dwellings but may accommodate a much lower number. To the north, Semington Road leads directly to the A350 and in a southerly direction, site traffic may access the A350 via Hampton Park West. Once on the A350, multiple access routes are available.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The site is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development.	

• The site is considered more accessible than site 6, by being closer to the Town Centre, but suffers the same lack of sufficient infrastructure, lack of residential supervision for long lengths of the route and the need to cross the A350, making it unattractive. The site is also marginally further out of Semington than site 6 and hence is considered between urban fringes. • Semington Road is a relatively narrow road (too narrow for a central white line), which is in a poor state of repair in some locations. This road may therefore not be considered adequate for the full build out of circa 900 dwellings but may accommodate a much lower number. **Local Constraints** Distance to the Rail Station and the need to cross the A350 for access to the Town Centre. **Site Specific Mitigation** Possible improvements to the design and condition of Semington Road. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approx. 1.6km to the north of this site. This site is relatively well connected to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a medium/large sized site, situated approx. 2.4km to the south of Melksham Railway Station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support mixed-use development, incorporating employment uses. Employment land could form an extension of existing employment land and could provide a range of land to meet the changing demands of existing businesses or attract higher skilled employment at a town where manufacturing is dominant. A housing development incorporating employment land would be somewhat able to meet wide ranging economic needs on this site, but there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. A solely employment development could be more suited to this site. The site has good accessibility by sustainable modes of transport to Hampton Park West and Bowerhill Industrial Estate is to the east of the site, east of the A350. Active travel choices should be promoted through any development to reduce reliance on private cars by commuters to and from the site.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could support some employment needs arising from the southern Melksham and local Bowerhill population or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the east.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	

Summary of SA Objective 12

- This site has a reasonable level of accessibility to the town centre and good accessibility to existing employment areas. Although it is some distance from the train station, opportunities to enhance sustainable transport are likely.
- There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development incorporating employment uses to the site. It would be able to help support existing employment land to the east of the site.
- Employment land at this site could meet a range of economic needs. Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent.
- The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure.
- However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 9 (SHELAA site 1025)
Site name: Land south of Western Way
Site size: 10.22ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 255 - 358 dwellings
Site description: A small site located to the south of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in agricultural use. The site boundaries extend north to Western Way, east to land with an approved planning application 16/01123/OUT for 235 dwellings, south to Bowerhill Industrial Estate and west to a narrow strip of land adjacent to the A350. Footpath MELW42 runs along part of the western site boundary.

SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises two small, arable fields, bound by a combination of hedgerows and narrow tree belts with a number of mature trees present within the site and a distinctive tree line to the west. The site is bound to the north, south and west by two small watercourses that rise in the north and east of the site and drain under the A350 towards Berryfield Brook. The site lies within a wider area which supports a metapopulation of great crested newts (GCN). It contains one pond and a ditch and lies immediately adjacent to a large pond and two smaller ponds where there is a record for GCN. The hedgerows provide good connectivity around the site while the small copse off site to the southern boundary provides good newt terrestrial habitat. The Council owned informal open space to the south of the site also offering good newt terrestrial habitat.

	Retaining newts on site will likely entail a reduction in housing capacity. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries of the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerows and tree(s)/tree belts • Water courses and buffers around these In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure, making suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises two small, arable fields, bound by a combination of hedgerows and narrow tree belts while also containing mature trees. The site is bound to the north, south and west by two small watercourses that rise in the north and east of the site and drain under the A350 towards Berryfield Brook. • The site lies within a wider area which supports a metapopulation of great crested newts (GCN). The hedgerows provide good connectivity around the site while the small copse off site to the southern boundary and open space to the south provide good newt terrestrial habitat. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.	

• Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site is adjacent to roads, employment uses and a new residential development. Densities may need to be lower towards these adjacent uses, especially the industrial estate and the A350 and Western Way, due to noise impacts. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. The site could potentially be served by an extension to bus services serving Bowerhill and the industrial estate. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and is bounded by former military land to the south which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. A suitable assessment would be required to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource, but the size of the site suggests this will not be significant. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within 500m of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.

of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. • This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and is bounded by former military land to the south which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. However, given the size of the site, any loss will not be significant. • The site is not located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, given the lack of likely significant effects noted, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant foul network infrastructure crosses the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant foul network infrastructure crosses the site. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that significant improvements to foul capacity would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	

SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Mitigation measures will be required to reduce these impacts. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. A noise assessment would be required as the site is in close proximity to the A350, Western Way and it backs onto Bowerhill industrial estate. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. Part of the site falls within Wessex Water's Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre odour zone, and potential odour impacts would require assessment to determine appropriate mitigation which may require a separation distance.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • A noise assessment would be required as the site is in close proximity to the A350, Western Way and it backs onto Bowerhill industrial estate. • Part of the site falls within Wessex Water's Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre odour zone, and potential odour impacts would require assessment to determine appropriate mitigation which may require a separation distance. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest watercourse to the site is a small drain which runs almost around the whole site, although this is not thought to present a significant flood risk. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This may result in the loss of some developable land.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There are minimal patches within the site which present a pluvial flood risk however this could be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy. The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located approximately 1 km from the town centre, which could enable active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates.

Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is minimal flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid.

	It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site isn't as large as others, energy demand will be less than a larger site. However, it is considered that there may be less opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production, so the site will likely still depend on the existing grid. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the	Development of this site is unlikely to impact on any listed buildings or areas of historical value. There are no listed buildings or heritage designations in proximity to this site. There are various features of low value including extensive Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks and a demolished 19th century Outfarm at the centre of the site. Further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching, potentially in the eastern site area, to identify the extent of possible settlement remains identified in the buffer. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily

character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where relevant. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site is characterised as C21 amalgamated fields- traces of ridge and furrow earthworks may remain visible. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Further research is likely needed to identify survival and extent of ridge and furrow earthworks across the site, possibly via site survey. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is low, however, following the results of site survey this risk could change.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • Development of this site is unlikely to impact on any listed buildings or areas of historical value. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is low, however, following the results of site survey this risk could change. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g.	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB is approximately 8.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site is located on the northwest edge of Bowerhill, to the south of Melksham and the A365. Land to the east of the site is consented for residential development that is currently under construction. Comprising flat land, which begins to rise very gradually from the northwest corner of the site towards Bowerhill Industrial Estate, the site is bound to the north, south and west by two small watercourses that rise in the north and east of the site and drain under the A350 towards Berryfield Brook. The site comprises two small, arable fields, bound by a combination of hedgerows and narrow tree belts that forms part of a remaining pocket of farmland that separates Melksham from Bowerhill. There are a number of mature trees within the site boundaries, which contribute some enclosure and separation of the site from adjoining residential and commercial areas. The west site boundary comprises a distinctive tree line that defines the eastern edge of narrow fields that are remnant field areas left over following the construction of the A350 road to the west of the site. The site is within an undesignated landscape that has few distinctive features and is in generally poor to moderate condition. It is a simple landscape with locally intrusive elements and of limited scenic quality. The site boundary vegetation and small watercourses contributes to green/blue infrastructure links through the local landscape and provides buffers to existing development edges. Overall, the site is of generally low landscape sensitivity to development, with greater value attached to the boundary vegetation. The site has generally high capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to break the locally treed skyline. • Potential loss of hedgerows and trees that provide linking features through the landscape and contribute to the generally well-integrated existing settlement and trading estate. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would break the treed skyline. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to a soft, well-integrated settlement.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	A public footpath links through the narrow fields to the west of the site, from Melksham and connecting south to the Kennet and Avon Canal. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • Lying on the northwest edge of Bowerhill, the site comprises flat land made up of two small, arable fields, bound by a combination of hedgerows and narrow tree belts. The site forms part of a remaining pocket of farmland that separates Melksham from Bowerhill. • The site is within an undesignated landscape that has few distinctive features and is in generally poor to moderate condition. It is a simple landscape with locally intrusive elements and of limited scenic quality. • The site is of generally low landscape sensitivity to development, with greater value attached to the boundary vegetation. The site has generally high capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period.

of affordable housing?	Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a moderate number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a good number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a good number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs arising from the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this medium sized site is capable of bringing forward a moderate amount of affordable housing as part of any development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of high-quality house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in less deprived area, but it is partially within an area subject to more deprivation. While, not within a more deprived area, there may be opportunities arising from the development of this site to achieve wider social benefits in the adjoining, more deprived neighbourhood. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 360 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is less than 1km to the north of the site. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible. This site may have potential to be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link the site to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Melksham Blue Pool Leisure Centre is within 1km to the north of the site and formal recreational greenspace is situated to the north-west. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 33-47 early years places, 79-111 primary school places and 56-79 new secondary school places. Early years needs are likely to be met through offsite provision, financial contributions would be required in securing these. Primary school needs could be met through new offsite provision at the adjacent Pathfinder Place development. Financial contributions would be needed to secure these places. Secondary school places would also need to be provided offsite, possibly in a new facility and financial contributions will be required to ensure the provision of places for all needs arising. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are less than 1km away to the north and north-east, respectively. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 there are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact on delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic,	This is a relatively small site and may not incorporate a mixed-use development. However, the site may allow opportunities for expansion of businesses from Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is adjacent to the south and south-eastern boundaries. These opportunities may not be vast onsite and so opportunities to create linkages to existing facilities, particularly through sustainable transport modes, should be taken. Opportunities to improve public right of way: MELW42 may be apparent.

cultural, recreational and community functions?	The provision of new onsite or enhancements of local offsite community, education and recreational facilities are likely to be required to serve a development of up to circa 360 homes and these will need to be in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located at Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide some affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and enhanced local community facilities which rural residents could access.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site could be capable of leading to some social benefits and would be capable of supplying a good level of affordable housing. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. • The site is well connected to the town centre and local health services. Enhancements to linkages to these and other community uses will need to be achieved as part of a future development. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make only a small contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	This is a relatively small site and is not considered large enough to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. However, the site may allow opportunities for expansion of businesses from Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is adjacent to the south and south-eastern boundaries. In terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 900m from Melksham town centre and therefore well within walking and cycling distance, but Western Way is a significant barrier.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	A vehicular access would not be achievable for this site from the A365 due to the proximity of existing junctions either side of the site and exiting congestion issues. Whilst a left-in left-out functioning access may be achievable, this would not be acceptable for such a large number of dwellings and would be likely to result in abuse. To achieve access, a route through to Pathfinder Place should be sought and tested. **Local Constraints** Limited opportunity for vehicular access and pedestrian crossing. **Site Specific Mitigation** Pedestrian crossing facilities to be provided on Western Way if achievable. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy

3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site fronts onto Western Way, which on the opposing side all residential properties back onto the road. With this in mind, even when crossing this busy road, there are limited routes to the town centre and none served by a controlled crossing; this would need to be addressed towards the far north-west of the site where a route through to public right of way MELW42, across the road linking up to the parallel footway/cycleway to Berkeley Close. For clarity, provision of a crossing would be considered difficult, due to the roundabout exiting vehicles and conflict with the crossing point. If the above link is achievable, the site would be within close walking proximity to the town centre and amenities therein. **Bus:** Bus 15 passes the front of the site along the A365, but it is unlikely stops could be provided for this service, due to the difficulties to cross the road, disruption to existing highways users, difficulty to exit a bus bay and lack of sufficient passenger demand. **Rail:** If an A365 crossing is achievable, the rail station comes within cyclable distance but not walkable distance. Direct access onto the A365 would also be likely to result in car driver mode prioritisation and reduce possible rail patronage. **Service Vehicles:** A vehicular access would not be achievable for this site from Western Way due to the proximity of existing junctions either side of the site but access is achievable via third-party land.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This is a relatively small site and is not considered large enough to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. However, the site may allow opportunities for expansion of businesses from Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is adjacent to the south and south-eastern boundaries. • In terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 900m from Melksham town centre and therefore well within walking and cycling distance, but Western Way is a significant barrier. • A vehicular access would not be achievable from the A365. To achieve access, a route through to Pathfinder Place should be sought and tested. **Local Constraints** Limited opportunity for vehicular access and pedestrian crossing. **Site Specific Mitigation** Pedestrian crossing facilities to be provided on Western Way if achievable. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is less than 1km to the north of the site. This site is well connected to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a medium sized site, situated approx. 1.9km to the south of Melksham Railway Station, suggesting more opportunities to support the town centre and local facilities are likely to arise from the development of this site.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support limited mixed-use development, incorporating employment uses. A housing development incorporating employment land would be likely to be able to meet a range of economic needs on this site and there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. The site has good connectivity to existing protected employment land through sustainable modes of transport. Bowerhill Industrial Estate adjoins the site to the

higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	south, while Hampton Park West is situated approx. 0.4km to the south. As a whole, the site is assessed as being well connected to existing employment areas, therefore opportunities for this site to be able to support existing employment are good as well as opportunities to enhance connectivity through sustainable modes of transport.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	This is a relatively small site and opportunities to incorporate a mixed-use development are limited. However, the site may allow opportunities for expansion of businesses from Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is adjacent to the south and south-eastern boundaries or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site is subject to a good level of accessibility to the town centre and good accessibility to existing employment areas. Nonetheless, opportunities to enhance sustainable transport are likely to be apparent. • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development incorporating employment uses onsite but it is more likely that part of the site could allow for an expansion of Bowerhill Industrial Estate. • Development would be able to help support existing employment land to the south. • Employment land at this site could meet a range of economic needs and opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent. • The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 11 (SHELAA sites 3105a, 3105b, 3105c, 3105d, 728, 3645) **Site name:** Land to the west of Melksham **Site size:** 52.06ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 1301 - 1822 dwellings **Site description:** This large site is located to the west of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to the River Avon, east to the A350 and Semington Rd, south to Berryfield and west into open countryside. The site includes working farms and agricultural buildings. The safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal runs through the site. There are several public rights of way within or adjacent to the site, including MELW15, MELW117, MELW116, MELW5, MELW6, MELW3, MELW1 and MELW2.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises of arable and pastoral fields of varying sizes predominantly bound by substantial hedgerows in places that are interspersed with hedgerow trees. There are a greater number of trees within hedgerows in the southern part of the site. The meandering course of the River Avon County Wildlife Site to the north and west contains individual and groups of willow trees growing along its banks. The A350 to the east is also bound by a substantial tree belt and small woodland. A small pond appears to be present within the site near a small copse (off site) alongside the A350, holding the potential for Great Crested Newts. Boundary Farm and Westward Farm have some traditional buildings with bat roosting potential while North and South Townsend Farms off site also hold bat potential. Indeed, Water tower held greater horseshoe in 2014. The hedgerows are likely to provide bat commuting routes across the site. The site is likely to have reduced in ecological value in recent times having been significantly modified farmed intensively - fields increased in size compared to historical maps. A significant portion of northern part of the site lies within flood zones 2 and 3. The amount of developable land that would need to be sacrificed for net gain will therefore be reduced compared to other sites due to the opportunity for significant habitat restoration within the flood plain. The main focus could be on enhancement in the flood plain and along the river corridor. Overall, well located to provide significant biodiversity gains. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site abuts the Bristol Avon County Wildlife Site while the Conigre Mead County Wildlife site lies on the other side of the A350. The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerows and trees • Enhancement in the flood plain and along the river corridor • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises of arable and pastoral fields bound by substantial hedgerows in places, interspersed with hedgerow trees. The A350 to the east is also bound by a substantial tree belt and small woodland. • The meandering course of the River Avon (County Wildlife Site) sits to the north. The main focus could be on enhancement in the flood plain and along the river corridor. • Protection, maintenance and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Scope for integrated GBI include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees alongside enhancement of the river corridor. The development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site extends out into open countryside towards the River Avon and it will need to incorporate the safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal which may affect densities. The site also contains significant areas of flood plain associated with the river. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. However, currently, there are no existing bus services/stops in close proximity to this site and the A350 serves as a physical barrier for people wanting to walk or cycle to the town centre. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists almost entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.

3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	Most of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and working farms which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. A suitable assessment would be required to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 1 and partly of Grade 4 agricultural land. Therefore, given the size of the site, there is likely to be a significant loss of the highest-grade agricultural land. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. The impact is likely to result in some sterilisation of the potential resource, but constraints could be overcome through mitigation, such as extraction of mineral prior to development.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. Also, the Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 1 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities. The site extends out into open countryside towards the River Avon and contains extensive areas of floodplain. • The site will need to incorporate the safeguarded route of the Wilts & Berks canal which may affect densities. • Most of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and working farms which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 1 and partly of Grade 4 agricultural land. Therefore, given the size of the site, there is likely to be a significant loss of the highest-grade agricultural land. • The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development	

• Overall, given the likely significance of impacts noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. An alternative connection to Melksham Water Recycling Centre would necessitate crossing the River Avon.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. An alternative connection to Melksham Water Recycling Centre would necessitate crossing the River Avon. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering significant infrastructure reinforcements would be required to cope with capacity, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to the A350 - as such there is a potential for adverse noise impacts. However, the site may be large enough to locate dwellings away from the A350. The proposed design of residential amenity should follow the principals of ProPG - Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise Guidance for new residential development and ensure noise impacts are incorporated into the early design stages. A noise assessment would also be required to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation.

	The northern and south-eastern extents of the site are also within odour consultation zones for sewage treatment works and this would require odour assessment to determine likely required mitigation such as a separation distance.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to the A350 - as such there is a potential for adverse noise impacts. However, the site may be large enough to locate dwellings away from the A350. • Small parts of the site are within Wessex Water's odour consultation zones related to STWs and may require mitigation such as a separation distance. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from a large development such as this would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	It is considered possible for most new development to be located within Flood Zone 1. 10% of the site is unsuitable for "more vulnerable" development such as housing as it is in Flood Zone 3b. 24% may also be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. The areas of significant and moderate flood risk are in proximity to the River Avon along the north of the site. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to the River Avon with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	The highest fluvial risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3b covers 10% of the site. Additionally, 20% of the site may also be unsuitable for development. This is the area along the northern side of the site, near the River Avon. Although development could avoid these areas and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is a significant risk posed to 11% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are less than 0.025 m below ground level. This covers the north-west edge of the site. There is a moderate risk posed to 81% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are between 0.25 and 0.5m below ground level. High groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. There is a low risk of surface water flooding on 7% of the site. There is a medium risk of surface water flooding on 2% of the site. There is a high risk of surface water flooding on 1% of the site. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space, but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • Areas of significant and moderate fluvial flood risk are associated with the River Avon to the north of the site. This means 24% of the site is potentially undevelopable. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere.	

