

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

SOUTH SIDE WORKING PARTY

MONDAY 9 JANUARY 2022 AT 1030 HOURS

Present: Councillors S Owen
V Harvey
C Palmer (Chair)
T Morris
R Goodchild
P Carberry

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio, Town Clerk
S Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk
L Salmon, Head of Cultural & Economic Services
M Jahn, Committee Officer
P Brown (Peppercorn Group)

Remotely: Stuart Hancox, Consultant, Steven George and Partners.
Claire Anderton, Steven George and Partners
Peter Brown, Steven George and Partners

Members of the Public: 2

42/SSWP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Dodwell.

43/SSWP DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Palmer declared a personal interest as a member of the Leighton Buzzard Society and the Leighton Buzzard Archaeological and Historical Society and Councillor Harvey also declared a personal interest as a member of the South Beds Friends of the Earth.

44/SSWP QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

45/SSWP MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The Committee received the minutes of the South Side Working Party meeting held on 24 October 2022.

Minute reference 39/SSWP: Councillor Harvey suggested that the minutes be amended to reflect that it had not been universally agreed that the first masterplan option had been an “excellent start” (final paragraph) and that “serious concerns” had been raised that not all information had reached the consultant prior to the meeting. On discussion and voting, working party members agreed no changes were required to the minutes (1 in favour of amendments, 5 against).

RESOLVED that the minutes of the South Side Working Party meeting held on 24 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

(b) Updates from the previous meeting:

Concerns were raised regarding a lack of information and engagement from Central Bedfordshire Council. The Town Clerk had written to the Portfolio holder to encourage involvement however no active response had been received to date.

46/SSWP MASTERPLANNING UPDATE

Consultants from Steven George and Partners gave an update presentation on the Masterplanning exercise for land south of the High Street. This included a similar number of residential dwellings to the first iteration (130) along with a mixed use community building near to a multi storey car park, with various orientation points, several access routes into the High Street and a reference to the former Rothschild Garden (this could for example be a pocket park). The plan also included several indicative commercial units but the consultants suggested these could be used for leisure/community purposes if retail/commercial uses were not viable in this location, due to lesser visibility and footfall than land to the north of the High Street.

A further option was presented which extended the proposals beyond the area of focus. After discussions, the group agreed to continue to focus on land south of the High Street at the present time.

The indicative community building focussed on the uses identified by the Peppercorn Group but discussion took place on potential additional community-based uses for the site. The public consultation undertaken recently by Central Bedfordshire Council on the needs of community groups and organisations would be useful and it was hoped that this information would be shared by the principal authority.

Members agreed it was essential that Central Bedfordshire Council as the biggest landowner on this site be involved in discussions and it was also suggested that other landowners be approached.

The question of financial viability was raised. A logical next step in the project would be to progress further with analysis of potential costs and financial viability. In order to ascertain costs for this next stage, the group would circulate a list of desirable potential uses of the site along with indicative sizes, for the consultants to consider further. The consultants would also fine-tune the presented designs before provided a copy of the slides for circulation to the group.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To note the presentation from Stephen George regarding potential uses of land south of the High Street and to await a copy of the slides to be circulated.**
- (ii) To update a list of potential uses and floor sizes to help inform costs from consultants for the next stage in the process (assessing financial viability).**
- (iii) To write to Central Bedfordshire Council providing a copy of the presentation, requesting sharing of their recent evidence gathering surveys and requesting a meeting date as soon as possible to discuss land south of the High Street further.**

47/SSWP CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

No Central Bedfordshire updates had been received or relayed to the Town Council.

48/SSWP ANY OTHER UPDATES

The Group were informed of a current public engagement exercise being undertaken on behalf of a hotel group, prior to the potential submission of a planning application on the site behind the post office. Concerns were raised as to whether this would affect the plans for the development of land south of the High Street.

The meeting closed at 1215 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2023.

Chair

TBA