



Crockenhill Parish Council

Crockenhill Parish Council's Comments on Swanley Town Council's Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Residents of Crockenhill are reliant on the medical services, retail and leisure facilities available outside the village, mainly Swanley, to meet their needs so Crockenhill Parish Council (CPC) is pleased to have been consulted on Swanley Town Council's proposed Neighbourhood Plan. We also recognise that there is an increasing number of Swanley children enrolled at Crockenhill pre-school and Primary school, and many of our sporting clubs, open spaces and children's activities are enjoyed by our neighbours in Swanley. CPC would therefore welcome the opportunity to work more closely with Swanley Town Council in the future on areas of mutual concern/interest, particularly around areas of infrastructure, health and planning.

The Parish Council is broadly supportive of the Plan, particularly in identifying some of the serious issues faced with regard to healthcare provision in the area. CPC is increasingly concerned about GP and hospital services which are already over-stretched. As we stated in our response to Sevenoaks District Councils' Local Plan 2040 consultation, there must be specific criteria in place for any larger-scale developments and associated infrastructure access – including Doctors surgeries, schools and pre-schools/nurseries.

The proposed Neighbourhood plan promotes the ideal of protecting green spaces and green belt land so as not to destroy the main character of the town and neighbouring villages which is encouraging.

There were a few items within the Neighbourhood Plan that CPC wishes to comment on specifically:

1) P24 - There is mention of land owned by the Town Council that might be considered as a potential new cemetery site (although we understand this may now have changed and another potential use for the site may have been identified.) We understand the site being referred to is the area by the allotments at Petham Court. The Parish Council would like to request that it is consulted at the earliest opportunity on any proposals for this site.

2) P. 94 policy SwT7 – Proposal for 'a corridor study of the lanes around Hextable, Swanley and Crockenhill to establish where improvements can be made to facilitate the safe movement of vehicles along these roads for existing and future users.'

CPC is concerned that our country lanes are being considered as possible alternative routes for diverting traffic from Swanley. CPC must be consulted on any such study, and any proposals for reducing traffic flowing through Swanley, as again these are issues which



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concern and affect all our residents. When there are traffic jams through Swanley and on the M25 (weekly occurrences) there is a tendency to use the B258 and its feeder lanes (Crockenhill Lane, Wested Lane, Eynsford Road to the east) as rat-runs. CPC is already working with KCC Highways to identify other traffic calming measures at all the entry points to the village.

CPC is aware of the Swanley Transport Study which was carried out some years ago and has strong objections to the suggestions made, namely to widen/ put passing places along Wested Lane/Eynsford Road. If carried out this would draw even more 'rat-run' traffic through the village of Crockenhill which would worsen the traffic issues outlined above, due to the nature of country lanes. If any new proposal/study were to be based on these suggestions, the Parish Council would strongly object as the proposals were not workable and the Study deeply flawed. We are happy to share our detailed explanation for this, which we submitted to Sevenoaks District Council during their initial Local Plan consultation but the key point being that even if the lanes were widened there would be **no way to make improvements where the route enters and proceeds through Crockenhill**. More traffic being enabled to negotiate the approach lanes would have the knock-on effect of causing chaos and preventing free flow of traffic in the village.

3) P38 Housing density – We share Swanley Town Council's, and indeed residents', concerns regarding high rise buildings. Although some taller buildings may be suitable for urban areas, this should be assessed on a site-by-site basis, taking in to account the local landscape and suitability of the area. The recent proposals for high rise buildings in Swanley did not meet any of the goals set out in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan – again highlighting the importance of Swanley, like other towns and parishes, having its own criteria and a greater say in its own future.



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