• There is a significant risk associated with shallow groundwater under 11% and 81% of the site respectively. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods, likely resulting in surface water having to be drained through conventional piping systems. This puts pressure on the existing system. • It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space, and it is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Development of this significant sized site has the potential to significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions due to emissions generated through the construction and occupation of the development. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, although future development is likely to increase emissions, it is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is considered possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the fluvial flood risk associated with the River Avon and the risk associated with high groundwater levels, which could inhibit the use of SUDs and thus worsen flood risk elsewhere, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is one of the larger sites in Melksham and so presents opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. It is thought that energy demand from a site of this size would be significant and could require substantial investment to reinforce the grid which may involve significant costs. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated	The site would impact on the Grade II Listed Berryfield Cottages to the south-west. These heritage assets originally were in isolated rural surroundings but have already been changed by development and have limited setting (garden curtilage). Mitigation through good design is likely to be possible. The site has high value features including Bronze age barrow cemetery identified by geophysical survey in the western site area (bordering the north and west of the site). Medium value features include Undated ditches and pits were identified by geophysical survey in the north-eastern area of the site and Iron Age to Roman rectilinear enclosure identified by cropmarks in aerial photographs in the western site area together with possible Neolithic to Bronze age ditch of a rectangular enclosure was identified in a geophysical survey in the western site area and Potential site of Former Berryfields settlement with Medieval origins within the SW site area (SHELAA 3105b)- inferred from bibliographic sources. There are various features of low value including Former Medieval ridge and furrow and associated plough headlands are visible as earthworks in air photographs and Lidar – may remain visible, former 20th century Melksham military camps located across the mid and southern site areas and former 20th century Melksham military camps located across the mid and southern site areas. Further investigation is likely needed in the north-western half of the site during the site allocations process to include geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching where not already undertaken as well as fieldwalking in order to understand the nature and extent of possible remains. Further investigation is likely needed in the south-

heritage assets and their settings?	eastern half of the site during planning application process to include archaeological evaluation of areas not previously developed. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, particularly with highly significant remains associated with the early prehistoric period, i.e. the western site edge. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Also, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. Following further investigation this risk may increase or decrease. The site has 21st century amalgamated fields with some former boundaries legible and post Medieval to 21st century piecemeal fields with little former character legible. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is located adjacent to a conservation area. However, the A350 sits between the conservation area and the site and the impact on the conservation area will be minimal.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The site would impact on the Grade II Listed Building. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. Following further investigation this risk may increase or decrease. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 7.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the southwest of Melksham, to the south and west of the A350 road. The site is on generally flat land that is characteristic of the clay vale landscape and Melksham's location on the River Avon. The site forms part of a strongly rural landscape that extends west of Melksham towards the River Avon. It comprises of arable and pastoral fields of varying sizes. Larger fields make up the north and western part of the site. The southern and eastern part of the site comprises smaller, rectangular fields around two small farmsteads (Boundary and Westwood Farms). The fields are predominantly bound by hedgerows that are interspersed with hedgerow trees. There are a greater number of trees within hedgerows in the southern part of the site, where they contribute to a smaller scale, enclosed landscape pattern between Melksham and Berryfield. The meandering course of the River Avon to the north and west is often defined by individual and groups of willow trees growing along its banks. The A350 to the east is also bound by a substantial tree belt and small woodland that provides a buffer and screening of the existing settlement edge. The site has a generally strong rural character and sense of separation from Melksham. The settlement edges of Melksham and Berryfield are well-integrated, soft edges with tree planting that predominantly screens the built form and separates the rural and suburban features. The site is within an undesignated landscape that displays distinctive characteristics of the sparsely settled, expansive Avon vale landscape. The site has as strong sense of separation from Melksham and contributes to the rural setting of the River Avon as it flows southwest from Melksham. It is an identifiable landscape of moderate scenic quality with occasionally intrusive overhead wires and poles. The landscape is considered to be in generally moderate condition. Overall, the site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity due to its strong rural character and contribution to separation between Melksham and the rural river corridor. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, particularly in the north and western parts of the site. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for new built form to be intrusive in the rural landscape especially where it has potential to form harsh new urban edges and skylines, or physically encroaches into the River Avon corridor. • Potential loss of hedgerows, riparian vegetation and trees that would alter the sense of countryside integration around the western edge of Melksham. • Potential changes in the viewing context for rural public rights of way users, particularly expansive views across the river valley. • Potential changes to the dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads. • Potential coalescence of Melksham and the village of Berryfield. • Potential loss of safeguarded canal routes (planned). Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would be prominent in the large-scale landscape. • Limit built development in close proximity to the River Avon corridor to retain a strong landscape buffer to the settlement edge and rural setting of the river; • Retain and manage hedgerows, riparian vegetation and trees as part of a mature landscape framework. • Retain rural views along key public rights of way and particularly open views across the river landscape. • Create appropriate buffers to settlement areas in order to maintain the separate identities of Melksham and Berryfield. • Avoid development that would preclude the restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal (impact upon its protected route).
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	A number of public rights of way pass through the site, linking between Melksham and the River Avon and beyond to the outlying villages within the rural landscape. The new, alternative route for the Wilts and Berks Canal is proposed through the site following a line broadly parallel with the A350 to the north and middle of the site before sweeping southeast towards Berryfield, to provide a link from the River Avon at the northern edge of the site to the southeast corner of the site, continuing south to link with the Kennet and Avon Canal. The proposed alternative route for the restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal would provide a valuable link between the River Avon and Kennet and Avon Canal and new pedestrian and cycleway link from the centre of Melksham to Berryfield and Semington and the sustrans cycleway along the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8	

• The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9.5km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 7.5km to the northwest. • Lying to the southwest of Melksham, the site consists of arable and pastoral fields of varying sizes. The fields are predominantly bound by hedgerows that are interspersed with hedgerow trees, a greater number of trees present in the south of the site. The River Avon to the north and west is often defined by individual and groups of willow while the A350 to the east is also bound by a substantial tree belt and small woodland. • A number of public rights of way pass through the site. • The site has as strong sense of separation from Melksham and contributes to the rural setting of the River Avon as it flows southwest from Melksham. The landscape is in generally moderate condition. • The site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity due to its strong rural character and contribution to separation between Melksham and the rural river corridor. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, particularly in the north and western parts of the site. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. The capacity of this site may be reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks Canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes through the entire site from Berryfield in the south to the River Avon in the north. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site still means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be opportunities to meet a range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have many benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Wilts & Berks Canal), this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in a more deprived neighbourhood. This area is not highly deprived but adjoins a more highly deprived area to the north. Development at this site would be likely to have social benefits through new homes and employment in an area subject to more deprivation. It has the potential to deliver a significant number of homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a very good level of affordable housing. However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes through the entire site from Berryfield in the south to the River Avon in the north. This reduction in supply will reduce the significance of overall benefits against this objective.

	There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is less than 0.5km to the east of the site's eastern boundary. This is a large site and some areas are more than 1km away. Efforts would need to be made to connect all parts of this site through sustainable modes of transport. Accessibility to Melksham town centre is significantly hampered by the A350 which acts as a significant barrier between this site and the rest of the town to the east. This site is likely to be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible, including incorporation of the safeguarded Wilts and Berks Canal. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 169-237 early years places, 403-565 primary school places and 286-401 new secondary school places. This level of development would require a primary school at this site on land of at least 2ha. This would not be sufficient to meet pupil product in full, but new offsite provision could be supported with financial contributions from this development. The new primary school would be able to accommodate a 60-place nursery, but an additional two full day care nurseries would be required onsite to ensure early years needs could be met in full. New secondary provision would be required to meet the needs arising from this site. It is unlikely that this could be accommodated on the existing school site and land for expansion or for a new facility may be required alongside maximisation of housing numbers to ensure viability. There may be an opportunity to operate this school as a satellite to Melksham Oak School if the current school cannot be expanded. Financial contributions and land would be required in meeting all needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery is approx. 1km away to the east of the eastern boundary of the site, whilst the most western point of the site is around 1.5km away. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development incorporating public space, alongside other community uses where necessary. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW15, MELW117, MELW6, MELW3, MELW2, MELW1 and MELW5. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local/district centres to serve the development are likely to be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. New onsite community, education and recreational facilities will be required to serve a development of up to circa 1475 homes in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents. These are like to be able to be delivered onsite, but where this isn't achievable, contributions should be sought.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site would be capable of leading to social benefits and would be capable of supplying a very good level of affordable housing.	

• However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes through the entire site from Berryfield in the south to the River Avon in the north. This reduction in supply will reduce the significance of overall benefits against this objective. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite. • This site has a good level of access to the town centre, but only a reasonable level of access to existing health services. • Enhanced connectivity within the site and from the site to the town centre, health services and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of a future development. • Accessibility to Melksham town centre is significantly hampered by the A350 which acts as a significant barrier between this site and the rest of the town to the east. • This site is capable of delivering a good level of public space and amenity greenspace to achieving social benefits onsite. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses. • Development would be able to contribute to the reduction of rural isolation to some extent. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	This is a large site and it is considered possible that a mixed-use development could be delivered. In terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 0.5km from Melksham town centre as the crow flies but there is no opportunity for additional access from the A350, restricted access from Semington Road and unattractive walking and cycling routes due to the need to cross the A350. This reduces the accessibility benefits of this site.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	The A350 in the locality of the site is subject to significant congestion and cannot been enhanced, in capacity terms, without addressing the floodplain and river crossing. With this in mind, it is not considered feasible to provide a direct access from the A350, even following the provision of a re-routed A350. **Local Constraints** No opportunity for additional access from the A350, restricted access from Semington Road and unattractive walking and cycling routes due to the need to cross the A350. **Site Specific Mitigation** Should the site be delivered alongside other sites in the locality and the A350 is diverted away in its current form, then there may be a gravity of development that may significantly alter the A350/Semington Road roundabout to maximise walking and cycling crossing facilities, which may significantly alter the accessibility of the site. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** Despite following the alignment of the A350 as it leads towards Asda and the Railway Station, there are no footway cycleway provisions along this corridor and the northern section is displaced from infrastructure provided at Farmers Roundabout. In this regard, whilst the site is of a scale to deliver footway and cycle way infrastructure, there is a significant length of infrastructure which may not be delivered by the site. Even if it is established that ped/cycle infrastructure can be delivered within highway land along the A350 leading to Farmers Roundabout, this would not be in an environment conducive to attracting active modes and is further prejudiced by crossing floodplain and the river Avon adding to cost. With this in mind, this site, despite its scale, is afforded the same ped/cycle accessibility as sites 7 and 10 (possibly 8, subject to access deliverability). For site 10, the following was stated which is considered salient for Site11: "*the location of the development would be unattractive to walking and cycling, due to very heavy adjacent traffic flows, and hence the site would not be considered suitable to maximise active mode share. Notwithstanding this, the site is considered within close proximity to the Town Centre and just beyond maximum walking distance to the Rail Station.*"

	Bus: Because of the location of the development, it is not well placed to be served by bus transit. The X34 service does accommodate the developments southern reaches along Semington Road, but this service deviates away from the site and the A350 towards the Town Centre. To deliver a bus service into the site is possible, but this would be likely to reduce town centre bus service frequency provision. **Rail:** As per site 10, the site is within walkable distance to the rail station; however, the route requires crossing the A350 and a particularly congested point on the network. **Service Vehicles:** Semington Road may provide access to Service Vehicles (see below). **Car:** The A350 in the locality of the site is subject to significant congestion and cannot been enhanced, in capacity terms, without addressing the floodplain and river crossing. With this in mind, it is not considered feasible to provide a direct access from the A350, even following the provision of a re-routed A350. This is due to still likely high vehicle numbers, limited opportunity for capacity enhancement and disruption to existing users. This site may be served from Semington Road; however, the numbers would need to be constrained to avoid negative impact on that area of the highway network.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This is a large site and it is considered possible that a mixed-use development could be delivered. • In terms of accessibility, the site is approximately 0.5km from Melksham town centre as the crow flies but there is no opportunity for additional access from the A350, restricted access from Semington Road and unattractive walking and cycling routes due to the need to cross the A350. This reduces the accessibility benefits of this site. • The A350 in the locality of the site is subject to significant congestion and cannot been enhanced, in capacity terms, without addressing the floodplain and river crossing. It is not considered feasible to provide a direct access from the A350, even following the provision of a re-routed A350. **Local Constraints** No opportunity for additional access from the A350, restricted access from Semington Road and unattractive walking and cycling routes due to the need to cross the A350. **Site Specific Mitigation** Should the site be delivered alongside other sites in the locality and the A350 is diverted away in its current form, then there may be a gravity of development that may significantly alter the A350/Semington Road roundabout to maximise walking and cycling crossing facilities, which may significantly alter the accessibility of the site. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approx. 0.5km to the east of the site's eastern boundary. Efforts would need to be made to connect all parts of this site through sustainable modes of transport. Accessibility to Melksham town centre is significantly hampered by the A350 which acts as a significant barrier between this site and the rest of the town to the east. Melksham Railway Station is situated 0.7km to the north of the site. It is considered that a site of this size would be capable of being able to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. This is a large site and areas to the east will be better related to the centre and areas in the north will have better access to the train station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that	A site of this size would be capable of delivering some employment land onsite as part of a mixed-use development. However, the site is not as well connected to existing employment areas as other sites to the south of the town. Bradford Road Employment Area, Challeymead Business Park and Avonside Enterprise Park are either north of the River Avon or east of the A350. Employment areas to the south of the site are more accessible by road. Employment development in this location could benefit from access to the A350 and better connectivity with the railway station to support higher skilled employment. the site is less likely to support an extension of an existing employment site but could have very good benefits for these through new residential land and an enhanced workforce.

are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	Efforts should be made to ensure access to existing employment land through sustainable modes from all parts of the site, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land to meet different economic needs. Active travel choices should be promoted through development to avoid a reliance on private cars for commuter journeys to and from the site.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site could provide a good level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure. However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes through the entire site from Berryfield in the south to the River Avon in the north. This reduction in supply will reduce the significance of overall benefits against this objective. The size of this site suggests opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could provide mixed-use development that includes a balance of employment and residential land to meet a wide range of needs, including those arising from the existing population in the west of Melksham. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere. A residential development along could have good benefits of locating new homes in reasonably good proximity to employment land to the north and south.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is reasonably close to the town centre and the railway station through sustainable transport modes. However, accessibility to the town centre is significantly hampered by the A350 which acts as a significant barrier between this site and the rest of the town to the east. • The site could be capable of bringing forward employment land to meet ranging needs onsite. • The size of the site suggests that it would be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. However, the capacity of this site may be significantly reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes through the entire site from Berryfield in the south to the River Avon in the north. This reduction in supply will reduce the significance of overall benefits against this objective. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 12 (SHELAA sites 3352, 3310)
Site name: Land to the west of Shurnhold
Site size: 38.90ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 972 - 1361 dwellings
Site description: This large site is located to the north-west of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north into open countryside and to Shurnhold and Bath Rd, east to South Brook and the railway line, and south and west into open countryside. The site includes a working farm and other agricultural buildings. There are several public rights of way within or adjacent to the site – MELK24, MELK28, MELK22 and BGIF34. There is a large solar farm adjacent to the west of the site.

SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises of irregularly shaped fields that are characteristic of the limestone lowland, these fields largely bound by hedgerows that contain a number of hedgerow trees. The field boundary vegetation is well connected through the landscape, linking with vegetation along the railway (southern boundary) and riparian vegetation along the river to the southeast. The east site boundary is formed by South Brook, which is a tributary to the River Avon while another small, meandering watercourse forms the west boundary of the site, flowing south into the River Avon. Both watercourses are lined by riparian shrubs and trees. These water courses holding potential for water vole. The fields themselves comprise a mixture of arable and grazing pasture, field patterns largely unchanged compared to historical maps. The intensive nature of the farming is likely to have reduced the ecological significance of the site generally. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerows and trees • Two tree lined water courses: Southbrook on eastern boundary and unnamed ditch on western boundary • Railway line (southern boundary) • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises of irregularly shaped fields largely bound by hedgerows that contain a number of hedgerow trees. The field boundary vegetation is well connected through the landscape, linking with vegetation along the railway (southern boundary) and riparian vegetation along the river to the southeast. The eastern and western site boundaries are formed by small meandering watercourse. Both watercourses are lined by riparian shrubs and trees. These water courses holding potential for Water Vole. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees alongside utilising and enhancing watercourses for GBI. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site is large but it extends out into open countryside from Shurnhold road. There is no other high-density development this side of Shurnhold road and in the north of the site, consideration will need to be given to the settings of listed buildings. This will influence the density of development on the site. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities and there are existing bus services/stops along the A365 which could serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists almost entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.

3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	Most of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and working farms which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. A suitable assessment would be required to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 2 and partly of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Given the size of this site, there is likely to be a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land through development. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. The impact is likely to result in some sterilisation of the potential resource but constraints could be overcome through mitigation, such as extraction of mineral prior to development.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 2.5 km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities. There is no other high-density development this side of Shurnhold road and in the north of the site, consideration will need to be given to the settings of listed buildings – these factors would affect densities. • Most of this site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground and working farms which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting partly of Grade 2 and partly of Grade 3 agricultural land. Given the size of this site, there is likely to be a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land through development. • The majority of the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development • Overall, given the likely significance of impacts noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, It is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water and foul network infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Any development should follow the surface water hierarchy: 1. into the ground (infiltration); 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer. Where infiltration is not a viable option then flows being released from the site would need a controlled discharge and to be agreed with the council on a site by site basis. Flows from greenfield sites should aim for 20% betterment over pre-developed discharge rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water and foul network infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that significant infrastructure reinforcements are likely to be required to cope with capacity, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is close to a sewage treatment works in the south. There may be odour and fly implications which will need to be assessed by the developer and may require mitigation such as a separation distance. The site is also very close to commercial/industrial land use. As such there is a potential for both noise and odour. The site is also located close to a railway line, which may require a buffer/separation for residential uses. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019. An odour assessment will also be required and must include representative visits to the site, taking into account weather conditions and wind direction. In order to determine whether the noise/odour impacts are significant. The proposed design of residential amenity should follow the principals of ProPG - Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise Guidance for new residential

	development and ensure noise impacts are incorporated into the early design stages. A noise assessment will also be required to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation. Relevant standards are WHO and BS8233:2014.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is close to a sewage treatment works in the south. There may be odour and fly implications which will need to be assessed by the developer. The site is also very close to commercial/industrial land use. As such there is a potential for both noise and odour. The site is also located close to a railway line, which may require a buffer/separation for residential uses. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, given the above evidence, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative	It is considered possible for new development to be located within Flood Zone 1, however 22% of the site may be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. These areas of flood risk are to the eastern edge of the site, associated with South Brook and the western side of the site, associated with a smaller tributary to the River Avon. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to these watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This

sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is moderate flood risk to some of the site associated with both fluvial and pluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest fluvial risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3a (which takes into account climate change) covers 22% of the site. This is along the eastern and western edges of the site. The highest pluvial risk on site (1% chance of flooding each year) covers 21% of the site and follows a similar pattern to the fluvial risk, however this is worse on the west side of the site. Although development could avoid these areas and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is a significant risk posed to 96% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are less than 0.025 m below ground level. High groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. Cumulative impacts have been scored high. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space, but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • Areas of moderate fluvial flood risk are to the eastern edge of the site, associated with South Brook and the western side of the site, associated with a smaller tributary to the River Avon. This means 22% of the site is potentially undevelopable. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • There are areas of moderate and low pluvial flood risk, which follow a similar pattern to the fluvial flood risk. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Cumulative impacts have been scored high. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required.	

• There is a significant risk associated with shallow groundwater under 96% of the site. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods, likely resulting in surface water having to be drained through conventional piping systems. This puts pressure on the existing system. • It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space, and it is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Development of this significant sized site has the potential to significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions due to emissions generated through the construction and occupation of the development. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, although future development is likely to increase emissions, it is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is considered possible for new development to be in flood zone 1. However, given the surface water flood risk and the risk associated with high groundwater levels, which could inhibit the use of SUDs and thus worsen flood risk elsewhere, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is one of the larger sites in Melksham and so presents opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. It is thought that energy demand from a site of this size would be significant and could require substantial investment to reinforce the grid however any associated costs are likely to be proportionate to the form of development that comes forward. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid without reinforcement works, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The north of the site forms the immediate setting of the Grade II Listed Building Shurnhold farmhouse. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland and mitigation has already been shown to be very difficult in a previous appeal decision. Whilst not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. Much of the wider site lies within the setting to the listed Shurnhold Farm and, although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development across the whole of the site appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. The site has high value features including two probable Bronze Age round barrows are visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs at the centre of the site. Low to medium value features include Roman pottery and roof tiles identified during fieldwork in the south-eastern site area. There are various features of low value including Medieval ridge and furrow and associated plough headlands and field boundaries are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar. Further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching across the site. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, potentially at the centre of the site, depending on the extent and significance of Bronze age round barrows here. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Also, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate.

