

**APPENDIX 2.2      NOTE OF MEETING WITH WILTSHIRE COUNCIL, JULY 2013**



## MELKSHAM LINK CANAL PROJECT

Notes from Meeting at Wiltshire Council offices, Trowbridge  
Tuesday 23 July 2013, 2.00pm

### Attendees:

Paul Lenaerts – Wiltshire & Berkshire Canal Trust (WBCT) Project Manager  
Ken Oliver – Wiltshire Council (WC), Countryside Officer (WBCT Planning Agent)  
Adam Boyden – Nicholas Pearson Associates, Environmental Planner  
James Taylor - WC, Planning Officer  
Mark Goodwin - WC, Landscape Architect  
Fiona Elphick - WC, County Ecologist

Apologies – Rachel Foster – Wiltshire Council, Assistant County Archaeologist

**Purpose of the meeting:** to discuss the consultation comments received from Wiltshire Council's landscape, ecology and archaeology officers on issues arising from the planning application for the Melksham Link canal submitted by the WBCT in Autumn 2012 (planning application ref. W/12/01080) and the applicants' response, to help move the planning application towards determination.

### Actions Agreed:

1. Comments on the planning application are awaited from Chris Kirk (WC Tree Officer).  
**Action: MG to chase a response.**
2. Comments on the planning application are awaited from WC Public Rights of Way officer.  
**Action: KO to chase a response.**
3. AB had asked JT to consult Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as they had not responded to the application although it affected their land at Conygre Mead Nature Reserve.  
**Action: JT to consult Steven Davis at WWT.**
4. A meeting had recently been held with the Canal and River Trust, who had not previously been consulted on the application, were apparently supportive in principle but were likely to issue a holding objection to ask for further information.  
**Action: JT to consult CRT.**
5. Work to respond to points raised in the Environment Agency's consultation response is being prepared for the applicant by consultants Black & Veatch. The results of this work are awaited by PL/KO and a further meeting will be arranged with the Environment Agency and JT when it is available.  
**Action: PL/KO to obtain report from BV.**
6. AB/PL noted that an Archaeology Desk-Based Assessment has now been commissioned by the applicant, to respond to the Assistant County Archaeologist's comments and concerns, and this would be available in a few weeks.  
**Action: PL/AB/KO to liaise with Rachel Foster on the report when available.**

7. The Design & Access Statement, design vision/ principles, and materials were discussed, as raised by MG. It was agreed that a broad statement of design intentions, selective details and illustrations would be prepared to reflect the vision of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century canal which respected the Kennet & Avon's heritage.

**Action: KO/PL to consider additions to Design & Access Statement and planning drawings.**

8. It was agreed that the potential marina (potentially proposed by others), additional canal routes to the east, and housing developments, would be removed from planning drawings as these do not form part of the planning application. It was agreed that the environmental implications of these potential future developments would be considered in the Environmental Statement when 'cumulative effects' are assessed.

**Action: KO/PL/AB.**

9. The need for planning drawings to be updated was discussed and agreed, including in relation to:
- the roads proposed near/through hedgerows (route to be refined to avoid hedgerows);
  - the Berryfield playground (the location of a replacement facility will be shown);
  - clarification as to whether Berryfield village hall facility would be relocated adjacent to the relocated playground (as is being requested by residents).

**Action: KO/PL**

10. It was agreed that the planning drawings, once amended, would need to be subject to public consultation, and that this could be done formally at the same time as consultation on the ES once completed. JT requested that the applicants consider submitting a new planning application with the new drawings and ES, or make very clear which documents and plans were being superseded or updated.

**Action: KO/PL to note.**

11. MG had requested that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was carried out for the project as part of the EIA/ES. MG agreed to consider the likely zone of visual influence further, and to liaise with AB in order to help define the receptors and viewpoints that should be assessed.

**Action: MG to contact AB to consider LVIA requirements further.**

12. It was agreed that the trees that would be lost to the proposals (including direct loss as well as due to changes in river water level) would be clearly identified, and that impacts of tree loss on landscape character and visual amenity, and mitigation measures, would be identified in the proposals and ES. PL/KO agreed to liaise with Sainsbury's in relation to potential replacement tree planting on their land.

**Action: PL/KO/AB.**

13. MG had requested that a Landscape Framework plan/document was prepared as part of the ES. FE had requested that an Ecological Management and Monitoring Plan was prepared as part of the ES. It was agreed that a combined Landscape and Ecological Framework and Management Plan drawing/s and document should be prepared.

**Action: PL/KO/AB.**

14. The need for the planning application to justify how alternative routes were considered was discussed. AB proposed that the ES should discuss the alternative routes and alternative design options that have been considered, as is required in EIA Regulations.

**Action: AB**

15. The Agricultural Land Classification of the land along the route was discussed; AB showed ALC maps available. JT raised the issue of how the landlocked farmland to the east of the new canal route would be managed; the need for farm access to be maintained was agreed. The potential need for temporary construction compounds, haul routes and working areas to be identified on plans was discussed; JT agreed that as the areas required were uncertain the submission of plans could be required under a planning condition rather than with the application. The need for a Construction Environmental Management Plan was discussed; AB agreed that the construction facilities and impacts arising should be identified in the ES where possible.

**Action: KO/PL/AB to note.**

16. FE discussed her concerns in relation to the information submitted with the planning application and ES on biodiversity, and the need for further surveys, impact assessment and mitigation measures including an ecological management plan. AB summarised the initial advice from Pernille Olsen (Oecology) after an initial surveys, and stated that a full Extended Phase I Habitat Survey has been undertaken to establish the scope of all necessary species and habitat surveys, which would focus the impact assessment and mitigation work on the likely significant impacts. Issues were discussed relating to surveys needed, and FE confirmed/requested specific surveys for:

- a. bats (a full season survey, including late 2013);
- b. Great Crested Newts (habitat suitability in the first instance, breeding pond surveys in spring 2014);
- c. reptiles (in order to take account of during construction);
- d. other notable species;
- e. fish (see Environment Agency response; need to check for sensitive species);

FE agreed there may be no need for surveys for Dormouse, or Badger (a sett survey would be needed in advance of construction) with the application/ES. It was agreed that the habitat survey report (which would include recommendations for further work) would be circulated to FE once it had been received from Oecology, to further discuss and agree the scope of ecological surveys required.

**Action: PL/KO/AB to provide survey report to FE when available.**

**Adam Boyden**

Nicholas Pearson Associates, August 2013