

Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

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DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

MINUTES

Wednesday 4th June 2025

Present:

Members	Present	Apologies	Reason
Chair: Cllr G Darrington		✓	Attending SDC Meeting
Deputy Chair: Cllr P Darrington		✓	Attending SDC Meeting
Cllr P Brown	✓		
Cllr S Durden	✓		
Cllr J Ferrari	✓		
Cllr M Horwood	✓		
Cllr C Prestedge	✓		
Cllr L Taylor	✓		
Cllr E Uttley	✓		

Officers: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Ryan Hayman
Executive Assistant – Marisa Levy
Senior Executive Assistant – Megan Campbell

Also Present: Cllr N Scott

Public: Two members of the public came along to speak against the proposed head pump at Argent, Beechenlea Lane. One resident highlighted the proximity to their property, concerns about the noise report, and requested that the planning manager of SDC attends a site visit. The Chair thanked them for their comments and said he would include their comments in the overall objection.

MEETING COMMENCED: 20:10

12470 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr G Darrington, Cllr P Darrington

12471 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST NONE

12472 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21st May 2025.
APPROVED AND SIGNED

12473 DECISIONS TO BE CONSIDERED BY SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL

25/01369/HOUSE Argent Beechenlea Lane Swanley Kent BR8 8DP – COMMENTS DUE BY 11/06/2025

Air Source Heat Pump and Air Conditioning Unit.

OBJECTION Swanley Town Council objects to this application on a number of grounds. We note this application has been resubmitted with a noise impact assessment; however we hold a number of concerns which we would be grateful for the environmental health officer to investigate:

- The noise assessment does not present the impact (ie in Table 7, 8 or 9) on the ground floor conservatory and living room, which is directly opposite the ASHP and where there is a clear open window into the property. This is the principal relaxation and living area of the house.
- The noise assessment focusses on background noise emitted from a fish pond. However, this could be removed at any point by the current or future occupier of Orchard End. The assessment makes no calculation or assumption for the removal of this and therefore the impact on the nearest room of Orchard End
- We believe the Environmental Health Officer must visit Orchard End to understand the incredibly close proximity of the ASHP to the Conservatory/Living Room, in order to confidently address the above two points when determining the above application. We would also encourage the Development Manager to attend the site, in addition to the Planning Officer.

In addition, our original comments still stand:

It is worth highlighting that there are a range of options under which Air Source Heat Pumps can be granted Permitted Development [The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Cross Heading: Class G]. However, this application would fail on PD grounds (showing it's controversial) due to:

- There is more than one heat pump, having a cumulative effect on the noise and visual impact on the property, both of which are visible from the road and street scene, and neighbouring properties
- The proximity of both air source heat pumps to both property boundaries (within 1m when considering the extension of the units themselves towards the boundary, which are not accounted for in the drawings)
- They are inappropriately located on the 1st floor of the property rather than sited at floor level and will create additional noise over the 42DB allowed. This contradicts the conditions under G3(b) and G3(c) of the PD Order that requires "(b)the air source heat pump is, so far as practicable, sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and (c)the air source heat pump is, so far as practicable, sited so as to minimise its effect on the amenity of the area."

Even taking into consideration the proposed amendments to the GPDO 2015 under the Government's Warm Homes Plan, this only removes the element of the heat pumps being 1m from the property boundary under permitted development rights. The other controversial elements, such as the height of the ASHPs, still remain, and are therefore controversial due to the fact the Government has not included these in the GPDO, as it recognises harm is caused, by for example an elevated siting of an ASHP.

For these reasons, we object to the application again on the following grounds:

1. Loss of Amenity and Noise Pollution – EN2 and EN7 of the ADMP 2015

a. The siting of both heat pumps, by virtue of their proximity to the neighbouring properties of both Orchard End and Colmar will have an unacceptable impact on both properties in terms of noise. In the case of Orchard End, the location of the heat pump directly faces the window of the principle lounge/conservatory, serving an unacceptable amount of noise, particularly when windows are open. The siting of both heat pumps are elevated and face narrow areas between the houses – further amplifying the noise to other windows. The conservatory of Orchard End is well used, as it is the only source of light for the very dark living room, therefore the existing

homeowner spends a lot of the time in this part of the lounge in order to enjoy the natural light.

b. It is worth highlighting that the dimensions that the applicant has provided is from the wall of the property, not the closest point of the heat pump unit itself (which protrudes from the wall) to the neighbouring property boundary.

2. Unacceptable impact of the character of the area: EN1 of the ADMP 2015 and SP1 of the Core Strategy 2011

a. The siting and height of the air source heat pumps are inappropriate for the property. As they are mounted to the 1st storey side wall, they are visually obtrusive from an outlook perspective from the neighbouring properties, which are very already very closely knit together, but also from the street scene. Both heat pumps can be viewed from the road and pavement, and give a visually disproportionate appearance and property spacing due to the wall mounted heat pumps.

b. There are no other properties in Beechenlea Lane, or even the wider area (Manse Way or London Road) which have 1st storey wall mounted heat pumps, therefore this is not a characteristic of the area where a precedent has already been set.

c. We do not believe the current siting or location of the ASHPs would meet Building Control Regulations.

In conclusion, whilst significant weight should now be given to the need to improve the energy efficiency of properties under the NPPF, this is counter-balanced by the fact that significant weight should also be given to good design, including the inappropriate siting and height of the heat pumps, when alternatives such as placing them on the ground floor, and at the back of the property with the fan element facing the garden, is an entirely possible and feasible alternative. We also do not feel that the Noise Impact Assessment has considered the full impact on the neighbouring property of Orchard End, leading to a greater impact on noise than what is suggested. As this proposal fails to meet EN2 and EN7, it should therefore be refused overall.

25/01053/FUL Telephone Box Swanley Centre Swanley Kent BR8 7TG – COMMENTS DUE BY 12/06/2025

The proposed installation of 1no. BT Street Hub unit and removal of associated 2no. BT payphone kiosks.

NO OBJECTION

25/01054/ADV Telephone Box Swanley Centre Swanley Kent BR8 7TG – COMMENTS DUE BY 12/06/2025

Erection of a street hub unit with two digital 75-inch LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit.

NO OBJECTION – Subject to the advertising brightness being dimmed at 10pm.

12474 DECISIONS MADE BY PLANNING AUTHORITY

25/00817/FUL Land North of Old Place Farm Beechenlea Lane Swanley

Demolish existing outbuildings and containers. Erection of a single storey building

GRANTED – STC COMMENT – OBJECTION 24/04/2025

25/00821/HOUSE 1 Pucknells Close Swanley Kent

Proposed wraparound extension with rooflights and part infill extension at front. Alterations to fenestration. Internal alterations and landscaping works.

GRANTED – STC COMMENT – NO OBJECTION 24/04/2025

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 18th June 2025

MEETING CLOSED: 20:26

SIGNED:

18/06/2025

**Cllr G Darrington
Chair of Development Control**