	The site has 21st century amalgamated fields, where former character remains legible, comprise the main character of the site- not highly sensitive. Post medieval to 21st century planned enclosure fields, with no former character legible, comprise the character of the northern section of the site. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The north of the site forms the immediate setting of the Grade II Listed Building Shurnhold farmhouse. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland and mitigation has already been shown to be very difficult in a previous appeal decision. Whilst not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development in this location appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. • Much of the wider site lies within the setting to the listed Shurnhold Farm and, although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development across the whole of the site appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, there are significant effects on heritage/conservation assets and a major adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB approximately 6.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of	The site lies to the northwest of Melksham, south of the A365 and west of the railway line. The site is on generally flat land that rises gently to the west of the River Avon. The east site boundary is formed by South Brook, which is a tributary to the River Avon while another small, meandering watercourse forms the west boundary of the site, flowing south into the River Avon. The site forms part of the mixed agricultural landscape, comprising of irregular shapes and sizes of fields that are characteristic of the limestone lowland that extends north and west of Melksham. The fields are largely bound by hedgerows that contain a number of hedgerow trees.

buildings and the public realm?	The field boundary vegetation is well connected through the landscape, linking with vegetation along the railway and riparian vegetation along the river to the southeast. Both watercourses are lined by riparian shrubs and trees that contribute to local treed skylines. The site has a predominantly rural character, with much of the site used for horse grazing and livery at Roundponds Farm. There are various settlement edge influences north and east of the site, including the sewage treatment works, light industrial units, a substantial care home and the generally well-integrated settlement edge of Shurnhold. There is a substantial solar farm to the west of the site, which is largely well-contained by hedgerow boundaries with mature hedgerow trees and occasional field trees. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The site has a local sense of place and strong sense of separation from Melksham. It also contributes to the separation of Melksham and outlying, traditional rural villages including Broughton Gifford. The landscape is in generally moderate condition with some locally intrusive elements. The site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to form an abrupt settlement edge and be intrusive in the rural landscape setting where it breaks treed skylines. • Potential loss of hedgerows, riparian vegetation and trees that punctuate the low-lying landscape and contribute to generally well-integrated existing settlement. • Potential alteration to the character and route of the watercourses that bound the site. • Potential change from a rural to urban context for users of the various rural footpaths through the site to the surrounding countryside and rural villages. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would break the treed skyline. • Create appropriate landscape buffers to the development that establish a soft well-integrated settlement edge. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to settlement buffers and maintains green links through the countryside. • Limit development in proximity to the watercourses in order to maintain distinctive landscape features. • Retain rural character of key public rights of way.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There are a number of public footpaths that pass through the site and link northwest/west with outlying rural villages including Broughton Gifford and Shaw. There are no recreational links to the River Avon south of the site. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 10km to the northeast of the site while the Cotswolds AONB approximately 6.5km to the northwest. • The site forms part of the mixed agricultural landscape, comprising of irregular shapes and sizes of fields that are characteristic of the limestone lowland that extends north and west of Melksham. The fields are largely bound by hedgerows that contain a number of hedgerow trees. • There are a number of public footpaths that pass through the site. • The site has a predominantly rural character. The landscape is in generally moderate condition with some locally intrusive elements. • The site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.

2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated in one more deprived and two less deprived areas. The neighbourhood within the east of the site, which stretches into the north-west of Melksham is subject to higher levels of deprivation. This suggests that this site poses a very good opportunity to direct development in areas subject to high level of deprivation in order to maximise social benefits. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 1361 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a very good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approximately 0.5km to the south-east of this site. Some north-western parts of the site are around 1.15km away from the town centre boundary. Efforts would need to be made to ensure connectivity from all parts of the site through sustainable modes of transport. This site is likely to be able to support opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. The site is within 1km of recreational greenspace at King George V Park and South Brook. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 126-177 early years places, 301-422 primary school places and 214-299 new secondary school places. This level of development would require one new primary school at this site on land of at least 2ha. This would be able to support a 60-place nursery to meet early years' needs, but it is likely that further 100 place full day care nursery will also be required. New secondary provision would be required to meet the needs arising from this site. It is unlikely that this could be accommodated on the existing school site and land for expansion or a new facility may be required alongside maximisation of housing numbers to ensure viability. There may be an opportunity to operate this school as a satellite to Melksham Oak School if the current school site cannot be expanded. Land and financial contributions would be required in meeting all needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery is approx. 1.6km away to the south-east of the southernmost boundary of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development incorporating public space, alongside other community uses where necessary. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public rights of way: MELW23, MELW22, MELW28, MELW118, MELW24, MELW93 and BGIF34.

support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local centres to serve the development are likely to be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. New onsite community, education and recreational facilities will be required to serve a development of up to circa 2550 homes in locations that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to all residents. These are like to be able to be delivered onsite, but where this isn't achievable, contributions should be sought.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • Development at this site would be more capable of leading to social benefits and would be capable of supplying a very good level of affordable housing. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite. • Enhanced connectivity within the site and from the site to the town centre, health services and community facilities would need to be achieved as part of a future development. • This site is capable of delivering a very good level of public space and amenity greenspace to achieving social benefits onsite. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses. • Development would be able to contribute to the reduction of rural isolation to some extent. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	This is a large site and it is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. The site is within close walking distance to bus stops, the rail station and beyond the A350, which is accommodated by controlled crossings, the Town Centre is considered reasonably accessible.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Bath Road is subject to congestion; however, this may be partly addressed by the A350 re-routing. Direct access is also achievable at a number of locations due to the alignment of the carriageway. **Local Constraints** Limited width ped/cycle provision and limited bus service provision **Site Specific Mitigation** Improvements to ped and cycle infrastructure and enhancements to the 273 Melksham to Bath bus service. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy

3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is served by narrow footways along Bath Road which is heavily trafficked and subject to congestion; this would be considered an unattractive route along which to walk. However, the site is within close walking distance to bus stops, the rail station and beyond the A350, which is accommodated by controlled crossings, the Town Centre is considered reasonably accessible. Due to the scale of the site, improvements to walking may be achievable and this may include enhancing the public rights of way network which cross the site. **Bus:** Bus access along Bath Road is considered within an easy walkable distance, however service provision is not considered sufficient; 2 hourly bus frequency to Bath – this is offset by good access to the Railway Station. **Rail:** Of the sites sifted, this site is the most accessible to the Rail Station and with some ped/cycle access improvements, this may offset deficiencies in bus transit provision. **Service Vehicles:** Bath Road provides good access to Service Vehicles. **Car:** Bath Road is subject to congestion; however, this may be partly addressed by the A350 re-routing. Direct access is also achievable at a number of locations due to the alignment of the carriageway.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This is a large site and it is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. • The site is within close walking distance to bus stops, the rail station and beyond the A350, which is accommodated by controlled crossings, the Town Centre is considered reasonably accessible. **Local Constraints** Limited width ped/cycle provision and limited bus service provision **Site Specific Mitigation** Improvements to ped and cycle infrastructure and enhancements to the 273 Melksham to Bath bus service. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, given the size of the site and issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 0.5km to the south-east of this site. The site is assessed as having reasonably good accessibility to the town centre through sustainable transport modes Efforts would need to be made to connect all parts of this site through sustainable modes of transport to ensure that benefits arise from the development of the site. Melksham Railway Station is situated 0.3km to the east of the site. It is considered that a site of this size, which is subject to a reasonably good level of existing accessibility to the town centre would be capable of being able to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. This is a large site and areas to the south-east will be better related to the town centre and areas in the east will have better access to the train station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by	A site of this size is likely to be capable of delivering employment land onsite as part of a mixed-use development. Employment land meeting wide ranging needs has the potential to be incorporated into a scheme on this site. The site is assessed as being very well connected to existing employment land. Bradford Road Employment Area is situated to the south of the railway line on the south-eastern boundary of this site. Intercity Industrial Estate also adjoins the site to the east/north-east. Upside Business Park is approx. 100m to the east of the site. Challeymead Business Park is approx. 300m and Avonside Enterprise Park is approx. 400m to the south-east of the site. The site is therefore likely to be able to support existing employment areas in the town or an extension to these. The site has extremely good access to the train station and the strategic road network and is therefore likely to be attractive to higher skilled employment or existing local business looking to relocate. Connectivity across the site, particularly from areas in the west, will need to be improved with active travel choices incorporated into any development to bolster the support development could have or the local economy and commuter journeys by active travel or other sustainable transport.

sustainable transport including active travel?	
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site could provide a high level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure. The size of this site suggests opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could provide mixed-use development that includes a balance of employment and residential land to meet a wide range of needs, including those arising from the existing population in north-west Melksham. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is well related to the town centre and the railway station through sustainable transport modes. • The site benefits from being closely related to existing employment land and is likely to be capable of bringing forward employment land to meet ranging needs onsite. • The size of the site suggests that it would be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 13 (SHELAA site 1000) **Site name:** Land to rear of Lowbourne Infants School **Site size:** 3.31ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 82 - 116 dwellings **Site description:** This small site is located in the north of Melksham. The site is greenfield but does not appear to be in agricultural use. The site boundaries extend north to allotments and Bowmans Court, east to residential properties along Forest Rd and Murray Walk, south to Rivermead school and west into open countryside towards the River Avon. Murray Walk runs through the site from east to west.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local	The site consists of neglected farmland forming part of a green finger through the north of Melksham, along the River Avon. The historic line of the Wilts & Berks Canal runs along the eastern edge of the site. Forming part of an informal green space that comprises of rough grassland with scattered shrubs, the site is bound by mixed residential property boundaries of fences, hedges, and trees along the east boundary with trees continue along the northern boundary.

biodiversity and geodiversity?	The rough grassland and unmanaged hedges provide ecological value, potentially for foraging bats. The public right of way with overgrown hedges through the middle of the site similarly potentially of value for commuting bats. Overall, the site looks ideal for foraging bats. It is likely that buffers would be required for all boundaries, reducing housing capacity. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	If grassland is found to be priority habitat, development at this site would have a more significant adverse effect. The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Retention of hedgerows and green corridors through the site • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure, making suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The historic line of the Wilts & Berks Canal runs along the eastern edge of the site. On site rough grassland and unmanaged hedges provide ecological value, potentially for foraging bats. The public right of way with overgrown hedges through the middle of the site potentially of value for commuting bats. • It is likely that buffers would be required for all boundaries, reducing housing capacity. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. If grassland is found to be priority habitat, development at this site would have a more significant adverse effect. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow corridors and boundaries. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI.	

• A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities or maximise the efficient use of land, given the existing green infrastructure and ecological value of the site, and the need to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops along Forest Road which could also serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This is a greenfield site which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. If subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 4 agricultural land which is lower quality. Given the size of the site, significant impacts are not considered likely.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by	Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is within approx. 2km of this site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.

development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities or maximise the efficient use of land, given the existing green infrastructure and ecological value of the site, and the need to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain. • This is a greenfield site which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 4 agricultural land which is lower quality. Given the size of the site, significant impacts are not considered likely. • The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. • Given the size of this site, it is not likely to be able to incorporate significant waste management infrastructure. • Overall, as it is considered that this site would not deliver appropriate densities or maximise the efficient use of land, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. Significant foul network infrastructure crosses the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • Significant foul network infrastructure crosses the site. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. No significant noise concerns, although the developer(s) will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether any noise impacts are likely to be significant. The proximity of Cooper Tyres site across the river will require consideration.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. However, this is a relatively centrally located site, reasonably close to many of the town centre's amenities, with reasonably good prospects for walkability to services and facilities. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • No significant noise concerns. • This is a relatively centrally located site, reasonably close to many of the town centre's amenities, with reasonably good prospects for walkability to services and facilities. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, no significant issues are anticipated. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies

	opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	It is considered possible for new development to be located within Flood Zone 1. 10% of the site may be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. These areas of flood risk are to the western edge of the site, associated with the River Avon. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to these watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is moderate flood risk to some of the site associated with fluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest fluvial risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3a covers 10% of the site. This is along the western edge of the site where there would need to be a buffer or another kind of flood protection on site. There is also a low risk posed to 85% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are between 0.5m and 5m below ground level. High groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. There is a low risk of surface water flooding on 3% of the site and a medium risk of surface water flooding on 1% of the site. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • Areas of moderate fluvial flood risk are to the western edge of the site, associated with the River Avon. This means 10% of the site is potentially undevelopable. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.	

• Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • There is a low risk associated with shallow groundwater under 85% of the site. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the flood risk associated with high groundwater levels and the proximity of the River Avon, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels and energy efficiency measures. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site isn't as large as others, energy demand will be less than a larger site. However, it is considered that there may be less opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production, so the site will likely still depend on the existing grid. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated	Development of this site is unlikely to impact on any listed buildings or areas of historical value. There are no listed buildings or heritage designations in proximity to this site. The Wilts and Berks Canal runs along the eastern border of the site which should be respected and remain legible via the design of any development. There are various features of low value including medieval ridge and furrow visible as earthwork. Further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where relevant. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is very low. The site has post medieval to 21st century meadows, part of a network alongside the River Avon surviving amongst the urban development of Melksham. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Further research is likely required to understand the survival and sensitivity of meadow character identified in the HLC. No mitigation strategy identified at this stage. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate.

heritage assets and their settings?	
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • There is no potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is very low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB lies approximately 9km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB sits approximately 7.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies in the north of Melksham, north of River Mead Primary School on land behind residential properties stretching along the western side of Forest Road. It consists of neglected farmland forming part of a green finger through the north of Melksham, along the River Avon. The site consists of gently sloping land that falls from the existing settlement edge, west towards the River Avon. The historic line of the Wilts & Berks Canal runs along the eastern edge of the site along the rear garden boundaries of properties located on Forest Lane. Forming part of an informal green space that comprises of rough grassland with scattered shrubs, the site is bound by mixed residential property boundaries of fences, hedges and trees along the east boundary. Trees continue along the north boundary to residential properties and allotments. Overall, it is an enclosed piece of land that is influenced by residential and commercial land uses in close proximity to the river.

	The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The site contributes to the blue/green corridor of the River Avon as it passes through Melksham and provides a valued link to the river from the residential suburbs. It has local value as part of a well linked recreational network. However, the site is in poor to moderate condition and is generally indistinctive. Overall, the site is of generally medium to low landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for built form to further impinge on the blue/green corridor of the River Avon. • Potential loss of valued public footpath links through the site and informal recreational use of green space. • Potential loss of shrubs and trees that define the small-scale landscape and provide a buffer to the existing residential settlement. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Create appropriate landscape buffers to the development that establish a soft well-integrated settlement edge and set back from the watercourse. • Retain Murray Walk as a key public right of way through the site and important pedestrian river crossing route. • Retain and enhance shrubs and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to existing buffers to the settlement edge.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	Murray Walk is a well-defined public footpath and part of Sustrans Route 403, which links west across the River Avon and also south along the Millennium Riverside Walk. The footpath also connects through the urban area to the east and north to the surrounding countryside. Murray Walk, as a key public right of way through the site and important pedestrian river crossing route, should be retained. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • Lying in the north of Melksham, the site consists of neglected farmland forming part of a green finger through the north of Melksham, along the River Avon. The site is bound by mixed residential property boundaries of fences, hedges and trees to the east, with trees continuing to the north. • Overall, it is an enclosed piece of land that is influenced by residential and commercial land uses in close proximity to the river. • Murray Walk is a well-defined public footpath and part of Sustrans Route 403, which links west across the River Avon and also south along the Millennium Riverside Walk. • The site contributes to the blue/green corridor of the River Avon as it passes through Melksham and provides a valued link to the river from the residential suburbs. It has local value as part of a well linked recreational network. However, the site is in poor to moderate condition and is generally indistinctive. • The site is of generally medium to low landscape sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. The capacity of this site may be reduced by the need to safeguard the route of the Wilts & Berks Canal as per Core Policy 16 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This safeguarded route passes along part of the western edge of this site. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a small number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a relatively small number of homes, albeit there will still be opportunities to meet some needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a small number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have some benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs arising in the community.

Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Wilts & Berks Canal), this smaller site could bring forward a small amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated a more deprived area, closely related to highly deprived areas to the north and south. There may be significant opportunities to achieve social benefits through development at this site as it would be directing development in a location subject to higher levels of deprivation. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 116 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver some affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approximately 0.3km to the south-west of this site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site. This site may be able to support some opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. The site is in close proximity to green space at King George V Park and the Millennium Riverside Walk. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 11-15 early years places, 25-36 primary school places and 16-23 new secondary school places. Financial contributions would be required in supporting the expansion of existing for new facilities to meet all education needs emerging from this site. Giffords Surgery is approx. 1.2km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that the site may be able to deliver a mixed-use development incorporating some public space and community uses where necessary. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELK4. Opportunities to introduce community facilities onsite should be pursued ahead of financial contributions into offsite provision.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located at Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide some affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access.

Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site would be likely to achieve some social benefits as it would be directing development towards a more deprived area, and it is likely to bring forward some affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision is unlikely to be achieved on a site of this small size. • The site has very good existing accessibility to the town centre, but only reasonable access to health facilities and these should be enhanced where possible. • This site would be less likely to bring forward a development that could incorporate onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make only a small contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	This is a small site and it is not considered large enough to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. In terms of accessibility, the site is located well within the urban fabric of Melksham and is thus well served by pedestrian infrastructure and is in close proximity to the town centre and walkable distance to the Rail Station.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	The Town Centre location gives the opportunity to maximise sustainable modes of transport. However, notwithstanding this, the site is served by a preconstructed access which may only require limited engineering to be considered sufficient. **Local Constraints** Narrow site access and limited street frontage may give the feeling of land locked isolation; this needs to be addressed through on-site walking and cycling infrastructure reaching out beyond the site. **Site Specific Mitigation** Minor access works. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is located well within the urban fabric of the Melksham and is thus well served by pedestrian infrastructure and is in close proximity to the Town Centre and walkable distance to the Rail Station. Cycle infrastructure is less well defined, however access to Murray Walk to the north of the site offers good opportunities to access the Millennium Path which may be widened to provide a shared surface path. **Bus:** Bus access is less critical for this site, given its access to the Town Centre where a multitude of service provisions and destinations are provided for. **Rail:** Access to the Rail Station is sufficient and attract for sections as t follows Murrays Walk. **Service Vehicles:** Given the Town Centre location, service vehicles are well accommodated for. **Car:** The Town Centre location gives the opportunity to maximise sustainable modes of transport. However, notwithstanding this, the site is served by a preconstructed access which may only require limited engineering to be considered sufficient; there is some concern for rear shunt accidents as vehicles departing the mini-roundabouts approach vehicles turning right int the site, however this may be addressed.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11	

• This is a small site and it is not considered large enough to realistically incorporate a mixed-use development. • In terms of accessibility, the site is located well within the urban fabric of Melksham and is thus well served by pedestrian infrastructure and is in close proximity to the town centre and walkable distance to the Rail Station. **Local Constraints** Narrow site access and limited street frontage may give the feeling of land locked isolation; this needs to be addressed through on-site walking and cycling infrastructure reaching out beyond the site. **Site Specific Mitigation** Minor access works. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 0.3km to the south-west of this site. The site is assessed as having very good accessibility to the town centre via sustainable transport modes. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site to ensure that development can have positive effects in supporting the town centre. The site is 0.8km to the east of the railway station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	This site would be less likely to be able to support a mixed-use scheme due to the size. Employment land at the site could support a range of smaller scale needs. The site is assessed as being well connected to existing employment land. Avonside Enterprise Park is approx. 0.5km away to the south-west. Challeymead Business Park is approx. 0.7km away in the same direction. Upside Business Park is approx. 0.7km to the west and Bradford Road Employment Area is approx0.9km to the south-west. Where possible, efforts should be made to improve and promote sustainable access to existing employment land, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment uses.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site would be less likely to support a high level of new housing, employment land and community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. But development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size is less likely to support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet wide ranging economic needs. The site could be a able to support smaller scale employment, meeting employment needs arising from southern Melksham and Bowerhill or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the west and south-west. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site it is very well related to the town centre and existing employment land and could bring forward benefits of supporting these. • The site would be less capable of bringing forward a mixed-use development. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, while relatively well connected when taking account of the size of the site, a minor positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 14 (SHELAA site 3243) **Site name:** Land north of Dunch Lane **Site size:** 10.20ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 255 - 357 dwellings **Site description:** This medium sized site is located to the north-west of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in agricultural use. There is an area of woodland situated in the north of the site. The site boundaries extend north to the grounds of Beanacre Manor, east to the A350, south to Dunch Lane and west to the railway line. Footpath MELW92 is adjacent to the northern boundary.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises two small fields that are bound by substantial trees and a small woodland to the north. A substantial tree belt forms the west edge of the site, along the railway cutting. Trees continue around the perimeter of the site. Hedgerows and trees are well connected through the local landscape. Within the woodland in the north of the site lies a pond with several additional ponds offsite to the north. These hold potential for great crested newt. Lesser horseshoe bats have been recorded at Beanacre Manor Barns to the north of the site with other offsite buildings holding similar potential for roosting bats. Mature vegetative features include the tree planting along the railway and hedgerow through the middle of the site, as shown on historical maps. Mature trees, old hedgerows, proximity to older properties and high connectivity across the site confer high ecological value. Mature vegetation needs to be retained as part of any development reducing capacity for housing, this warranting a significant buffer to ensure trees can be retained for the lifetime of the development. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.

