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## PLANNING WORKING GROUP

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held at the site listed below on Monday, 6 January 2020 from 10.00am - 10.27am.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson (Chairman), James Hall, James Hunt, Carole Jackson, Elliott Jayes, David Simmons, Paul Stephen and Tony Winckless.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Rob Bailey, Rebecca Corrigan and Philippa Davies.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Roger Clark, Simon Clark, Peter Marchington, Eddie Thomas and Tim Valentine.

### 407 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

### 408 **19/500866/OUT, LAND AT SWALE WAY, GREAT EASTHALL, SITTINGBOURNE, ME10 3TF**

The Chairman welcomed Members, officers and members of the public to the meeting.

The Area Planning Officer introduced the application which was for the erection of up to nine dwellings. He explained that it was an outline application for which all matters were reserved, except for access to the site. An indicative layout set-out the provision of seven dwellings. The Area Planning Officer explained that there would be pedestrian access to the north of the site, and advised that the site was within the built-up area of Sittingbourne. He said the application site had originally been allocated as a site for a medical centre. This had been offered to the National Health Service (NHS) twice and they had declined to take the site on. As these legal obligations had been met, the site was now being treated as unallocated land. The Area Planning Officer explained that the barrier to the Community Hall would be removed. He said that although seven detached/semi-detached dwellings were proposed, this figure could go up to nine dwellings, however this would require a decrease in their size, and a change in the type of units, and some might be flats. The Area Planning Officer said this would be dealt with under the reserved matters application.

The Area Planning Officer advised that Kent County Council (KCC) Highways and Transportation raised no objection to the application. Environmental Services had raised no objection in terms of noise and air quality. He said the existing trees on the site would be retained, and there would be additional landscaping.

In summary, the Area Planning Officer stated that the proposed development would result in no harm to visual or residential amenity; it was positioned in the built-up area of Sittingbourne; the site was not allocated for a particular use; and KCC Highways and Transportation had no objection on highway safety grounds.

Local residents raised objections which included the following points:

- Residents were promised amenities which had not materialised;
- the site should remain empty so that it could be used in the future for amenities;
- we were promised facilities such as a shop, doctors, a school, and a link road to the A2; we only had a community hall;
- the estate was a cul-de-sac, with only one entrance/exit, and was cut-off from Sittingbourne;
- developers focussed on more housing, rather than the provision of amenities;
- maintenance issues;
- residents on the existing estate had been forgotten;
- the estate was not sustainable;
- once housing was built on the site, the land was lost for any amenities in the future;
- there were not enough facilities to attract residents to the area; and
- when had the NHS last been asked about whether they wanted to set-up a medical facility on the site? They might be more interested now as there was more housing.

In response to some of the points made, the Area Planning Officer explained that the NHS had been offered the site a few years ago. The legal agreement only required the land to be offered to them once, but it had been offered twice. As such, the Council had no power to insist on a medical centre here, as the developer had done what they were required to do. He added that the NHS, at the time of being asked whether they wanted to utilise the site for a medical centre, would have been made aware of the number of dwellings to be constructed at the estate. The Area Planning Officer explained that wider road matters, such as a link to the A2 were not a consideration of this planning application.

A Ward Member asked about the acoustic barrier put in place to mitigate noise from the community hall to the existing estate. He considered the proposed development would be affected by this mitigation measure, as the noise was funnelled to the presently vacant land. The Area Planning Officer explained that a noise assessment report had been submitted with the planning application and the Environmental Health Manager was happy with this assessment at the current time. He recommended a further acoustic report be submitted at the reserved matters application, based on the layout of the site.

A Member asked if the barrier to the community hall would be removed and the Area Planning Officer confirmed that it would be. In response to a question, he advised that a condition could be added to re-install the barrier in a new location.

A Member asked that as the application site appeared to be in a hollow, whether there were any water issues on the site? The Area Planning Officer explained that in common with another site in the vicinity, there would likely be a need for some drainage measures, that the application description included surface water attenuation features, including swales and that the precise nature and location of these would be determined under reserved matters.

The Area Planning Officer confirmed that the existing trees on the site would be retained.

In response to a question from a local resident, the Area Planning Officer confirmed that he would look into what should be happening to the construction access road to the east of the site, and he would advise at the Planning Committee on 9 January 2020.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel