

Swanley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th March 2021 6.00 pm via ZOOM

Present Chrissy Hudson, Glynnis Darrington, Paul Darrington, Chris Prestedge, Bob Wallis, Bob Brickell, Roger Ford

In attendance – Cllr Fleming (Leader Sevenoaks District Council), Cllr Dyball, Cllr Barnes, Cllr Searles. Toni Roast, Ryan Hayman (Swanley Town Council) Lorraine Hart (Neighbourhood Planning Consultant)

1. Apologies

John Roche, Dr Lunt, Alan Dean

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Health & Wellbeing Centre

Bob Brickell welcomed Cllr. Peter Fleming to the meeting and thanked him for attending

He stated that:

Residents have been concerned about the Oaks and Cedars capacity to cope with the existing number of residents for some time. We feel that residential developments proposed in both Swanley and Hextable will result in an increase in population which the existing surgeries will not be able to cope with. We know that The Oaks surgery wrote to SDC stating that “The CCG’s health strategy is to have a single central hub, Health and Wellbeing centre in Swanley, housing both the Cedars and The Oaks Surgeries.”

The CCG have stated that an area of 2,615 sq. m. is required for a Health Centre. Do you agree with this figure bearing in mind that Edenbridge has a new Health & Wellbeing centre of 2,066 sq. m. for only a population of 9,700 people? Swanley & Hextable has a population of 21,290 according to the Census 2018 mid-year estimates.

The group had looked at possible locations and identified four possible sites that are close to the town centre with our preferred location being the underused park at Bartholomew Way. Bartholomew Way is a small, 0.5-hectare, underused park. The proposal is to use only part of the park for the Health hub. SDC have set a precedent by allocating amenity green space at Alder Way and Conifer Way for housing as it is felt that they are in close proximity to Swanley Park. The new White Oak Leisure Centre is being built on open green space, the old building to be demolished and replaced with new housing. No substitutions for the loss of any of these green spaces have been offered. We feel Bartholomew Way is justified because it is for the benefit of all Swanley residents. The Edenbridge health facility has been approved on Green Belt land.

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He stressed that the Steering Group would not normally wish to lose the open space, however, the group felt that there are very few options available and the mitigation would be a facility needed by all residents of Swanley. This would not be the first time that SDC has gone against their own planning policy. The Edenbridge Health hub will be built upon a site which is in part a brown field site (redundant school) and upon green belt land, something that we would not wish to countenance here. SDC have also announced plans to build upon the Amenity green space at three locations in the town which are:

- Land east of 40, Alder Way planning application 20/00037, 0.79 hectare.
- White Oak Leisure planning application 19/02951, 0.34 hectare.
- 1-7 Conifer Way planning application 19/01980, 0.29 hectare.

A total of 1.42 hectares which has left us with a deficit of amenity green space in the town and we no longer achieve the requirement of 0.60 hectares per 1000 population.

Other material facts:

The small surgery in Hextable has been closed but recently reopened on a part time basis as a satellite to the Cedars surgery.

The Town Centre developers are not willing to provide the space requirement of 2,615 square metres in their development. They offered up to 958 square metres of floor space.

The Town Centre developer's commitment is to the Cedars only, who are their current tenants.

Once the six-year Town Centre regeneration project starts, access to the Oaks & Cedars, especially for emergency vehicles, will be difficult.

The SDC LP update indicates a requirement for a review of the "Infrastructure Delivery Plan". We hope that the Health and Wellbeing centre in Swanley will be a top priority. The NP steering group have also identified a need for a cemetery and a community indoor sports facility.

He stated that the Steering group asked that Bartholomew Way is not discounted by planning policy alone without looking at the mitigating circumstances in its favour.

He stressed the urgency of the provision needed particularly as the Hextable surgery had now closed.

Cllr Fleming responded that SDC did support the concept of a hub in Swanley for health services provisions.

However the Bartholomew Way site was not an option in planning policy terms and that SDC had already refused to transfer ownership of the site to STC to facilitate this. This was partly due to the fact that the two surgeries were not currently clear on their requirements (despite having completed a previous business case) and were

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each working to different time scales. He felt that this impasse could only be unlocked by agreement between the surgeries and CCG about what was needed and how it could be funded in order to better define the possibilities of a new location.

He reported that work by SDC on the development of Bevan Place, which could include health facilities could benefit from residents input to address an of their concerns and would pass on the details of the officers concerned to LH to take forward a discussion.

Ryan Hayman also reported that there were discussions going on with both U&A and LCP (now the two owners of the sites covered by the U&I development plans which have secured planning consent to look at accommodating the surgeries into one hub though it may be a complex process of phased development and ownership arrangements.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 25th January 2021 and matters arising

Agreed as a true record

5. Any Other Business

LH reported that the AECOM reports had now been finalised and issued by them and that they had included all the comments and amendments suggested by the Steering group – she would circulate before the next meeting.

LH also requested that people look at the amended version of the Conservation and Heritage chapter that she had circulated after the last meeting with the amendments that had been agreed then. It could then be signed off as a draft at the next meeting.

PD asked LH whether she felt that a full draft of the NP could be ready by the end of September 2021 when her commission finished with STC. LH said she was aiming to have a draft for a regulation 14 version (when the NP is formally consulted on with statutory consultees) by that time.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19th April at 6pm on zoom