3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Woodland within the north of the site • Mature trees along railway • Mature hedgerow through the middle of the site • Pond to the north In line with national policy, development plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure, making suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises two small fields that are bound by substantial trees and a small woodland to the north. A substantial tree belt forms the west edge of the site, along the railway cutting. Within the woodland in the north of the site lies a pond with several additional ponds offsite to the north. These hold potential for great crested newt. • Lesser horseshoe bats have been recorded at Beanacre Manor Barns to the north of the site with other offsite buildings holding similar potential for roosting bats. • Mature vegetative features include the tree planting along the railway and hedgerow through the middle of the site, as shown on historical maps. Mature trees, old hedgerows, proximity to older properties and high connectivity across the site confer high ecological value. Mature vegetation needs to be retained as part of any development reducing capacity for housing, this warranting a significant buffer to ensure trees can be retained for the lifetime of the development. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. • Green buffers should protect any ecologically valuable features such as the woodland to the north and hedgerow running through the site while the provision of biodiverse open space should provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not be able to deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site extends north into open countryside towards Beanacre Manor and is adjacent to the A350 and the railway line. These adjacent uses and the mature trees within and adjacent to the site will influence the density of any development on this site. There is no other high-density residential development near to the site and a high-density development here would stand out markedly in relation to its surroundings.

	Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops along the A350 which could also serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. Based on available evidence, it is considered unlikely that remediation measures would be required in order to facilitate development. If subsequent evidence becomes available which suggests that there may be land contamination, an assessment would be required as part of any future planning application to establish a remediation and mitigation strategy.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 2 BMV agricultural land with a narrow strip of Grade 3 adjacent to the railway line. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Development will lead to a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. The impact is likely to result in some sterilisation of the potential resource but constraints could be overcome through mitigation, such as extraction of mineral prior to development.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is approx. 3km from the site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not be able to deliver appropriate densities as it extends north into open countryside towards Beanacre Manor and is adjacent to the A350 and the railway line - these adjacent uses will influence the density of any development on this site. • This is a greenfield site which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated.	

• Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 2 BMV agricultural land with a narrow strip of Grade 3 adjacent to the railway line. Development will lead to a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land • The site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, given the combination of site location affecting densities, loss of higher-grade agricultural land and location within a MSA, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to water supply, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Minor water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The site is some distance from sewer of requisite size. Taking into consideration the planned capacity improvements to sewage treatment works (STWs) are likely to be required because there is only capacity available to support a limited amount of development at Melksham. This is subject to further detailed review. Further evidence would be required to establish whether this site could be developed prior to STW improvements. It would need to be confirmed whether any network reinforcement is necessary to maintain satisfactory service levels. Where the pressure exerted by new housing and/or employment development could lead to capacity issues, on the current system (not just the STW), suitable and timely investment would need to be agreed between the developer(s) and the relevant utilities companies. With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Any development should follow the surface water hierarchy: 1. into the ground (infiltration); 2. to a surface water body; 3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; 4. to a combined sewer. Where infiltration is not a viable option then flows being released from the site would need a controlled discharge and to be agreed with the council on a site-by-site basis. Flows from greenfield sites should aim for 20% betterment over pre-developed discharge rates.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. • Minor water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The site is some distance from sewer of requisite size. • With regards to the impacts of surface water discharges, stringent policy criteria would be required to address potential cumulative impacts of development. Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering significant improvements to infrastructure capacity would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	

SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to industrial/commercial premises. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. Impacts from road traffic noise and the proximity of the railway line are also a concern. Because this is a fairly narrow site in close proximity to the A350 and the railway line, it will be difficult to locate dwellings away from these sources of noise and emissions and this may significantly reduce the capacity of the site. Employment uses may be more readily accommodated. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase. The proposed design of residential amenity should follow the principals of ProPG - Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise Guidance for new residential development and ensure noise impacts are incorporated into the early design stages. A noise assessment will also be required to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation. Relevant standards are WHO and BS8233:2014.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to industrial/commercial premises. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. • Impacts from road traffic noise and the proximity of the railway line are also a concern. Because this is a fairly narrow site in close proximity to the A350 and the railway line, it will be difficult to locate dwellings away from these sources of noise and emissions and this may significantly reduce the capacity of the site for residential uses. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation)	

Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest watercourse to the site is South Brook which runs from north to south to the west of the site. Flood zone 3 is close to the border of the site therefore a buffer zone should still be left adjacent to the watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is minimal surface water flood risk to the site. However, there is a significant risk posed to 11% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are less than 0.25 m below ground level. This covers the north-west edge of the site. There is a moderate risk posed to 89% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are between 0.25 and 0.5 m below ground level. High groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. Cumulative impacts have been scored high. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site.

Systems, permeable paving etc?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • Cumulative impacts have been scored high. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • There is a significant and moderate risk associated with shallow groundwater under 11 and 89% of the site respectively. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods, likely resulting in surface water having to be drained through conventional piping systems. This puts pressure on the existing system. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the risk associated with high groundwater levels, which could inhibit the use of SUDs and thus worsen flood risk elsewhere, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid.

	It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels and energy efficiency measures. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site isn't as large as others, energy demand will be less than a larger site. However, it is considered that there may be less opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production, so the site will likely still depend on the existing grid. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas,	Development at the site will impact on the Grade II* Listed Building Beanacre Manor, Grade II Listed stables and Grade I Listed Old Manor. Also, an impact on Listed Building Beechfield House and on the separate identity of Beanacre. Contribution of setting to significance of Beanacre Manor and Old Beanacre requires assessment as the extent of any designed setting is unknown, but these are high status dwellings which were constructed to be principal buildings in a rural setting. Understanding of this element of significance is likely to be eroded by encroachment of urban Melksham. The designed setting of Beechfield House is clearer and site will impact on this. Mitigation may be difficult. In combination with 3405, sites will threaten separate identity and rural character of Beanacre.

Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	Development likely to affect setting of multiple and high-status assets. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development across anything more than a very small area at south end of site appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. There are various features of low value including medieval ridge and furrow and associated plough headlands and field boundaries are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar across and around the site- probably associated with the medieval settlement of Beanacre to the north of the buffer area. Further investigation is likely needed in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching across the site. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site has 21st century amalgamated fields comprise most of the site- some ridge and furrow earthworks may remain visible. The north-east area of the site is characterised as 21st century secondary woodland with no former character legible. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. Further research is likely needed to identify survival and extent of ridge and furrow earthworks across the site, possibly via site survey. If ridge and furrow earthworks survive across the entirety of the site, mitigation may not be possible. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate, however, following the results of site survey this risk could reduce.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • Contribution of setting to significance of Beanacre Manor and Old Beanacre requires assessment as the extent of any designed setting is unknown, but these are high status dwellings which were constructed to be principal buildings in a rural setting. Understanding of this element of significance is likely to be eroded by encroachment of urban Melksham. The designed setting of Beechfield House is clearer and site will impact on this. Mitigation may be difficult. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate, however, following the results of site survey this risk could reduce**.** • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9.5km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 6.5km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.

and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the north of Melksham, between the A350 and the Great Western Railway south of Beanacre. The site is generally flat, forming part of the low-lying land between the River Avon (east) and South Brook (west). The site forms part of the small-scale, pastoral landscape that extends northwest of Melksham. It comprises two small fields that are bound by substantial trees and a small woodland to the north, which marks the southern edge of Beanacre and the grounds of Beanacre Manor. A substantial tree belt forms the west edge of the site, along the railway cutting. This continues north along the railway and contributes to the enclosed, treed character of the village of Beanacre. Trees continue around the perimeter of the site, along Dunch Lane to the south and the A350 to the east. Hedgerows and trees are well connected through the local landscape and define a tight field pattern around Beanacre. The site has a generally strong rural character and sense of separation from the north edge of Melksham, due to substantial trees that encompass it. The site provides the remaining rural separation between the northern edge of Melksham and the southern edge of Beanacre along the western side of the A350. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains locally distinctive woodland features. It forms part of an identifiable, small-scale, rural landscape that encompasses the village of Beanacre. The site contributes to the rural transition from the suburbs of Melksham to the rural, dispersed settlement of Beanacre. It has generally good sense of place, although this has been altered in part by edge of settlement commercial land uses to the southeast. The site is in generally moderate to good condition and key characteristics are susceptible to change. Overall, the site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the north of the site where woodland defines the southern edge of Beanacre and Beanacre Manor. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to result in settlement coalescence of Melksham and Beanacre and erode the rural qualities, separate identity and setting of the village in particular the loose cluster of listed buildings around Beanacre Manor and Beechfield House to the south of the village. • Potential for development to break the wooded skyline. • Potential loss of trees and woodland that are distinctive, linking features through the landscape and contribute to the locally characteristic woodland setting of Beanacre Manor and Beechfield House to the south of Beanacre. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would result in coalescence of the settlements and alter the landscape setting of the listed buildings including country house and manor. • Avoid development that would break the wooded skyline. • Retain trees and woodland as part of a mature landscape framework that contributes to a green buffer between settlement areas and distinctive woodland setting of Beanacre Manor and Beechfield House.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There is a public footpath along the north boundary of the site, passing through the woodland of Beanacre Manor, which connects between Shurnhold and Beanacre, where a number of footpaths link north through the village. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • The site forms part of the small-scale, pastoral landscape that extends northwest of Melksham comprising two small fields that are bound by substantial trees and a small woodland to the north.	

• There is a public footpath along the north boundary of the site, passing through the woodland of Beanacre Manor. • The site is in generally moderate to good condition and key characteristics are susceptible to change. • The site is of generally medium to high landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the north of the site where woodland defines the southern edge of Beanacre and Beanacre Manor. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a moderate number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a good number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet different needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a good number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this medium sized site is capable of bringing forward a moderate amount of affordable housing as part of any development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of high-quality house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a more deprived and a less deprived area. While opportunities may not be vast, there is a possibility that development at this site would be capable of directing homes and jobs into a location subject of higher levels of deprivation and have social benefits in the local area. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 360 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.1km to the south of this site. transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site. This site may be able to support some opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 33-46 early years places, 79-111 primary school places and 56-79 new secondary school places. Primary provision could be met through expansion of The Manor Primary School, however this site in combination with another site, potentially Site 15, would be able to support a new primary school. These would have to come forward in combination to make a new school viable. This would be able to support a 60 place early years nursery, but additional early years provision would be required to meet remaining needs. Secondary school provision could be supported through the expansion of Melksham Oak or a new facility if one were to come forward. Financial contributions, and potentially land, will be required in meeting education needs arising from the site.

	Giffords Surgery is approx. 2.1km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development to some extent, including the incorporation of public space and community uses. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW92. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local centres to serve the development may be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. Development at this site alone is less likely to support new onsite community, education and recreational facilities as the site would only be able to deliver up to circa 360 homes. Nonetheless, where these can be achieved on site, they should be and enhancements of existing facilities and sufficient accessibility to these through sustainable modes of transport, are likely to be required as part of any development on this site. .
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site may be able to achieve some social benefits as it would help direct development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision may be required, but educational facilities to meet all needs arising from this site are unlikely to be met onsite. • The site has very good existing accessibility to the town centre and is reasonably connected to health facilities. These should be enhanced where possible. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce	This site may be able to incorporate a mixed-use development given its size. In terms of accessibility, the site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than some other sites. The site is within reasonable walking distance to the railway station. However, it is likely to generate a significant increase in car-based journeys.

reliance on the private car?	
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15). **Local Constraints** The site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows. **Site Specific Mitigation** Coordinated delivery with Site 15 would maximise vehicular access opportunities. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is served by a footway, but this is narrow and overgrown and would need to be addressed. As this footway leads into the Town it disappears and a controlled crossing is provided to cross to opposing infrastructure. Beyond the site, cycle infrastructure is provided both sporadically but where provided it is considered of relatively good design. The local road accommodates fast moving heavy traffic flows; however, this may be addressed through a re-routing of the A350, with the site adding greater speed awareness of drivers through site frontage and activity. **Bus:** The site is within close proximity to existing bus stops serving the X34, which provides excellent high frequency accessibility between Frome, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham. The scale of the development, if delivered with site 15, would justify a relocation of stops and pedestrian crossing facilities. **Rail:** The site is within reasonable walking distance to the railway station. **Service Vehicles:** The site may easily accommodate service vehicles. **Car:** A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15).
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This site may be able to incorporate a mixed-use development given its size. • In terms of accessibility, the site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than some other sites. The site is within reasonable walking distance to the railway station. However, it is likely to generate a significant increase in car-based journeys. • A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15). **Local Constraints** The site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows. **Site Specific Mitigation** Coordinated delivery with Site 15 would maximise vehicular access opportunities. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.1km to the south of this site. The site is assessed as having good accessibility to the town centre via sustainable transport modes. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site to help ensure positive benefits in supporting the town centre are apparent. This is a medium sized site, situated approx. 0.6km to the north of Melksham Railway Station, suggesting more opportunities to support the town centre and local facilities are likely to arise from the development of this site.

town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support mixed-use development, incorporating employment uses. A housing development incorporating employment land could meet some different economic needs on this site and there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. The site is likely to be attractive to higher skilled employment due to excellent access to the A350 and reasonably good access to the train station. The site is also assessed as being well connected to existing employment land. Upside Business Park is approx. 100m to the south. Challeymead Business Park and Bradford Road Employment Area are less than 1km away to the south, while Avonside Enterprise Park is approx. 1km away to the south-east. Opportunities for this site to be able to support existing employment through employment, residential or mixed-use development are likely to be apparent. Active travel choices should be promoted through any development to reduce reliance on private cars by commuters to and from the site.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could support some employment needs arising from the north of Melksham or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the south. The site does not adjoin any existing residential land, but development would be able to locate homes or jobs near to both existing and employment land in the north of Melksham.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site has a good level of accessibility to the town centre and Melksham Railway Station. • The site benefits from a good level of accessibility to existing employment areas. • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development which includes an element of employment. • Employment land at this site could meet a range of needs but would be less like to support wide ranging economic needs. • Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent. • The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development, associated infrastructure, including a bypass for the town. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 15 (SHELAA sites 3405, 187) **Site name:** Land to the north of Melksham **Site size:** 20.60ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 515 - 721 dwellings **Site description:** This large site is located to the north of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in arable use. The site boundaries extend north into open countryside towards Beechfield House, east to the River Avon, south to residential properties on Avon Rd and Trent Crescent and west to the A350. Footpath MELK1 traverses the site from north to south.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises arable fields, which are bound by generally low hedgerow boundaries with some gaps and occasional trees. The River Avon flows along the eastern boundary of the site and through a green corridor between the norther suburbs of Melksham. The River Avon is lined by riparian shrubs and trees and this continues south and north along the meandering river course. Hedgerows and trees link with this. The Bristol Avon is designated a County Wildlife site, with the associated flood zone spreading well into the site. The hedgerows may provide commuting routes for bats heading towards the Avon while Halfway Farm has potential for roosting bats which may equally commute across the site. The intensively farmed nature of the site has likely decreased the current ecological value. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Given the size and characteristics of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features, such as the Bristol Avon and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerows and trees • Bristol Avon County Wildlife site and associated flood plain • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises arable fields, which are bound by generally low hedgerow boundaries with some gaps and occasional trees. The Bristol Avon is designated a County Wildlife site forming the eastern boundary of the site, with the associated flood zone spreading well into the site. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries, trees and utilising the Bristol Avon County Wildlife site and associated floodplain. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site may be able to deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. There is existing residential development to the south of this site which may indicate what densities could be achieved. However, the proximity of the A350, River Avon and listed buildings at Beanacre may affect the density that can be achieved. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. There are existing bus services/stops along the A350 and at Avon Rd which could also serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists almost entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are few opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to	This site is almost entirely greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground which would require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. Suitable assessment to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.

issues of viability and deliverability?	
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 2 BMV agricultural land with a narrow strip of Grade 4 adjacent to the River Avon. Development is likely therefore to lead to a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land. Development should seek to avoid loss of BMV agricultural land where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. The impact is likely to result in some sterilisation of the potential resource but constraints could be overcome through mitigation, such as extraction of mineral prior to development.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate, which is not in close proximity, being approx. 3km from the site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • Development of this site may be able to deliver appropriate densities. However, the proximity of the A350, River Avon and Beanacre may affect the densities that can be achieved. • This site is almost entirely greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground which would require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 2 BMV agricultural land so development is likely to lead to a significant loss of higher-grade agricultural land. • The site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and the potential impact will be of medium significance. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.

2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, It is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. Minor water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The site is some distance from sewer of requisite size.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, It is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Minor water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The site is some distance from sewer of requisite size. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering significant improvements to infrastructure capacity would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to industrial/commercial premises and the A350 as such there is potential for adverse noise. However, the site is large, and it is possible for development to be located away from noise sources. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase. The proposed design of residential amenity should follow the principals of ProPG - Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise Guidance for new residential development and ensure noise impacts are incorporated into the early design stages. We will also require a noise assessment to confirm noise impact on noise sensitive receptors and appropriate mitigation. Relevant standards are WHO and BS8233:2014.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.

3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to industrial/commercial premises and the A350; as such there is potential for adverse noise. However, the site is large, and it is possible for development to be located away from noise sources. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, significant effects are not anticipated. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	It is considered possible for most new development to be located within Flood Zone 1 however 26% of the site may be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. The area of flood risk is to the eastern edge of the site, associated with the River Avon. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to the watercourse with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is moderate flood risk to some of the site associated with fluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3a covers 26% of the site. This is along the eastern edge of the site. There is an area of low pluvial flood risk (0.1% chance of flooding each year) which covers 14% of the site and follows a similar pattern to the fluvial risk. Although development could avoid these areas and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is a moderate risk posed to 45% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are between 0.025 m and 0.5m below ground level. There is a low risk posed to 41% of the site due to high groundwater levels. This means groundwater levels are between 0.5m and 5m below ground levels. High

	groundwater levels could impact infiltration techniques, drainage, construction activities and flood risk, therefore site-specific groundwater investigations will be required. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. However, the extent to which SuDS can be used may be affected by high groundwater levels on site. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • Areas of moderate fluvial flood risk are to the eastern edge of the site, associated with the River Avon. This means 26% of the site is potentially undevelopable. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • There are areas of low pluvial flood risk, which follows a similar pattern to the fluvial risk. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • There is a moderate and low risk associated with shallow groundwater under 45% and 41% of the site respectively. This would inhibit the use of some sustainable draining methods, likely resulting in surface water having to be drained through conventional piping systems. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the risk associated with surface water flooding and high groundwater levels, which could inhibit the use of SUDs and thus worsen flood risk elsewhere, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is a medium sized site in Melksham, there may be some open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and

	• identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a medium site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure than a larger site. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are unconstrained, therefore could withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are partially constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. , It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies than a larger site. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size could potentially support some renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site is a medium sized site, energy demand would be reasonably high. However, it is considered that there may be more opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs.	

• Overall, given that this is a medium site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site but significantly more than a small site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, but increase demand, therefore a neutral effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	Development at this site will have an impact on Grade II Listed Building Beechfield House, Grade II* Listed Building Beanacre Manor and Grade II Listed Building stables, Grade I Listed Building Old Manor and Grade II Listed Building Halfway Farm. There is also an impact on the separate identity of Beanacre. Beechfield House is a country house with a designed setting. The site is likely to impact on the contribution of the rural setting to the special interest of the site. Mitigation may be difficult. The contribution of setting to significance of Beanacre Manor and Old Beanacre will require assessment as the extent of any designed setting is unknown but these are high status dwellings which were constructed to be principal buildings in a rural setting. Understanding of this element of significance is likely to be eroded by encroachment of urban Melksham. Halfway Farm remains legible as historic farmstead. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. Clear and separate constraints at either end of the site suggest that mitigation of any significant level of development would be extremely difficult. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development across the site appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. There are various features of low value including extensive medieval ridge and furrow with associated field boundaries and plough headlands are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar across the site. Former ridge and furrow and associated earthworks across and around the site indicate potential for survival of archaeological remains. Further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching, to identify potential further Medieval activity. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site has 21st century amalgamated fields- with limited former piecemeal field character legible via surviving field boundaries. The eastern edge of the site comprises part of a post medieval to 21st century farmstead (Halfway Farm) which contains buildings of historic origin. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7	

• Clear and separate constraints at either end of the site suggest that mitigation of any significant level of development would be extremely difficult. Although not involving direct and clear 'substantial harm' the public benefit of significant development across the site appears highly unlikely to be such that it can outweigh the harm to the designated assets. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, any significant level of development would be extremely difficult as would be likely to cause harm to designated assets. A major adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 7km to the northwest. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the north of Melksham between the A350 and River Avon, to the north of existing residential properties on Avon Road and Trent Crescent. The site is generally flat, forming pat of the low-lying land between the River Avon (east) and South Brook (west). The River Avon flows along the east boundary of the site and through a green finger between the norther suburbs of Melksham. The site forms part of a mixed arable and pastoral landscape to the east and west of the River Avon, north of Melksham. The site itself comprises arable fields, which are bound by generally low hedgerow boundaries with some gaps and occasional trees. The River Avon is lined by riparian shrubs and trees along the east site boundary this continues south and north along the meandering river course. Hedgerows and trees link with this across the landscape. The site as a predominantly rural character, although is influenced by the abrupt, poorly integrated existing settlement edge to the south and by edge of settlement, small commercial units on the A350 to the southwest of the site. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains some distinctive features, including the River Avon, locally distinctive woodland edge to the south of Beanacre. It is a relatively simple landscape of limited scenic quality, with locally intrusive elements on the north edge of Melksham. The site itself has limited sense of place. However, it contributes to the rural transition and separation between Melksham and Beanacre and particularly the distinctive wooded setting of Beechfield House. Landscape elements of the site are in generally poor to moderate condition. Overall, the site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity to the north of the site that contributes to the landscape setting of Beanacre and Beechfield Manor and separation from Melksham. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development, with limited capacity in the north. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to result in settlement coalescence of Melksham and Beanacre and erode the rural qualities, separate identity and setting of the village in particular the loose cluster of listed buildings set in woodland around Beanacre Manor and Beechfield House to the south of the village. • Potential for development to form an abrupt, hard new settlement edge that is intrusive into the rural landscape and river valley. • Potential change to the separate identity and rural landscape setting of Beanacre, north of the site. • Potential for development to alter the rural setting of the River Avon. • Potential loss of public footpath routes through the site. • Potential loss of hedgerows, trees and riparian vegetation that contribute to green links through the landscape, particularly along the River Avon and contributing to the setting of Beanacre. Scope for mitigation includes the following:

	• Create a substantial landscape buffer to the north of the site, which is in keeping with the local landscape character and contributes to the improvement of an appropriate rural transition between Melksham and Beanacre. • Restrict development through the north of the site. • Create a substantial landscape buffer to the east of the site, as part of the blue/green corridor along the River Avon, which continues south into Melksham; • Retain public footpaths as part of proposed development. • Retain hedgerows, trees and riparian vegetation as part of a mature landscape framework that maintains green links through the landscape and settlement areas.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There is a public footpath through the centre of the site, connecting from the northern suburbs of Melksham to the east of Beanacre, through numerous small fields east of the River Avon. Another shorter footpath branches from this route from the northern site boundary through the grounds of Beechfield House located a short distance to the northwest. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 9km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 7km to the northwest. • Sitting to the north of Melksham, the site comprises three arable fields, which are bound by generally low hedgerow boundaries with some gaps and occasional trees. The site as a predominantly rural character, although influenced by nearby built development. • There is a public footpath through the centre of the site. • The site contributes to the rural transition and separation between Melksham and Beanacre and particularly the distinctive wooded setting of Beechfield House. Landscape elements of the site are in generally poor to moderate condition. • The site is of generally medium landscape sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity to the north of the site that contributes to the landscape setting of Beanacre and Beechfield Manor and separation from Melksham. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development, with limited capacity in the north. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a moderate adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet different needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities	

Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a more deprived area, although this is not a highly deprived area. The site adjoins an area subject to higher levels of deprivation. While opportunities may not be vast, development at this site may be capable of directing homes and jobs into a location subject to higher levels of deprivation and have social benefits in the local area. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 560 homes of all types and tenures. The site is considered able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is less than 1km to the south of this site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. This site may be able to support some opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace and opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 67-94 early years places, 160-224 primary school places and 113-159 new secondary school places. In meeting primary education needs a new school at this site is likely to be viable if delivered in combination with another site, potentially site 14, to ensure sufficient pupil product to support a new primary school. This site would therefore need to come forward with another site to ensure the school was viable and this would require a site of 2ha. This would be able to support a 60 place early years nursery, but additional early years provision would be required to meet remaining needs. Secondary school provision could be supported through the expansion of Melksham Oak or a new facility, if one were to come forward. Financial contributions, and potentially land, will be required in meeting education needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery is approx. 1.8km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development to some extent, including the incorporation of public space and community uses. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW1. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local centres to serve the development may be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. Development at this site alone is less likely to support new community, education and recreational facilities together, as the site would only be able to deliver up to circa 560 homes. Nonetheless, where these can be achieved on site, they should be pursued and enhancements of existing facilities and sufficient accessibility to these through sustainable modes of transport, are likely to be required as part of any development on this site.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10	

• This site may be able to achieve some social benefits as it would help direct development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite. Onsite provision may be required, but educational facilities to meet all needs arising from this site are unlikely to be met onsite. • The site has reasonably good existing accessibility to the town centre and has some connectivity to health facilities. These should be enhanced as part of development on this site. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	This is a relatively large site and it is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development. In terms of accessibility, the site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15). **Local Constraints** The site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows. **Site Specific Mitigation** Coordinated delivery with Site 15 would maximise vehicular access opportunities. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is not served by any footway until provision is made opposite Leekes and this will need to be addressed. The site does have potential access to the A350 south of the BP Garage and with sufficient highway verge, provision may be made to link to existing infrastructure. The provision opposite Leekes mentioned above, represents a shared surface footway cycleway and hence access to this would enhance accessibility of the site for all active modes. The local road accommodates fast moving heavy traffic flows; however, this may be addressed through a re-routing of the A350, with the site adding greater speed awareness of drivers through site frontage and activity. **Bus:** The site is within close proximity to existing bus stops serving the X34, which provides excellent high frequency accessibility between Frome, Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham. The scale of the development, if delivered with site 14, would justify a relocation of stops and pedestrian crossing facilities. **Rail:** The site is within reasonable walking distance to the railway station. **Service Vehicles:** The site may easily accommodate service vehicles. **Car:** A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15).
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This is a relatively large site and it is considered large enough to incorporate a mixed-use development.	

• In terms of accessibility, the site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows. • A bespoke access for the site is achievable, however this would be best served by a junction also accommodating the opposing site (site 15). **Local Constraints** The site is on the periphery of Melksham, but in closer proximity to the urban fabric of Melksham than many other sites. Whilst sites to the east may be considered to directly benefit from any re-route of the A350, in reality sites like 14 and 15 are best placed to take advantage of the reduced traffic flows. **Site Specific Mitigation** Coordinated delivery with Site 15 would maximise vehicular access opportunities. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is less than 1km to the south of this site. The site is assessed as having reasonably good accessibility to the town centre via sustainable transport modes Development at this site should look to promote accessibility through sustainable transport, enhancing them where possible to ensure that development at this site could help support the town centre. This is a medium sized site, situated approx. 0.6km to the north of Melksham Railway Station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support mixed-use development, incorporating employment uses. A housing development incorporating employment land would be somewhat able to meet wide ranging economic needs on this site, but there may be some opportunities to meet higher skilled employment demands. The site benefits from excellent access to the A350 and reasonably good access to the train station. This suggests the site would be an attractive location for new employment. The site is less likely to support an extension to existing employment land. But new higher skilled employment could support diversification of the local economy. The site is assessed as being well connected to existing employment land. Upside Business Park is approx. 300m to the west. Challeymead Business Park, Bradford Road Employment Area and Avonside Enterprise Park are less than 1km away to the south. Opportunities for this site to be able to support existing employment are likely to be apparent.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing, employment land and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could support some employment needs arising from the north of Melksham or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the east.

development to help reduce travel to work distances?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site has a reasonable level of existing accessibility to the town centre and is closely related to Melksham Railway Station. • The site benefits from a good level of existing accessibility to existing employment areas. • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development which includes an element of employment. • Employment land at this site could meet different economic needs, but the benefits would be less likely to be wide ranging. • Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent. • The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 16 (SHELAA sites 3107, 1001) **Site name:** North-West of Woodrow Road & Land Rear of Woodrow **Site size:** 18.09ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 452 - 633 dwellings **Site description:** This medium sized site is located to the north-east of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to Forest Farm, east to the rear of properties along Woodrow Rd, south to residential properties on Meadow Rd and west into open countryside. The former route of the Wilts & Berks canal runs along the western site boundary. There are no public rights of way within or adjacent to the site.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises part of a large arable field and four smaller pastoral fields generally bound by hedgerows with occasional trees. These hedgerows form a strong network (shown on historical maps) in the middle of the site around grazed pasture, these hedgerows connecting offsite. The safeguarded planned alternative route of the Wilts and Berks Canal would provide a feature in proximity to the site. A watercourse runs along the northern boundary of the site that holds records for Water vole with potential for otter, the northern boundary is also close to Forest Farm buildings (bat roost record). Bats are likely to use the watercourse for foraging and commuting whilst ditches and hedgerows provide valuable habitat for species potentially including great crested newt and grass snakes. Similarly, the western boundary is the line of the old Wilts and Berks canal, now marked by hedgerow(s) and likely to be bat commuting route to the river. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or SSSI's. However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly.

and habitats and protected species?	
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Water course running along the northern boundary and associated flood plain. • Existing hedgerows and trees • Old canal corridor and new safeguarded route The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site contains hedgerows (historical) with occasional trees, these hedgerows connecting offsite. The safeguarded planned alternative route of the Wilts and Berks Canal would provide a feature in proximity to the site while a watercourse runs along the northern boundary that holds records for Water vole with potential for otter, the northern boundary also close to Forest Farm buildings (bat roost record). Bats are likely to use the watercourse for foraging and commuting whilst ditches and hedgerows provide valuable habitat for species potentially including great crested newt and grass snakes. Similarly, the western boundary is the line of the old Wilts and Berks canal, now marked by hedgerow(s) and likely to be bat commuting route to the river. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as mature hedgerows and trees along the boundaries and within the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees, utilisation of water courses and associated flood plain along with the old/new canal corridor. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The existing residential development along Woodrow Road which would serve this site is linear and low-density and the road is not considered suitable to accommodate large increases in traffic. Development density will be influenced by the size of the site and landscape mitigation required due to the site extending out into open countryside, the River Avon valley to the west and the low density, linear form of development along Woodrow Road. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities and there is an existing bus service serving the development adjacent which could potentially be extended to serve a development here.

	New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site is bounded by unknown filled ground which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. Suitable assessment to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 3 agricultural land with a small amount of Grade 4 in the north of the site. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Development is likely to lead to a significant loss of agricultural land but not of higher grades 1 and 2. Development should seek to avoid loss of BMV agricultural land where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate which is approx. 3km from the site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site would not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. • This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated.	

• Evidence shows this site as consisting mainly of Grade 3 agricultural land with a small amount of Grade 4. Development is therefore not likely to lead to a significant loss of higher grades 1 and 2. • The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, given the site's size and location extending out into open countryside along Woodrow Rd which is not considered suitable to accommodate large increases in traffic, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development is likely to necessitate a long off-site connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development is likely to necessitate a long off-site connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering infrastructure capacity improvements would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase.

2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, significant adverse effects are not anticipated. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to	It is considered possible for most new development to be located within Flood Zone 1. 13% of the site may be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. The area of flood risk is to the northern edge where the site is bordered by a small watercourse which leads to the River Avon, approximately 300m to the west of the site. Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to the watercourse with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.

developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	There is moderate flood risk to some of the site associated with fluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3a covers 13% of the site. This is along the northern edge of the site. There is an area of low pluvial flood risk (0.1% chance of flooding each year) which covers 19% of the site. Although development could avoid these areas and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is no known existing groundwater flooding risk on the site. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 5

- Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1.
- Areas of moderate fluvial flood risk are to the northern edge of the site, associated with a tributary of the River Avon. This means 13% of the site is potentially undevelopable.
- Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
- There are areas of low pluvial flood risk, which cover 19% of the site. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy.
- Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere.
- It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change.
- Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport.
- Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the risk associated with surface water flooding, a minor adverse effect is likely.

SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy
Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…

1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is a medium sized site Melksham, there may be less open space available than a larger site for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a medium site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure than a larger site. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies than a larger site. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size could potentially support some renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels.	

• New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site is a medium sized site, energy demand would be reasonably high. However, it is considered that there may be more opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, however the costs are considered proportionate to the scale of development that comes forward. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The site would have an impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Woodrow House Farmhouse and Forest Farm and their farmsteads. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. Mitigation via buffer to retain the rural setting may be possible. Part of the site wraps around the rear of Woodrow Farm and impacts on agricultural land to south-west of Forest Farm (which is more intact and of greater significance). The flat, open nature of site increases difficulties for mitigation. The historic line of the Wilts & Berks canal, which passes through this site, should be safeguarded with a view to its long-term re-establishment as a navigable waterway. This may adversely affect the developable area of the site. The site has medium to high value features including roman settlement in the south-west of the site. Medium value features include a second medieval settlement in the north-eastern corner of the site, with associated ridge and furrow earthworks and medieval settlement and lidar in the southern half of the site. Further investigation is likely needed in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching, where this has not already been undertaken. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains where preservation in situ is likely to be required, specifically in the southern portion of the site and potentially in the north-eastern corner. Should preservation be part of a mitigation strategy, opportunities to interpret and enhance understanding and / or improve land management regimes could be taken forward. Also, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. The site has post medieval to 21st century piecemeal fields, with little former character legible with 21st century re-organised fields of former piecemeal field character which remains legible along with remnants of ridge and furrow earthworks. The northern portion of the site comprises part of a wider network of strong continuity, where landscape character has remained stable since the late 19th century. The site lies between more modern residential development, and older rural landscape character. Further research is likely needed to identify survival and extent of ridge and furrow earthworks in the southern area of the site, possibly via site survey. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. If ridge and furrow earthworks survive across the entirety of the site, mitigation may not be possible. It may be desirable to retain the historic landscape character due to its unusual continuity. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects is moderate. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is moderate. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 8km to the northwest. Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden lies approximately 2.5km to the northeast. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the north of Melksham, behind residential properties on Woodrow Road and Meadow Road/Lincoln Green to the east of the River Avon. The site is generally flat and forms part of the clay vale low-lying river landscape that is characteristic of Melksham's location on the River Avon. The landform gently slopes down to the west towards the River Avon, which flows through the wide valley floor to the west of the site, continuing south between the north suburbs of Melksham. The elevated geological greensand outcrop at Sandridge forms distinctive, wooded slopes to the east of the site. The greensand hills extend north to Spye Park (Grade II Listed Park and Garden) and further north to Bowden Hill, overlooking the lower clay vale. The well wooded slopes and ridgeline provide the visual horizon to the northeast and east of the site. A tributary watercourse flows along the north boundary of the site from the slopes of Sandridge Park (east) into the River Avon. The site has a predominantly rural character and forms part of the mixed agricultural landscape that characterises the landscape north of Melksham. It comprises part of a large arable field and four smaller pastoral fields that form part of a small-scale landscape pattern behind properties that line Woodrow Road. The fields are generally bound by hedgerows with occasional trees. The east site boundary is formed by a combination of fence and hedge boundaries to private gardens. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. It is a relatively simple landscape of limited scenic quality that is influenced by the adjoining residential properties. The site has limited sense of place. The safeguarded planned alternative route of the Wilts and Berks Canal would provide a valued and distinctive feature in proximity to the site. The landscape of the site is in generally moderate condition with some intrusive elements. Overall, the site is of generally medium to low sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to replicate an abrupt, hard settlement edge that is intrusive in the rural landscape. • Potential loss of safeguarded canal routes (planned). • Potential loss of hedgerows, trees and riparian vegetation that contribute to green links through the landscape, the distinctive small-scale field pattern that separates the existing settlement from the River Avon. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Limit development to the outer edges of the site. • Create an appropriate landscape buffer to the north and west of the site that incorporates the safeguarded canal route (planned) and watercourse within public greenspaces. • Retain hedgerows, trees and riparian vegetation as part of a mature landscape framework that maintains green links through the landscape and settlement areas.
3. Protect and enhance rights of	There are no public rights of way within the site. A public footpath links from Hardie Walk in the southwest corner to the site, through the fields in proximity to the west site boundary. The west site boundary follows the historic route of the Wilts and Berks Canal. The route is defined in part by hedgerow field boundaries, which become a

way, public open space and common land?	double boundary and more distinctive feature to the north of the site. The new alternative route of the Wilts and Berks Canal is proposed to link into the historic route alignment in the northwest corner to the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 8km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 8km to the northwest. Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden lies approximately 2.5km to the northeast. • Lying to the north of Melksham, the site comprises part of a large arable field and four smaller pastoral fields generally bound by hedgerows with occasional trees. The site has a predominantly rural character and forms part of the mixed agricultural landscape that characterises the landscape north of Melksham. • There are no public rights of way within the site. A public footpath links from Hardie Walk in the southwest corner to the site. • The landscape of the site is in generally moderate condition with some intrusive elements. • The site is of generally medium to low sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium to high capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet different needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have significant benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a less deprived area. The site is in close proximity to an area subject to higher levels of deprivation to the south. While opportunities may not be vast, development at this site may be capable of directing homes and jobs into a location subject to higher levels of deprivation and have social benefits in the local area. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 633 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health,	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.2km to the south-west of this site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. This site may be able to support some opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace, including

amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	those arising with relation to the safeguarded route for the Wilts and Berks Canal, but opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 59-82 early years places, 140-196 primary school places and 99-139 new secondary school places. Primary needs would need to be met offsite. Early years provision could be met in this primary school through a 60-place nursery. Further early years provision would be required in addition. Secondary school provision could be supported through the expansion of Melksham Oak or a new facility if one were to come forward. Financial contributions, and potentially land, will be required in meeting education needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are both approx. 1.9km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development to some extent, including the incorporation of public space and community uses. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW66. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local centres to serve the development may be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. Development at this site alone is less likely to support new community, education and recreational facilities together, as the site would only be able to deliver up to circa 550 homes. Nonetheless, where these can be achieved on site, they should be and enhancements of existing facilities and sufficient accessibility to these through sustainable modes of transport, are likely to be required as part of any development on this site.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site may be able to achieve some social benefits as it would help direct development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite • The site is well connected to the town centre and has very good connectivity to health facilities. These should be promoted where possible. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses, amenity greenspace and public space, but opportunities to create sustainable transport linkages or enhancements to existing facilities should be taken, including the enhancement of existing local GI assets should be pursued. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in	This is a large site and it is considered possible to incorporate a mixed-use development here.

accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	In terms of accessibility, access to the town centre is approximately 1.5km walk which is below the maximum distance for walking and cycling. Access to the Rail Station is 2km and hence at the edge of reasonableness and beyond for the far north of the site.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	The site is served by one achievable point of access and hence the dwelling numbers should be reduced to below 300 due to emergency vehicle requirements. However, the site access is very narrow with poor visibility, meaning that a roundabout would be the preferred solution, however given the narrowness of the road, this is not considered achievable. **Local Constraints** Poor footway/cycleway provision, but within the town. No bus service provision achievable and no sufficient access arrangements. **Site Specific Mitigation** None **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The site is served by Woodrow Road, which, representing a traditional rural town road, does not have adequate width footways. However, given that the site ties into this network in the urban fabric of the town, it is more likely that occupiers will walk and cycle. Upon cycling, again infrastructure is poor, but traffic flows are considered to be low enough to safely accommodate carriageway cycling. One detriment to the site is the single point of access for all modes of transport at one extreme end of the site. This lack to route choice may result in car dominance as vulnerable users compete with other modes in a narrow corridor exit. Access to the town centre is approximately 1.5km walk which is below the maximum distance for walking and cycling. Access to the Rail Station is 2km and hence at the edge of reasonableness and beyond for the far north of the site. **Bus:** The site is beyond reasonable walking distance to bus stops, with the nearest serving the 273 service with a 2-hour frequency. This site is not considered well served by bus transit, nor can't be. **Rail:** The site is at the very edge of reasonable walking distance to the Rail Station. **Service Vehicles:** See below. **Car:** The site is served by one achievable point off access and hence the dwelling numbers should be reduced to below 300 due to emergency vehicle requirements. However, the site access is very narrow with poor visibility, meaning that a roundabout would be the preferred solution, however given the narrowness of the road, this is not considered achievable.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 11

- This is a large site and it is considered possible to incorporate a mixed-use development here.
- In terms of accessibility, access to the town centre is approximately 1.5km walk which is below the maximum distance for walking and cycling. Access to the Rail Station is 2km and hence at the edge of reasonableness and beyond for the far north of the site.
- Local constraints include poor footway/cycleway provision and no bus service provision achievable and no sufficient access arrangements.
- The site is served by one achievable point off access and hence the dwelling numbers should be reduced to below 300 due to emergency vehicle requirements.

Local Constraints

Poor footway/cycleway provision, but within the town. No bus service provision achievable and no sufficient access arrangements.

Site Specific Mitigation

None

Necessary Strategic Mitigation

Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.2km to the south-west of this site. The site is assessed as well connected to the town centre via sustainable transport modes. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site to ensure optimised benefits for the town centre through development here. This is a medium sized site, situated approx. 1.2km to the north-east of Melksham Railway Station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	There may be some opportunities for a site of this size to support mixed-use development. But the site has poor accessibility to the strategic transport network, however, and would therefore be less attractive for employment uses. The site would be unlikely to support an extension to existing employment land and could be less attractive to existing businesses looking for expansion space.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	To some extent this site could support new housing and potentially community facilities that will help support the local economy and economic growth. Additionally, development would be capable of bringing forward associated infrastructure, which could have benefits for the local economy. There may be opportunities for the site to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size could support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land to meet different economic needs. The site could be able to support some employment needs arising from the north/north-east Melksham or bring forward new housing to support existing employment land to the east.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • This site has a good level of existing accessibility to the town centre and is well related to Melksham Railway Station.	

• It is subject to only a reasonable level of existing accessibility to existing employment areas. • There may be some opportunities to introduce a mixed-use development which includes an element of employment. • Employment land at this site could meet different economic needs, but the benefits would be less likely to be wide ranging. • Opportunities to consider onsite renewable or low carbon energy generation may be apparent. • The site is likely to be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 17 (SHELAA sites 715, 1027, 3479, 3478, 3742, 3743) **Site name:** Land to the north of A3102 **Site size:** 47.28ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 1177 - 1650 dwellings **Site description:** This large site is located to the north-east of Melksham. The site is greenfield and in arable and pastoral agricultural uses. The site boundaries extend north to Woodrow Rd, east to New Road and New Road Farm, south to the A3102 and west to residential areas along Savernake Ave, Bream Close and Gladstone Rd. Footpath MELW60 traverses the site east to west.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site contains a tributary watercourse flowing from the south of the site north towards the River Avon and consists of predominantly pastoral fields with some arable adjoining the existing settlement edge. The fields are bound by generally low hedgerows with scattered trees. Flood plain, associated with the watercourse, extends onto the north-eastern part of the site. The pattern of hedgerow boundaries has remained virtually unchanged from late 1800s (maps) with such habitat having potential for foraging bats with roosts likely off site. The site subsequently has potential for commuting and foraging bats. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. For example, buffers should be provided alongside retained hedgerows. Given the size of the site there would be the potential to make suitable provision for buffers to protect any biodiversity features and the provision of biodiverse open space which may give opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly. Priority habitat on site includes hedgerow boundaries (some interconnecting to ditches), these hedgerows being historical in nature.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

Sites (LGSs) from development?	
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Watercourse running through the site. • Existing hedgerows and trees • Incorporation of public right of way into scheme design to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development. The development of the site would appear to be capable of delivering multi-functional green infrastructure and improve habitat connectivity, for example through the retention of hedgerows/trees and addition of new greenspace. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • Consisting of predominantly grazed pastoral field, the site contains a tributary watercourse flowing from the south of the site north towards the River Avon. The fields are bound by generally low hedgerows with scattered trees. Flood plain, associated with the watercourse, extends onto the north-eastern part of the site. The site has potential for commuting and foraging bats. • Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees alongside utilisation of the water course and associated flood plain for biodiverse green space. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. There is existing residential development to the west and south of this site which may indicate what densities could be achieved. Development density will be influenced by the size of the site and landscape mitigation required due to the site extending out into open countryside to the east towards Sandridge. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities and there is an existing bus service serving the development adjacent which could potentially be extended to serve a development here. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. Suitable assessment to confirm if impact is significant. If so, a remediation strategy will need to be developed and implemented.

issues of viability and deliverability?	
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. Development is likely to lead to a significant loss of agricultural land, given the size of the site, some of which may be BMV. Development should seek to reduce loss of BMV land, where possible, by developing land of a lower quality.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate, which is not in close proximity, being approx. 2.5km from the site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that the development of the site could deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. • This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore it is unlikely to be contaminated. However, the site contains unknown filled ground which would be regarded as potentially contaminated land and require investigation in terms of its effect upon development. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. If it is found to be Grade 3a then development is likely to lead to a significant loss of BMV agricultural land • The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones.

water quantity/quality?	In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a long offsite connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. • With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. The quantum of development envisaged would necessitate a long offsite connection to Bowerhill Water Recycling Centre. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that significant infrastructure improvements would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. The developer will need to carry out a noise impact assessment based on the requirements of BS4142:2019 in order to determine whether the noise impacts are significant. It is very likely that in order to provide sufficient mitigation, there will need to be adequate physical separation of residential and commercial during the design phase.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.

3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units. As such there is a potential for adverse noise. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Overall, significant adverse effects are not considered likely for this site. A minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	A site of this size has the potential to produce large amounts of greenhouse gases through the construction and occupation of the development. Mitigation measures can be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	It is considered possible for most new development to be located within Flood Zone 1. 15% of the site may be unsuitable, due to being too high risk, subject to the exception test. The area of flood risk is within the north-west of the site and is associated with a small watercourse which runs down the centre of the site. Either drainage mitigation or wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to this watercourse with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. This would result in the loss of developable land. Consideration should be given to sequentially planning the development of the site to ensure that the risk of flooding is alleviated.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without	There is moderate flood risk to some of the site associated with both fluvial and pluvial surface water flooding, which may be exacerbated by climate change. The highest fluvial risk on site, located in Flood Zone 3a covers 15% of the site. The highest pluvial risk on site (1% chance of flooding each year) covers 16% of the site and follows a similar pattern to the fluvial risk. Further to this, there is a low pluvial risk (0.1% chance of flooding each year) to 28% of the site. Although development could avoid these areas and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere if surface water isn't managed sustainably. There is no known existing groundwater flooding risk on the site. Cumulative impacts have been scored low. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy would be required to identify and mitigate flood risk and to ensure flood risk isn't worsened elsewhere.

increasing flood risk elsewhere?	
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). The size of this site will allow for the provision of areas of open space, but much of what is currently greenfield agricultural land will be developed. Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • Most of the site is in Flood Zone 1. • Areas of moderate fluvial flood risk are associated with a drain which runs down the centre of the site. This means 15% of the site is potentially undevelopable. • Wide buffer zones should be left adjacent to watercourses with significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure. • There are areas of moderate and low pluvial flood risk, which covers 16% and 28% of the site respectively. This would need to be mitigated by an appropriate surface water management strategy. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • It would be possible for a development of this scale to include significant renewable energy generation, both within buildings and in areas of open space, and it is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Development of this significant sized site has the potential to significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions due to emissions generated through the construction and occupation of the development. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, although future development is likely to increase emissions, it is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is considered possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the surface water flood risk, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	This site is one of the larger sites in Melksham and so presents opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. It is thought that energy demand from a site of this size would be significant and could require significant investment to reinforce the grid however any associated costs are likely to be proportionate to the size of the development coming forward. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size could enable economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. And possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, it is more likely that undeveloped areas of the site would be used for open space, green infrastructure, and biodiversity net gain.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • There are no known details of future development schemes but there are opportunities for a site of this size to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources and create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers and there are parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure. However, it is thought that undeveloped areas of the site may be used for different priorities. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Further evidence is required to understand whether a site of this size would need to invest in reinforcing the grid as the increased demand could be significant. • If the site were to be bought forward with its own self-supporting network through renewable energy generation, grid reinforcement costs could be significantly less. • Overall, given the opportunities for future renewable energy generation and the use of sustainable construction materials and sustainable green technologies, but considering the potential cost implications for increasing the demand on the grid, a neutral effect is likely against this objective.	

SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The site may have an impact on the Grade II Listed Woodrow House Farmhouse. Farmsteads have a fundamental relationship with their surrounding hinterland which contributes to their understanding and special interest. Given the flat, open nature of the site, mitigation might be hard, however possible through a buffer to the north of the site and development occurring in the south therefore preserving the setting of farmstead. There are various features of low value including post Medieval ridge and furrow and associated field boundaries are visible as earthworks and cropmarks in aerial photographs across the site. Further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process in the form of geophysical survey and subsequent trial trenching across the site, potentially focussed in the Northern site area, where Medieval remains may be present. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Following further investigation, mitigation strategy could include preservation by record where preservation in situ is not required. The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site has post Medieval to 21st century planned enclosure fields, with no former character legible and 10th-21st century parliamentary enclosure, with little former character legible, forms the character of the eastern extension of the site. The site comprises part of a wider network of strong continuity, where landscape character has remained stable since the late C19th century. The site lies between modern residential development, and older stable rural landscape character. It may be desirable to retain the historic landscape character due to its unusual continuity. The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site could deliver development that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is moderate. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • A minor adverse effect is considered likely overall.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 7.5km to the east of the site while the Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 8km to the northwest. Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden lies approximately 2.5km to the northeast. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site lies to the northeast of Melksham, east of Melksham Forest to the north of the A3102. The site is predominantly flat, across low-lying land around a tributary watercourse flowing from the south of the site north towards the River Avon. The landform gradually begins to rise to the east of the site and gets steeper up the hillside to Sandridge Park. The greensand hills extend north to Spye Park (Grade II Listed Park and Garden) and further north to Bowden Hill, overlooking the lower clay vale. The site forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape that extends northeast of Melksham. The site is formed of predominantly pastoral fields with some arable adjoining the existing settlement edge. The fields are bound by generally low hedgerows with scattered trees. The landscape has an open, expansive and generally large-scale character with large skies that are occasionally punctuated by the scattered trees. The site has a predominantly rural character that is influenced by the adjoining settlement edge to the west and a prominent line of National Grid high voltage power lines. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows provide linking vegetation through the otherwise sparsely vegetated landscape. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. Overall, the site is of generally medium sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to form a conspicuous, large scale urban extension into the lower river valley that encroaches east across the clay vale towards the distinctive elevated greensand hills. • Potential for development to form an abrupt, hard settlement edge that is intrusive in the rural landscape. • Potential for development to be prominent in the open landscape and alter the character of the large skies. • Potential loss of vegetation features including low hedgerows and scattered trees that punctuate the large-scale, open landscape. • Potential alteration to the open character and route of the watercourse through the site. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would introduce uncharacteristic, large-scale buildings within the lower clay vale landscape that would be highly conspicuous, in particular from the elevated greensand hills. • Introduce strategic green fingers through the development that incorporate new woodland and/or tree planting, to help break up large scale urban massing, contain and soften the new settlement edge and provide an appropriate transition with countryside, especially where this supports landscape character guidance. • Limit development in the east of the site and create a landscape buffer that forms an appropriate, transitional settlement edge to the rural landscape. • Avoid tall development that would form prominent urban features that break the skyline. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that links between Melksham and the wooded hills to the east. • Limit development in proximity to the watercourse in order to maintain a setting to this local landscape feature through the site.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	A public footpath crosses the centre of the site from the west edge of Melksham Forest, east towards New Road. There are limited onward public rights of way linking from the site. There is opportunity to create biodiverse, accessible and connected greenspaces through the development that connect with the existing public rights of way as part of the landscape strategy for the site. There is no public open space or common land within this site.

Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • Likely effects on nationally designated landscapes are not considered to be significant. • Lying to the northeast of Melksham, the site forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape bound by generally low hedgerows with scattered trees. • A public footpath crosses the centre of the site from the west edge of Melksham Forest, east towards New Road. • The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows provide linking vegetation through the otherwise sparsely vegetated landscape. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. • The site is of generally medium sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Development of this site is considered likely to have a minor adverse effect on the SA objective overall.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have major benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a less deprived area. The site adjoins an area subject to higher levels of deprivation to the west. There may be opportunities arising from development at this site to ensure social benefits for the wider area. It has the potential to deliver up to circa 1650 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.2km to the south-west of this site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. This site may be able to support some opportunities for onsite amenity greenspace, but opportunities to link development to existing GI features should be pursued where possible. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 153-215 early years places, 365-512 primary school places and 259-363 new secondary school places. The site would require a new primary school, up to 2.5FE. This should incorporate a 60-place nursery. Up to 2 additional 80 place full day care nurseries would also be

the additional demand?	required in meeting early years needs in full. New secondary provision would likely be required at a new school, possibly on a larger site in the town. Land and financial contributions will be required in meeting education needs arising from the site. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are approx. 1.3-2.2km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development to some extent, including the incorporation of public space and community uses. There are opportunities to improve and enhance public right of way: MELW66. Opportunities to introduce community facilities adjoining school developments to create local centres to serve the development may be apparent and should be incorporated where possible. Development at this site alone is less likely to support new community, education and recreational facilities together as the site would only be able to deliver up to around 550 homes. Nonetheless, where these can be achieved on site, they should be and enhancements of existing facilities and sufficient accessibility to these through sustainable modes of transport, are likely to be required as part of any development on this site.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site may be able to achieve some social benefits as it would help direct development towards a more deprived area, but it is likely to be able to bring forward a good level of affordable homes. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met either onsite or offsite • The site has some accessibility to the town centre and health facilities. These should be enhanced where possible. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses. • This site is capable of delivering a very good level of public space and amenity greenspace to achieving social benefits onsite. • Development would be able to make some contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a moderate positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce	This is a large site and it is considered possible to incorporate a mixed-use development here. In terms of accessibility, this site could be accessed both from the A3102 in the south and from Woodrow Rd in the north. From both ends, the town centre and Rail Station are at the limit of walking accessibility and immediate infrastructure would need to be delivered.

reliance on the private car?	
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	The preferred access would be onto the A3102 as this is much more suitable for a site of this size than via Woodrow Rd which is narrow and has traffic calming measures. This site may provide a vehicular link between Eastern Way and Woodrow Road; however, this may be considered a pointless venture unless there is a further extension beyond Woodrow Road. **Local Constraints** The site may deliver a link road or form part of a relief road. **Site Specific Mitigation** Access at either end and onto Savernake Avenue, but with limited numbers at Savernake and if part of an extended relief road, no turning movements onto Woodrow. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** From the north, the site mirrors site 16. The site is served by Woodrow Road, which, representing a traditional rural town road, does not have adequate width footways. However, given that the site ties into this network in the urban fabric of the town, it is more likely that occupiers will walk and cycle. Upon cycling, again infrastructure is poor, but traffic flows are considered to be low enough to safely accommodate carriageway cycling. Access to the town centre is approximately 1.5km walk which is below the maximum distance for walking and cycling. Access to the Rail Station is 2km and hence at the edge of reasonableness and beyond for the far north of the site." From the immediate south, the town centre and Rail Station are at the limit or beyond of walking accessibility and immediate infrastructure would need to be delivered. **Bus:** The site is currently poorly served with bus stops but existing bus services could serve this site. By providing a link road between Eastern Way and Woodrow Road may provide opportunities for fast inter town commuting services, however these may not serve the Town centre and hence deplete the town service provision. **Rail:** The site is at the limit of walking accessibility. **Service Vehicles:** See below. **Car:** Site 17 may provide a vehicular link between Eastern Way and Woodrow Road; however, this may be considered a pointless venture unless there is a further extension beyond Woodrow Road. The reason for this is that linking the two roads would only be likely to result in detrimental rat-running along the less sufficient road being Woodrow. An extension beyond Woodrow may further deliver benefits to the wider community and deliver sites previously listed, however by delivering this site, it would likely result in car dominated trip generation; this is a function of being accessed from a high-capacity bypass, rather than inter-grated into the community. Without a link, this site may achieve a small number of houses from Savernake Avenue, although this is limited due to the condition of the road, and a much larger number of properties from Sandridge Common A3102 (via an additional fourth arm to the existing roundabout). Access from Woodrow is difficult, because like the previous site (Site 16), this would require a roundabout beyond the capacity and available width of the road. It should therefore be considered that if this site provided an extended link beyond Woodrow, the crossing point would benefit from no turning movements; this would avoid rat running along insufficient road infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • This is a large site and it is considered possible to incorporate a mixed-use development here. • In terms of accessibility, this site could be accessed both from the A3102 in the south and from Woodrow Rd in the north. From both ends, the town centre and Rail Station are at the limit of walking accessibility and immediate infrastructure would need to be delivered. • The preferred access would be onto the A3102 as this is much more suitable for a site of this size than via Woodrow Rd which is narrow and has traffic calming measures. **Local Constraints** The site may deliver a link road or form part of a relief road. **Site Specific Mitigation** Access at either end and onto Savernake Avenue, but with limited numbers at Savernake and if part of an extended relief road, no turning movements onto Woodrow.	

Necessary Strategic Mitigation Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.3km to the west/south-west of this site. The site is assessed as having poor connectivity to the town centre via sustainable transport modes. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site to ensure benefits for the town centre are apparent. Melksham Railway Station is situated 1.7km to the west of the site. This is a large site and areas to the west will be better related to the town centre and railway station.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	A site of this size could deliver employment land onsite as part of a mixed-use development. Employment land meeting wide ranging needs has the potential to be incorporated into a scheme on this site, which benefits from access to the A3102. The site is assessed as being poorly connected to existing employment land but does benefit from access to the A3102. Protected employment land to the north-west of Melksham, including Bradford Road Employment Area and Upside Business Park, is situated less than 2km away to the west of the site. The site is less likely to support an extension to existing employment land, but an employment development could be attractive to higher skilled employment or existing businesses looking for new floorspace to meet changing needs. Efforts should be made to ensure enhanced access to existing employment land through sustainable modes from all part of the site, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land to meet different economic needs. Active travel choices should be promoted through development to reduce any reliance on private cars for commuter journeys.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	This site could provide a significant level of new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure. The size of this site suggests opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. It is considered that a site of this size could enable significant economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	A site of this size would be more likely to be able to provide mixed-use development that includes a balance of employment and residential land to meet a wide range of needs, including those arising from the existing population in the east/north-east of Melksham. This could help reduce the need to travel but there will still need to be investment in sustainable transport modes linking to the town centre and railway station for those people who work elsewhere. The site adjoins existing residential land and development would be places further from existing employment as a result of the sites location.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12	

• The site is less well related to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. • The site is subject to a poor level of accessibility to existing employment land but could be capable of bringing forward employment land to meet a very good range of needs onsite. • The size of the site suggests that it would be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Opportunities to explore energy generation through renewable and low carbon energy sources may be apparent. • Overall, a moderate significant positive effect is likely.

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 18 (SHELAA site 3744) **Site name:** Land northwest of Blackmore Farm **Site size:** 3.55ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 88 - 125 dwellings **Site description:** An agricultural field to the north-east of Melksham with the western boundary adjacent to New Road and southern boundary adjacent to the A3102.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises of a single field and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral field scape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound by generally low hedgerows with occasional trees. Development would need to retain hedgerows, especially those connecting to the watercourse on the north-western boundary. Indeed, circa 10m buffers would be required to hedgerows. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries of the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly. Priority habitat on site is likely to include hedgerow boundaries which connect with network of hedgerows around small, grazed fields off-site. There is potential for bat flight-lines if roosts present within farm buildings.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.
4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Hedgerow/tree boundaries and associated buffers. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises of a single field and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral fieldscape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound by generally low hedgerows with occasional trees. • Development would need to retain hedgerows, especially those connecting to the watercourse on the north-western boundary. Indeed, circa 10m buffers would be required to hedgerows. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Priority habitat on site is likely to include hedgerow boundaries which connect with network of hedgerows around small, grazed fields off-site. There is potential for bat flight-lines if roosts present within farm buildings. • Scope for integrated green and blue infrastructure (GBI) include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site may not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site is within open countryside and divorced from the urban area of Melksham. There is no residential development adjacent to the site except a couple of properties along the A3102. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. However, there are no existing bus services/stops in close proximity to this site. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore significant land contamination is unlikely. However, a more detailed assessment of the site would be required prior to any development coming forward. If subsequent evidence suggests the presence of land contamination, a remediation and mitigation strategy would be required.
4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. If it is found to be Grade 3a then there will be some loss of this resource, but the size of the site suggests this will not be significant.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate approx. 2.8km from the site.

management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site may not deliver appropriate densities. The site is within open countryside and divorced from the urban area of Melksham • This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL • This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore significant land contamination is considered unlikely. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. Given the size of the site the loss of agricultural land will not be significant • The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development • Overall, given the lack of likely significant effects noted above, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.
2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that Wessex Water would be able to accommodate development of this site without reinforcement to networks. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that moderate off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that infrastructure reinforcements would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	

SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is close to the A3102 road, which would require noise impact assessment. The potential for odour impacts and potential mitigation of odours from nearby farming uses would also be required.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is close to the A3102 road, which would require noise impact assessment. • The potential for odour impacts and potential mitigation of odours from nearby farming uses would also be required. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Based on the evidence above, a minor adverse effect is considered likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and

	identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. The closest watercourse to the site is a small watercourse approximately 0.3km west of the site.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located approximately 1 km from the town centre, which could enable active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport. It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of pluvial flooding should be mitigated by an appropriate surface water drainage strategy.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is minimal flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport.	

• Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is one of the smaller sites in Melksham, there may be less open space available for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a smaller site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.

4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size would not support large-scale renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies as there is limited space available. It would still be possible to generate renewable energy on a smaller scale. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from renewable sources from developers for example, solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than a larger site. • It is considered possible that the current energy infrastructure could cope with the increased demand of this site however further evidence is required to confirm this. • Overall, given that this is a smaller site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site. There may be opportunities considering the scale of renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, therefore a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	Impact on wider setting of Grade II listed Blackmore Farmhouse. Southern roadside edge will need to respect setting of Blackmore Farm. Some need for mitigation may impact on capacity. This would be a greater issue if it were developed in combination with area to south of Sandridge Common Road. The site is within the 100m buffer of several features, including a Settlement/farmstead with Medieval origins (Blackmore Farm) located to the south of the site of low to moderate value and post-medieval ridge and furrow and associated field boundaries of very low value. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. The site has not been subject to archaeological investigation; therefore, further investigation is likely needed during a planning application process to identify the presence and significance of yet unknown archaeological remains across the site. Following this, depending on the significance of any remains found, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains or preservation by record. Following the application of suitable mitigation strategies, the potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. The site is characterised as post-medieval regular enclosed fields set out in 19th century, formerly rough grassland/heath known as Blackmore Forest, past features not legible of very low value. The site comprises part of a wider network of weak continuity, where landscape character has been subject to change. Overall, the site is not heavily constrained by historic landscape character. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as ridge and furrow, field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. Following the application of suitable mitigation strategies, the potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site for housing could deliver housing that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would

and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area. It is considered that development has the potential for appropriate mitigation measures to safeguard the historic environment of the site and its immediate surroundings.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is very low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 7km to the east of the site, the Cotswolds AONB approximately 9km to the northwest and Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden 2.8km to the northeast. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site is located to the northeast of Melksham, to the north of the A3102 and east of New Road. The site is predominantly flat on low-lying land to the east of a tributary watercourse. The landform begins to gently rise to the east of the site, towards the elevated geological greensand outcrop at Sandridge that forms distinctive, wooded slopes to the east of the site. The greensand hills extend northeast to Spye Park (Grade II Listed Park and Garden) and further northeast to Bowden Hill, overlooking the lower clay vale. The well wooded slopes and ridgeline provide the visual horizon to the east of the site. The site comprises of a single field and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound by generally low hedgerows with occasional trees. The surrounding landscape has an open, expansive and generally large-scale character with large skies that are occasionally punctuated by the scattered trees. The site has a predominantly rural character and is separated from the existing urban settlement edge to the west by open fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. The urban edge of Melksham to the west of the site forms an abrupt, hard and generally poorly integrated settlement edge. The site is within an undesignated landscape that contains relatively ordinary components. It is a relatively simple, rural landscape with some locally intrusive elements such as the large pylons through the north of the site. The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows provide linking vegetation through the otherwise sparsely vegetated landscape. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. Overall, the site is of generally medium sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following:

	• Potential for development to be conspicuous, poorly connected to the existing settlement and encroach east across the clay vale towards the distinctive elevated greensand hills. • Potential for development to form an abrupt, hard settlement edge that is intrusive in the rural landscape. • Potential for development to contribute to coalescence of the urban area of Melksham with the characteristic outlying rural hamlets and scattered farmsteads. • Potential for development to be prominent in the open landscape and alter the character of the large skies. • Potential loss of vegetation features including low hedgerows and scattered trees that punctuate the large-scale, open landscape. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Do not develop the site separately from the nearby promoted sites (Site 17). • Avoid development that would introduce uncharacteristic, large-scale buildings within the lower clay vale landscape that would be highly conspicuous, in particular from the elevated greensand hills. • Limit development in the east of the site to prevent coalescence and retain the rural character and separate identity of the outlying rural settlements such as Sandridge Park/Sandridge Common, and create a landscape buffer that forms an appropriate, transitional settlement edge to the rural landscape. • Avoid tall development that would form prominent urban features that break the skyline. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that links between Melksham and the wooded hills to the east
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There is no public open space or common land within this site and no public right(s) of way passes through the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 7km to the east of the site, the Cotswolds AONB approximately 9km to the northwest and Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden 2.8km to the northeast. • The site comprises of a single field and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound by generally low hedgerows with occasional trees. • The site has a predominantly rural character and is separated from the existing urban settlement edge to the west by open fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. • The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows provide linking vegetation through the otherwise sparsely vegetated landscape. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. • The site is of generally medium sensitivity to development. The site has generally medium capacity to accommodate development. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a small number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a relatively small number of new homes, albeit there will still be opportunities to meet needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a small number of high-quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have some benefits in terms of providing a range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the different housing needs of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	

Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area, this smaller site could bring forward a small amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a minor positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a less deprived area. The site is smaller but is situated near to areas subject to higher levels of deprivation. While benefits of locating development at this site may not be significant, there may be wider benefits of directing development towards this location. The site has potential to deliver up to 125 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.9km to the west of the site. Sustainable transport connectivity will need to be enhanced and promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. This site is unlikely to support onsite amenity greenspace and lacks good access to offsite existing greenspace assets. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 11-16 early years places, 27-39 primary school places and 19-28 new secondary school places. In meeting early years, primary and secondary needs, financial contributions would be required to expand existing facilities. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are both approx. 1.7km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of the site suggests it would be less capable of delivering a mixed-use development, including community facilities and onsite public open space. Access to existing or emerging facilities at the town would need to be ensured.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide some affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas to the north-east of Melksham who cannot afford rural house prices. The site is smaller so less likely to support new local service, e.g. public transport connections through the development of this site alone.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10	

• This site may be able to achieve some social benefits more widely through new development in this location. However, the site is not within or adjoining a more deprived area, so benefits would be limited. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite • The site is less well connected to the town centre and health facilities. Connectivity, particularly through sustainable transport modes, should be enhanced where possible. • This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses. • The site is unlikely to support onsite amenity greenspace, public open space and new community facilities. • Development would make a very limited contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The size of this site means that a mixed-use development is considered unlikely. Given the location of the site, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Access can easily be achieved from the A3102. **Local Constraints** No footway or cycle infrastructure to connect the site to Melksham Town Centre. No bus service accessibility. No rail accessibility. **Site Specific Mitigation** The site is not considered to be of a scale that could justifiably afford the necessary mitigation to serve the site, being the funded delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure along the A3102 and bus service uplift. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The A3102 accommodates pedestrians in a very narrow path on the southern side of the carriageway and with little or no active frontage between the site and principal urban areas of Melksham, there is no opportunity to provide a safe controlled crossing to access the path; controlled crossings require regular demand for both justification and safety – if they are not regularly used, drivers can ignore them. There is also limited opportunity to provide footway facilities on the nearside, given limited highway space in which to provide and also the impact upon local hedgerows. Beyond the local connectivity issues, the site is also over 2km walk to the town centre and 1km to the nearest food shop and is thus not considered accessible to necessary amenities. **Bus:** X76 bus service passes the site frontage but has a frequency of one bus return per day between Marlborough, Bath and Calne. The site is not considered accessible by bus. **Rail:** The site is 2.7m from the railway station and is thus beyond a walkable distance. With no cycle infrastructure the rail station is also not accessible by cycle. **Service Vehicles:** Sandridge Common is of sufficient width to accommodate the servicing demands of the site. **Car:** Given the location of the site, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice. Whilst Melksham is subject to congestion in peak hours, the site is not of a scale to exacerbate this and there are no particular congestion concerns in the very near locality.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The size of this site means that a mixed-use development is considered unlikely.	

• Given the location of the site, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice. • Access can easily be achieved from the A3102. **Local Constraints** No footway or cycle infrastructure to connect the site to Melksham Town Centre. No bus service accessibility. No rail accessibility. **Site Specific Mitigation** The site is not considered to be of a scale that could justifiably afford the necessary mitigation to serve the site, being the funded delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure along the A3102 and bus service uplift. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.9km to the west of the site. Sustainable transport connectivity will need to be enhanced and promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site to ensure benefits for the town centre are apparent. Melksham Railway Station is situated 2.3km to the west of the site. This is smaller site, although the A3102 provides access to Melksham town centre.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	A site of this size is less likely to support a mixed-use development incorporating employment land. The site is more likely to support a development of either employment or residential uses. The site is situated 2.3km away from protected employment land at Upside Business Park. The site is less well related to existing employment and this along with its size suggests it would not form an extension to existing business and is likely to be unattractive to higher skilled employment, despite access to the A3102. Active travel choices should be promoted through development to reduce any reliance on private cars for commuter journeys.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	A site of this size is unlikely to support new employment alongside housing and associated infrastructure. Local economic benefits are likely to be apparent through the provision of new housing or employment alongside associated infrastructure, including new highways infrastructure. There may be opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help	Development in this location would be closely related to existing residential land. There could be benefits through an employment development of placing new jobs in close proximity to existing homes. However, a residential development alone is less likely to have good benefits of placing homes and jobs in close proximity, leading to a reduction in travel to work distances.

reduce travel to work distances?	
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is less well related to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. • The site is subject to a poor level of accessibility to existing employment land but could be capable of bringing forward employment land. • The size of the site suggests that it would be less capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	

Site Number and SHELAA ref(s): Site 19 (SHELAA site 3712) **Site name:** Land to the north and west of Manor Farm **Site size:** 18.79ha **Site capacity:** approximate range 469 - 658 dwellings **Site description:** A large site to the north-east of Melksham consisting of four agricultural fields. Manor Farm is adjacent to the south-east corner of the site. The southern boundary is on the A3102. The site extends out into open countryside to the north and east. Forty Acre Copse lies adjacent to the eastern boundary.	
SA objective 1 - Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses. **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on local biodiversity and geodiversity?	The site comprises several small to large fields and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral fieldscape that extends northeast of Melksham. The site is bound to the north, south and west by generally robust hedgerows with occasional trees. Blocks of woodland and tree belts form parts of the north and east site boundaries. Woodland links along hedgerows and tree belts to the east, into Sandridge Park. There is also a substantial offsite pond extending across most of the easternmost field boundary. Protection, maintenance, and enhancement should be provided for habitats such as hedgerows, trees and water features within and along the boundaries of the site alongside other ecologically valuable habitat/features. For example, development would need to avoid the eastern most field in order to minimise impacts to off-site habitats and buffers should be provided alongside hedgerows. A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas.
2. Protect and enhance designated and non-designated sites, priority species and habitats and protected species?	The site does not present a direct risk to any European sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, development of the site has the potential to increase recreational pressure upon identified protected species, habitats, and designated/non-designated biodiversity features in the local area and this must be assessed and mitigated accordingly. Priority habitat on or near the site includes two areas of priority broadleaved woodland off-site adjacent to the eastern most site boundary. Similarly, the perimeter and internal site hedgerows, connecting well with hedgerows off site, represent valuable habitat. In terms of species there is a risk zone for great crested newts around a substantial off-site pond extending across most of the easternmost field boundary.
3. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development?	The development of the site would be unlikely to lead to impacts on designated Local Geological Sites (LGS). There are no LGS within or in close proximity to this site.

4. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?	Green and blue infrastructure (GBI) incorporates a wide range of natural green and blue assets ranging from water courses, rights of way and farmland to woodland, hedgerows, street trees. Embedding GBI into well-designed built development (buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and strategic connectivity) can help enhance the built and natural environment, facilitate biodiversity net gain, and help communities and wildlife become more resilient to climate change. On site features that could aid the delivery of a strategic network of GBI include, for example: • Two areas of priority broadleaved woodland off-site adjacent to the eastern most site boundary and integrated habitat to these features • Perimeter and internal site hedgerows that connect well with hedgerows off site. In line with national policy, local plan policy and standard advice from relevant bodies, the development of the site should conserve and enhance green infrastructure and holds the potential to make suitable provision for buffers at recognised water course/green corridors.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 1 • The site comprises several small to large fields and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral fieldscape that extends northeast of Melksham. The site is bound to the north, south and west by generally robust hedgerows with occasional trees. Blocks of woodland and tree belts form parts of the north and east site boundaries. • Development would need to avoid the eastern most field in order to minimise impacts to off-site habitats and buffers should be provided alongside hedgerows. • A minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity is required within individual sites (as per latest biodiversity metric) and the overall layout and design of this site should ensure that habitat creation provides connectivity to adjacent or nearby habitat areas. • Priority habitat on or near the site includes two areas of priority broadleaved woodland off-site adjacent to the eastern most site boundary. Similarly, the perimeter and internal site hedgerows, connecting well with hedgerows off site, represent valuable habitat. In terms of species there is a risk zone for great crested newts around a substantial off-site pond extending across most of the easternmost field boundary. • Scope for integrated GBI include opportunities presented by the retention of hedgerow boundaries and trees (including buffers) alongside leaving the eastern most field for ecological mitigation. The development of the site should conserve and enhance GBI. • Overall, a minor adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 2 - Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Ensure development maximises the efficient use of land?	It is considered that development of this site may not deliver appropriate densities in line with local planning policy and available evidence. The site is within open countryside and very much divorced from the urban area of Melksham. There is no residential development adjacent to the site except a couple of properties on the north side of the A3102. Melksham contains a wide range of infrastructure, services and facilities. However, there are no existing bus services/stops in close proximity to this site. New development should seek to maintain the area's prevailing character and setting and secure well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
2. Maximise the reuse of Previously Developed Land?	This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL.
3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability?	This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore significant land contamination is unlikely. However, a more detailed assessment of the site would be required prior to any development coming forward. If subsequent evidence suggests the presence of land contamination, a remediation and mitigation strategy would be required.

4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)?	Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. There is no differentiation in the evidence between Grades 3a and 3b so further assessment may be required to establish the proportion of Grade 3a BMV. The size of the site suggests that a significant loss of Grade 3 agricultural land is inevitable.
5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?	The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area. As such, development would be unlikely to lead to the sterilisation of known, potentially viable mineral resources.
6. Support the provision of sustainable waste management facilities and include measures to help reduce the amount of waste generated by development through integrated recycling infrastructure?	There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into the layout and design of development on this site. The Melksham Household Recycling Centre is located at Bowerhill Industrial Estate approx. 2.8km from the site. The site is not located within, or likely to affect a designated safeguarding zone associated with an active waste management facility, or allocated Waste Site Allocation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 2 • It is considered that development of this site may not deliver appropriate densities. The site is within open countryside and very much divorced from the urban area of Melksham • This site consists entirely of greenfield, agricultural land and therefore there are no opportunities to maximise the reuse of PDL • This site is greenfield, agricultural land which appears not to have been developed before - therefore significant land contamination is considered unlikely. • Evidence shows this site as consisting entirely of Grade 3 agricultural land. The size of the site suggests that a significant loss of Grade 3 agricultural land is inevitable • The site is not located within a designated Mineral Safeguarding Area • There are no known reasons why sustainable waste management facilities and integrated recycling infrastructure could not be incorporated successfully into a development • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 3 - Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quantity/quality?	This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. In line with the provisions of local planning policy and the Water Framework Directive, the development of this site will still need to make suitable provision to protect and, where appropriate, improve local surface and groundwater quality – this includes ensuring that enough buffer zones are located adjacent to watercourses and ensuring that runoff does not enter these watercourses. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems to control the risk of surface water flooding from impermeable surfaces.

2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?	This site falls within the catchment area supplied by Wessex Water. The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 3 • This site is not covered by any Source Protection Zones, Drinking Water Protected Areas, or Drinking Water Safeguard Zones. • The area covered by Wessex Water has been classed by the Environment Agency as 'seriously water stressed'. Steps will need to be taken to ensure the efficient use of water through the development and occupation of the site. • With regards to water supply, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Significant water infrastructure crosses the site. With regards to foul network capacity, it is likely that significant off-site infrastructure reinforcement would be required. • Overall, given that the site is not within a Source Protection Zone, but considering that significant infrastructure reinforcement would be required, a moderate adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 4 - Improve air quality and reduce all sources of environmental pollution **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration?	Development of this site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. Additional light pollution is most likely to arise through vehicle use at night and through street lighting. Additional noise pollution is most likely to arise during the construction phases, from any employment activities onsite and through motorised vehicle use. The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units and there is a potential for adverse noise. Noise impact assessment would be required.
2. Reduce impacts on and work towards improving and locating sensitive development away from areas likely to experience poorer air quality due to high levels of traffic and poor air dispersal?	Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. CIL/S106 contributions will be required to enable the council to put in place funding to enable actions to be taken to enable a reduction in emissions. It is also desirable that air quality is dealt with at a strategic level with modelling of traffic and air quality impacts, allowing prevention and reduction measures to be incorporated into the Local Plan so developers know the requirements and constraints they must operate within. An Air Quality Assessment showing any cumulative effects of this development on relevant receptors in the locality will be required.
3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?	This site does not lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	

Summary of SA Objective 4 • Development of this large site is likely to increase levels of environmental pollution, including noise, light and vibration – both during construction and operational phases. • The site is located close to working commercial farms/industrial units and there is a potential for adverse noise. Noise impact assessment would be required. • Melksham does not have an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in respect of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective. However, traffic from any new development in Melksham would feed into the network of roads causing additional air quality pressure. As such, steps would need to be taken to mitigate the additional impact of any development. • Based on the evidence above, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 5 - Minimise our impacts on climate change (mitigation) and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects (adaptation) **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Maximise the creation and utilisation of renewable energy opportunities, including low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating?	As this is a smaller site than some of the others, it is considered that fewer emissions would be produced during the construction and occupation of the site. Mitigation measures can still be applied within this objective and across the whole framework to reduce emissions. Some examples include building energy efficient buildings, generating on site renewable energy and delivering sustainable transport. It would be possible for a development of this scale to include renewable energy generation; however, this may mainly be within buildings rather than areas of open space. Low carbon community infrastructure such as district heating could also be incorporated. There is no existing district heating network for this site to link into. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
2. Be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3? If so, are there alternative sites in the area within Flood Zone 1 that can be allocated in preference to developing land in Flood Zones 2 or 3?	The whole site is in Flood Zone 1. This means that each year, this land has less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea. There are no significant watercourses close to the site.
3. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?	The site is not considered vulnerable to surface water flooding or vulnerable to high groundwater levels. Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. The site will require a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure there is no flood risk to site and that development of this site won't exacerbate Flood Risk elsewhere.
4. Promote and deliver resilient development that is capable of adapting to the predicted	Plans for developing this site should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. It is considered that any future development of this site could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. The location, layout and design of any new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts predicted to arise from climate change, including flood risk, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. This site is located more than 1 km from the town centre, which could inhibit active travel to the town centre and ease of access to public transport.

effects of climate change, including increasing temperatures and rainfall, through design e.g. rainwater harvesting, Sustainable Drainage Systems, permeable paving etc?	It is anticipated that Wiltshire will experience hotter summers, milder winters, increased periods without rain, increased intensity in rainfall and more extreme weather events. Development would need to include adaptation measures such as designing to prevent overheating, heat resistant landscaping, more resilient foundations, drought resistant planting and for generally more resilient buildings and spaces (general design and robust materials). Enough land would need to be available for robust surface water management, to include comprehensive surface water drainage measures (including SuDS) that result in run-off rates equalling or bettering current greenfield infiltration rates. Areas currently at risk of fluvial flooding should be protected with wide buffer zones that incorporate significant biodiversity enhancement and Green Infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 5 • The site is in Flood Zone 1. • There is minimal flood risk associated with fluvial, pluvial or groundwater sources. • Flood risk could be exacerbated by climate change. Although development could avoid this area and avoid risk, it may worsen the risk elsewhere. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Cumulative impacts have been scored medium. More stringent policy with regards the control of surface water discharges from new development is required. • It would be possible for this development to include renewable energy generation, however there may be limited opportunity to use open space as this is a smaller site. It is considered that any future development could incorporate appropriate measures to adapt to the predicted future impacts of climate change. • Although the size of this site may not lend itself to large amounts of renewable energy opportunity, it also has the potential to produce significantly less greenhouse gas emissions than a larger site. These emissions could be reduced through the design and layout of the site, by ensuring high levels of energy efficiency in all new buildings to reduce energy use, through mixed-use development that can reduce the need to travel and by ensuring as much choice and access as possible to efficient and reliable sustainable modes of transport. • Overall, this is a smaller site which should produce fewer emissions than a larger one. It is considered that there are opportunities to support resilient development, which supplies energy efficient buildings and provides investment in renewable energy. It is possible for new development to be in Flood Zone 1. However, given the loss of greenfield land which thus natural drainage, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 6 - Increase the proportion of energy generated by renewable and low carbon sources of energy **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?	As this is a medium sized site Melksham, there may be less open space available than a larger site for opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. There may still be opportunities for renewable energy generation on a smaller scale, for example, solar panels on roofs. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources from developers, that: • maximises the potential for suitable development; • considers identifying suitable areas and options for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and • identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

2. Be capable of connecting to the local Grid without the need for further investment?	The electricity infrastructure is constrained across much of Wiltshire. The Grid Supply Points in Wiltshire, located in Minety and Melksham are both constrained. The Bulk Supply Points across Wiltshire are also constrained. Due to the uptake of low carbon technology, and the move towards net zero, the Climate Change Committee have estimated that energy demand could almost treble by 2050. This increased pressure on the system is something SSEN, as Distribution Systems Operator, is working on to manage new system capacity. Solutions may include flexible connections, renewable energy, and further investment to reinforce the current infrastructure. Early engagement with SSEN may be required to discuss connections issues and new solutions may be required. As this is a medium site, there would be less demand on the current infrastructure than a larger site. According to SSEN's generation availability map, the substations in Melksham are constrained, therefore could struggle to withstand additional energy generation connections to the grid, if the site were to produce its own energy. According to SSEN's Network Capacity (demand) Map, the substations in Melksham are also constrained, therefore could potentially struggle to withstand further significant demand. Further conversation with SSEN would be required to ensure connectivity to the grid. It is not known how the site will be brought forward - if the site was able to support its own renewable energy, then the site would be less likely to depend on the grid, however it is considered that this site may struggle to allocate much open space for renewables.
3. Create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies?	It is considered that a site of this size would enable less economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies than a larger site. There may be parts of the site that could be suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure however it is considered that most of the site will be used for development to improve viability. With less renewable energy generation on site there are fewer possibilities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems onsite and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. However, being a smaller site, there will be a lower energy demand.
4. Deliver high-quality development that maximises the use of sustainable construction materials?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver a high-quality development that makes maximum use of sustainable construction materials throughout the development.
5. Deliver energy efficient development that exceeds the minimum requirements set by Building Regulations?	It is considered that development of this site would be able to deliver an energy efficient development that exceeds minimum requirements set by Building Regs. New development should also consider incorporating EV charging points into site design and into individual dwelling design, where possible. However, this will need to be factored into the increased demand the site will have on the existing infrastructure.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Neutral effect	
Summary of SA Objective 6 • It is considered that a site of this size could potentially support some renewable energy generation or create economic and employment opportunities in sustainable green technologies. • There will need to be a positive strategy for energy from developers such as solar panels. • New developments should consider incorporating EV charging points, which will encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport but will increase the energy demand of the site. • As this site is a medium sized site, energy demand would be reasonably high. However, it is considered that there may be more opportunity for large-scale renewable energy production. • It is considered that significant investment could be required to reinforce the grid to cope with increased demand that would be required, and this may entail significant costs. • Overall, given that this is a medium site, energy demand will be less than that of a larger site but significantly more than a small site. There may be opportunities for small scale renewable energy generation, and there is potential for this site to provide EV charging points, which would encourage more sustainable car use, but increase demand, therefore a neutral effect is considered likely against this objective.	

SA objective 7 - Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Conserve and enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest and, where appropriate, undesignated heritage assets and their settings?	The site will have an impact on wider setting of Grade II listed Blackmore Farmhouse. The southern roadside edge will need to respect setting of Blackmore Farm. Some need for mitigation may impact on capacity. This would be a greater issue if the site were developed in combination with area to south of Sandridge Common Road. The site includes archaeological features of post-medieval ridge and furrow and associated field boundaries of very low value. The site is also within the 100m buffer of several more features, including Bronze Age axe head findspot just north-east of the site of moderate value and Settlement/farmstead with Medieval origins (Blackmore Farm) located to the south of the site of low to moderate value. The site was included within a watching brief covering the wider area but no archaeological remains were recorded. Based on evidence that is currently available and known, the site appears to be not heavily constrained by archaeological remains. Despite being subject to a watching brief on a gas pipeline through the centre of the site, further investigation is likely needed to identify the presence and significance of yet unknown archaeological remains across the site. Following this, depending on the significance of any remains found, mitigation could include avoidance of high value archaeological remains or preservation by record. Following the application of suitable mitigation strategies, the potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is low. Some parts of the site are considered to have sensitive historic landscape features, including on the southern edge of site which is characterised as Rural settlement/farmstead established in 19th century and historic landscape character may survive of moderate value. The east of site is characterised as post-medieval/21st century regular enclosed fields unchanged since 19th century, former landscape features not legible and of very low value. To the west the site is characterised as post-medieval regular enclosed fields set out in 19th century, formerly rough grassland/heath known as Blackmore Forest, past features not legible which is of very low value. Overall, the site is not heavily constrained by historic landscape character. Mitigation strategy could include incorporation of surviving historic landscape elements, such as ridge and furrow (i.e. in the east of the site) field patterns, hedgerows and mature trees, within future development. Following the application of suitable mitigation strategies, the potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is low.
2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account, where necessary, the management objectives of Conservation Areas?	In accordance with national policy/local policy, the development of the site for housing could deliver housing that maintains and enhances the distinctiveness of settlements through high quality design. No details of any potential future development scheme or design and layout are currently known. Development of the site would have the potential to appropriately protect and enhance designated heritage assets according to their significance. The site is not located near to a conservation area. It is considered that development has the potential for appropriate mitigation measures to safeguard the historic environment of the site and its immediate surroundings.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 7 • The potential for significant adverse heritage/conservation effects is low. • The potential for significant adverse archaeological effects is very low. • The potential for significant adverse historic landscape effects is low. • The site is not located near to a conservation area.	

• Overall, a minor adverse effect is likely.	
SA objective 8 - Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place. Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…	
1. Minimise impact on and, where appropriate, conserve and enhance nationally designated landscapes e.g. National Parks and AONBs and their settings?	The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 6.3km to the east of the site, the Cotswolds AONB approximately 9km to the northwest with Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden 2.1km to the northeast. Significant impacts on nationally designated landscapes from development are not anticipated.
2. Minimise impact on, and enhance, locally valued landscapes through high quality, inclusive design of buildings and the public realm?	The site is located to the northeast of Melksham, to the north of the A3102 and east of New Road. The site is predominantly flat on low-lying land at the base of the elevated geological greensand outcrop at Sandridge that forms distinctive, wooded slopes to the east of the site. The site forms part of the low-lying, gently undulating valley floor that is characteristic of the Clay Vale and Melksham's location on the River Avon. The greensand hills extend northeast to Spye Park (Grade II Listed Park and Garden) and further northeast to Bowden Hill, overlooking the lower clay vale. The well wooded slopes and ridgeline provide the visual horizon to the east of the site. The site comprises several small to large fields and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound to the north, south and west by generally robust hedgerows with occasional trees. Small blocks of woodland and tree belts form parts of the north and east site boundaries. Woodland links along hedgerows and tree belts to the east, into Sandridge Park. The surrounding landscape to the north and south of the site has an open, expansive and generally large-scale character with large skies that are occasionally punctuated by scattered trees. The site has a predominantly rural character and is separated from the existing urban settlement edge to the west by a network of fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. The site encompasses Manor Farm, which comprises residential properties, various barns, out buildings and container units. It is an identifiable local landscape of moderate scenic quality, forming part of the low-lying, rural clay vale landscape that separates Melksham from the distinctive, rising wooded greensand hills to the east. It is a relatively simple, rural landscape with some locally intrusive elements such as the large pylons in through the north and south of the site. The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows and tree boundaries link east to woodland on the rising greensand slopes. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. Overall, the site is of generally medium to high sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the east of the site due to its contribution to rural separation between Melksham and the wooded hills and rural settlements. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, which is reduced to the east of the site. Potential for significant adverse effects include the following: • Potential for development to be conspicuous, disconnected from the existing settlement and encroach east across the clay vale towards the distinctive elevated greensand hills. • Potential for development to form an abrupt, hard settlement edge that is intrusive in the rural landscape. • Potential for development to alter the character of outlying rural settlements to the northeast and east of Melksham. • Potential for development to be prominent in the open landscape and alter the character of the large skies. • Potential loss of vegetation features including low hedgerows and scattered trees that punctuate the large-scale, open landscape. Scope for mitigation includes the following: • Avoid development that would introduce uncharacteristic, large-scale buildings within the lower clay vale landscape that would be highly conspicuous, in particular from the elevated greensand hills. • Limit the scale and density of development to retain the identity and rural character of outlying settlements to the northeast and east of Melksham, and create a landscape buffer that forms an appropriate, transitional settlement edge to the rural landscape.

	• Avoid tall development that would form prominent urban features that break the skyline. • Retain and enhance hedgerows and trees as part of a mature landscape framework that links between Melksham and the wooded hills to the east.
3. Protect and enhance rights of way, public open space and common land?	There is no public open space or common land within this site and no public right(s) of way passes through the site.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 8 • The North Wessex Downs AONB sits approximately 6.3km to the east of the site, the Cotswolds AONB approximately 9km to the northwest with Spye Park Grade II Listed Park and Garden 2.1km to the northeast. • The site is predominantly flat on low-lying land at the base of the elevated geological greensand outcrop at Sandridge that forms distinctive, wooded slopes to the east of the site. • The site comprises several small to large fields and forms part of the mixed arable and pastoral landscape that extends northeast of Melksham towards the rising, wooded, greensand hills at Sandridge Park. The site is bound to the north, south and west by generally robust hedgerows with occasional trees. • The site has a predominantly rural character and is separated from the existing urban settlement edge to the west by a network of fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. • The landscape and features within the site are in generally moderate condition and hedgerows and tree boundaries link east to woodland on the rising greensand slopes. The site contributes to the separation of Melksham from the distinctive wooded, greensand hills to the east and northeast. • The site is of generally medium to high sensitivity to development, with higher sensitivity through the east of the site due to its contribution to rural separation between Melksham and the wooded hills and rural settlements. The site has generally medium to limited capacity to accommodate development, which is reduced to the east of the site. • Overall, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 9 - Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Provide an appropriate supply of affordable housing?	The record of housing delivery at Melksham to date has met planned levels over the WCS plan period, with a significant supply to carry into the emerging plan period. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), the development range for this site means that it has potential to deliver a significant number of affordable homes. This could contribute, either alone or in combination with other sites, to the delivery of affordable housing at Melksham.
2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?	This site would be capable of delivering a significant number of homes, suggesting that there will be many opportunities to meet a wide range of needs for different house types or tenures. Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as any land required to be safeguarded for a future Melksham bypass), in accordance with local plan policy and national standards, the development of this site could deliver a significant number of high quality, sustainable homes of different types and tenures. The development of this site would have major benefits in terms of providing a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the housing needs of a wide cross-section of the community.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Major (significant) positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 9 • Notwithstanding any mitigation that may be required which results in a reduced developable area (such as to accommodate the Melksham bypass), this large site could bring forward a significant amount of affordable housing as part of a housing development. • The site would be likely to support a wide range of house types, tenures and sizes to meet different needs. • Overall, a major positive effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 10 - Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	

1. Maximise opportunities for affordable homes and job creation within the most deprived areas?	The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identify this site as being situated within a less deprived area. The site is reasonably sized but is situated further from areas subject to higher levels of deprivation. While benefits of locating development at this site may not be significant, there may be wider benefits of directing development towards this location. The site has potential to deliver up to 658 homes of different types and tenures. The site is considered to be able to deliver a good level of affordable housing. There would be short term benefits during construction through new jobs at this site.
2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.9km to the west of the site. Sustainable transport connectivity will need to be enhanced and promoted as part of any development at this site and improved where possible to ensure accessibility from all areas of the site. This site is more likely to be able to support onsite amenity greenspace but lacks good access to existing formal assets offsite. Housing development at this site would generate a need for 61-86 early years places, 145-204 primary school places and 103-145 new secondary school places. In meeting early years needs, financial contributions and land would be required for a new 60-100 place nursery. New primary school provision would be needed, but this would need to be delivered in conjunction with surrounding sites. Financial contributions would be required. New secondary provision would be required and is most likely achieved offsite. Financial contributions would be required towards this provision. Giffords Surgery and Spa Medical Centre are approx. 2.1km away to the south of the site. Melksham is subject to a negative GP capacity gap and this has been forecast to increase by 2026. Closure of St Damian's surgery means that from March 2020 are only two surgeries operating in the town. A new facility at Melksham Campus struggled to find an operator and so never came into fruition. There is a possibility that the location of this site could have an impact of delivery of health services in the town. Financial contributions are to be sought through development to ensure new residents have access to healthcare facilities.
3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions?	The size of this site suggests that development would be capable of delivering a mixed-use development to some extent, including the incorporation of public space and community uses.
4. Reduce the adverse impacts associated with rural isolation, including through access to affordable local services for those living in rural areas without access to a car?	Development of this site in Melksham is unlikely to reduce rural isolation to any great extent as the housing will be located on the urban edge of Melksham and will be meeting the needs of Melksham primarily. However, new development could provide a very good level of affordable housing for those people living in surrounding rural areas who cannot afford rural house prices and there will be new education and other community facilities which rural residents could access. Public transport services will need to be extended/enhanced to serve this new development and this could also benefit people in rural areas.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 10 • This site may be able to achieve some social benefits more widely through new development in this location. However, the site is not within or adjoining a more deprived area, so benefits would be limited. • Housing development at this site would require investment into local education and health services to ensure that needs arising from development can be met offsite • The site is less well connected to the town centre and health facilities. Connectivity, particularly through sustainable transport modes, should be enhanced where possible.	

• This site is likely to bring forward an element of mixed-use development, potentially incorporating onsite community uses. • The site is unlikely to support onsite amenity greenspace, public open space and new community facilities. • Development would make a very limited contribution to the reduction of rural isolation. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	
SA objective 11 - Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on the private car?	The size of this site means that a mixed-use development could realistically be achieved. Beyond the local connectivity issues, the site is also over 2km walk to the town centre and over 1km to the nearest food shop and is thus not considered accessible to necessary amenities. Without adequate and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure and bus service provision, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice. The scale of the development is such that it may materially affect the operation of junctions along the A3102 corridor towards the A350 and junctions along Eastern Way towards the A365, particularly the dual roundabouts on Spa Road.
2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity?	Access is easily achieved from the A3102. **Local Constraints** Limited opportunity for footway or cycle infrastructure to connect the site to Melksham Town Centre. No adequate bus service accessibility. No rail accessibility. Possible congestion implications. **Site Specific Mitigation** Provision of an appropriately design crossing facility of the A3102 and widening of the existing path on the southern side of the road. Delivery of a 30-minute frequency bus service to serve the site. Possible junction enhancements en route to the A350 and A365. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy.
3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and promote investment in sustainable transport options, including Active Travel?	**Pedestrian/Cycle:** The A3102 accommodates pedestrians in a very narrow path on the southern side of the carriageway and with little or no active frontage between the site and principal urban areas of Melksham, the opportunity to provide a safe controlled crossing to access the path is limited. The demand from the site will be greater than that of site 18 and this should be fully assessed to determine the form of crossing; if no crossing is feasible, then the site should not be developed. There is also limited opportunity to provide footway facilities on the nearside, given limited highway space in which to provide and also the impact upon local hedgerows. If a crossing is deemed feasible, then this should be delivered with width enhancements to the pedestrian facilities, with due regard to safety; the road has a relatively high traffic speed and the narrow path is afforded additional protection through the provision of a separator verge, which would have to be lost if the footway is widened. Beyond the local connectivity issues, the site is also over 2km walk to the town centre and over 1km to the nearest food shop and is thus not considered accessible to necessary amenities. **Bus:** X76 bus service passes the site frontage but has a frequency of one bus return per day between Marlborough, Bath and Calne. The site is not considered currently accessible by bus and enhancements will be necessary to extend one of the town shuttle buses to serve the site which will need to accommodate bus penetration. To achieve this, the site should be delivered to its maximum housing quantum to improve the commercial viability of the service – the service may further benefit from the concurrent delivery of sites 17 and 18 to ensure commercial viability. **Rail:** The site is 2.7m from the railway station and is thus beyond a walkable distance. With no cycle infrastructure the rail station is also not accessible by cycle. **Service Vehicles:** Sandridge Common is of sufficient width to accommodate the servicing demands of the site.

	Car: Without adequate and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure and bus service provision, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice. The scale of the development is such that it may materially affect the operation of junctions along the A3102 corridor towards the A350 and junctions along Eastern Way towards the A365, particularly the dual roundabouts on Spa Road.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Moderate (significant) adverse effect	
Summary of SA Objective 11 • The size of this site means that a mixed-use development could realistically be achieved. • Beyond the local connectivity issues, the site is also over 2km walk to the town centre and over 1km to the nearest food shop and is thus not considered accessible to necessary amenities. • Without adequate and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure and bus service provision, the use of the car is going to represent the principal mode of choice. • The scale of the development is such that it may materially affect the operation of junctions along the A3102 corridor towards the A350 and junctions along Eastern Way towards the A365, particularly the dual roundabouts on Spa Road. • Access is easily achieved from the A3102. **Local Constraints** Limited opportunity for footway or cycle infrastructure to connect the site to Melksham Town Centre. No adequate bus service accessibility. No rail accessibility. Possible congestion implications. **Site Specific Mitigation** Provision of an appropriately design crossing facility of the A3102 and widening of the existing path on the southern side of the road. Delivery of a 30-minute frequency bus service to serve the site. Possible junction enhancements en route to the A350 and A365. **Necessary Strategic Mitigation** Contribution to a Melksham Transport Strategy. • Overall, given the issues noted above, a moderate adverse effect is considered likely against this objective.	
SA objective 12 - Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth **Decision-Aiding Questions. Will the development site…**	
1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)?	Melksham town centre is approximately 1.9km to the west of the site. Sustainable transport will need to be promoted as part of any development at this site to ensure benefits for the town centre are apparent. Melksham Railway Station is situated 2.5km to the west of the site. This is a modestly sized site that benefits from access to the A3102. This suggests the site could provide some support for the town centre.
2. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport including active travel?	A site of this size may be capable of delivering employment land onsite as part of a mixed-use development. Employment land alone could meet a wide range of needs, including higher skilled employment. The site benefits from access to the A3102 but is assessed as being poorly connected to existing employment land. Protected employment land to the north-west of Melksham, including Bradford Road Employment Area and Upside Business Park, is situated approx. 2.5km away to the west of the site. The site is less likely to support an extension to existing employment land, but an employment development could be attractive to higher skilled employment or existing businesses looking for new floorspace to meet changing needs. Due to the location of the site a residential development alone is less likely to have good benefits of supporting existing employment land. Efforts should be made to ensure enhanced access to existing employment land through sustainable modes from all part of the site, in addition to the consideration of onsite employment land to meet different economic needs. Active travel choices should be promoted through development to reduce any reliance on private cars for commuter journeys.
3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote	This site could potentially provide new housing, including affordable housing, employment and community facilities and associated infrastructure that will help support the local economy and economic growth, including new highway infrastructure.

economic growth, including opportunities to maximise the generation and use of renewable energy and low-carbon sources of energy?	There may be opportunities to support energy generation from renewable and low carbon sources. To help to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat from this site, there will need to be a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, considers identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identifies opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.
4. Promote a balance between residential and employment development to help reduce travel to work distances?	Development in this location would be closely related to existing residential land. There could be benefits through an employment development of placing new jobs in close proximity to existing homes. However, a residential development alone is less likely to have good benefits of placing homes and jobs in close proximity, leading to a reduction in travel to work distances. A mixed-use development could be supported on this site. This type of development is more likely to have good benefits of locating job and homes in close proximity.
Assessment outcome (on balance): Minor positive effect	
Summary of SA Objective 12 • The site is less well related to the town centre through sustainable transport modes. • The site is subject to a poor level of accessibility to existing employment land but could be capable of bringing forward employment land to meet a very good range of needs onsite. • The size of the site suggests that it could be capable of being able to support mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. • A mixed-use development is likely to have the most benefits of reducing travel to work distances. • Overall, a minor positive effect is likely.	