

Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan – Monitoring and Implementation Group

(Open to members of the public)

Monday 18th March 2024 6pm

Sevenoaks Town Council Chamber, Bradbourne Vale Road, TN13 3QG

Agenda

Chair: Cllr Varley

Vice Chair: Cllr Ancrum

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes (Pages 3-11)**

To receive and agree the Minutes of the previous STNP Monitoring and Implementation Group meeting, held on 22nd January 2024.
- 3. Kent County Council Results of its Draft Emerging Local Transport Plan Consultation**

To receive notice that Kent County Council has published the results of its 2023 Public Consultation on its draft Emerging Local Transport Plan, available to download via [this link](#).
- 4. Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns Masterplans ([Available online here](#))**

To receive and note briefing documents received from STC's consultant for the STNP (Urban Initiatives Studio) for its proposed Masterplans for Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns.
- 5. 20mph Public Consultation Results and Town Council Report ([Available online here](#))**

To receive copy of Sevenoaks Town Council's report on the results of its 2023 Public Consultation on 20mph speed limit proposals for Sevenoaks Town. This includes copy of the independent analysis of the responses completed by Lake Market Research.
- 6. Theme Three – Work Stream (Pages 13-19)**
 - a) To receive and note a list of actions as identified within the STNP under Theme Three: Movement and Public Realm.
 - b) To identify priority actions.
- 7. Monitoring (Pages 21-36)**
 - a) To receive and note an update report, of how the STNP policies have been against planning applications within Sevenoaks Town since the last preliminary report.
 - b) To receive and note a list of trends/observations from the above report, as well as changes since the last report.
 - c) To discuss any other observations or trends noticed by members for bringing to attention of the Working Group, Sevenoaks Town Planning Committee, or Sevenoaks District Council.
- 8. Dates of future meetings**

To note that the next meeting date of the Monitoring and Implementation Group is 7th May 2024, when the Group will consider the STNP's first draft Annual Report.

[Page deliberately left blank]

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring and Implementation Group meeting held at the Council Chambers on 22nd January 2024, 6:00pm.

In attendance:

Sevenoaks Town Council – Vice Chair of Planning Committee	Cllr Nick Varley – (Chair)
Sevenoaks Town Council – Leader of the Town Council	Cllr Tony Clayton
Sevenoaks Town Council	Cllr Lionel O’Hara
Sevenoaks Town Council – Town Clerk	Linda Larter MBE
Sevenoaks Town Council – Planning Committee Clerk	Georgie Elliston
Glenn Ball Chartered Architect	Glenn Ball
Sevenoaks Society	Simon Raikes
Warners Solicitors	Liz Dolding

1 Declarations of Interest

None.

Apologies for absence

Cllr Libby Ancrum (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Cllr David Skinner** (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Cllr Nigel Wightman** (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Cllr Sally Layne** (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Cllr Claire Shea** (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Cllr Dr Marilyn Canet** (Sevenoaks Town Council), **Paul Baker** (Wealden Properties), **Cllr Elizabeth Purves** (Sevenoaks District Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the previous STNP Monitoring and Implementation Group meeting held on 4th December 2023 were received and agreed.

Theme Two – Work Stream

a) Actions listed under the Theme Two Work Stream were discussed one by one, with comments or updates added to each item. (Updated document attached)

b) The following points of note were discussed:

- Action 2.1 – It was noted that STC had listed two significant parcels of ancient woodland located in Kippington as Assets of Community Value, and had since submitted an Intention to Bid on one of them following its registration on the market.
- It was observed that the Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment identified various locations where trees and hedgerows contributed significantly to the local character, and agreed that these instances would be extracted and collated in order to provide a cohesive register. This would be provided to the Planning Committee members to use in their planning application recommendations in order to encourage application of Policy L4 in the assessment, as well as creation of planning applications.*
- Action 2.2 – It was noted that update on this action was awaited from Tarmac via the imminently anticipated submission of Reserved Matters planning applications.
- Action 2.3 – It was agreed that STC would reach out to Kent Wildlife Trust to pursue discussions on improving access to the Wildlife Reserve via Sevenoaks Station in order to encourage use of public transport as opposed to cars.*

- Action 2.4 – Update was awaited on a potential HLF funding bid for the restoration of Bradbourne Lakes which was believed to be in progress.
- Action 2.5 – It was noted that the new allotment land proposed in the STNP had not been re-proposed by the District Council for allocation in its Local Plan. STC would prioritise progressing an application to register the land as an Asset of Community Value.*
- Action 2.6 – It was agreed that more information and research was required to inform this action.
- Action 2.7 – It was agreed that Policy L1 should be separated into two policies when the STNP is reviewed in 5 years; one Policy to require 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, and a separate Policy to require both Full *and* Householder applications to support local wildlife and biodiversity, where possible and relevant. For instance, by providing hedgehog holes in proposals for new fences.*
- Action 2.8 – It was agreed that Policy L7 should be amended to include support of improvement and restoration proposals for Millpond.*
- Action 0.1 – The Planning Committee Clerk clarified that the Action for reviewing and updating existing evidence base documents is titled 0.1 due to its applicability to multiple STNP Themes. All actions under this item would be collated into one Action for a definitive list of evidence base documents requiring update.

*All decisions must be approved by Sevenoaks Town Council’s Planning Committee before they may be actioned, as per the Terms of Reference. All recommendations will be presented to the Committee for approval on 5th February 2024.

c) RECOMMENDATIONS TO PLANNING COMMITTEE:

- i) To note Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment locations where trees and hedgerows contribute significantly in the Planning Committee’s responses to planning applications.
- ii) Liaise with Kent Wildlife Trust regarding STNP objectives.
- iii) Community Asset nomination for the land proposed for future allotments to be prioritised.
- iv) Biodiversity policy L1 to be strengthened as indicated.
- v) Policy L7 to include reference to Millpond.

5. Monitoring

a) The Planning Committee’s update monitoring report, which recorded how the STNP was being applied to planning applications since the last preliminary report, was received and noted.

b) The Planning Committee Clerk reported that, although the conditions enforced via Decision Notices published by the District Council are not legally obligated to cite planning policies for their justification, the District Council’s Planning Officers had agreed to include the STNP policies alongside the Local Plan’s. This new practice could be observed in the update report, and was considered a constructive step both in encouraging the STNP’s successful application, as well as its positive influence on planning applications.

c) It was queried whether the STNP had been observed as influencing decisions on planning applications on its own merits, or whether it mainly supported the influence of other existing policies. The Planning Committee Clerk reported an increase in the former, in particular via Policies L1 and L4, with conditions having been observed requiring the

retaining of natural features, and grants of approval being conditioned on provision of Biodiversity Management Plans. The Town Clerk agreed that the STNP was having an increasingly positive and significant influence on planning applications received within the Town.

6. Dates of future meetings

a) It was agreed that the next meeting of the Monitoring and Implementation Group would be held at 6pm on 18th March 2024, prior to the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for 7pm. This meeting would focus on Theme Three of the STNP – Movement and Public Realm.

b) It was also noted that a 2024 meeting schedule would be produced, with STNP Group meetings to take place every 8 weeks thereafter.

Meeting concluded at 6:45pm.

Theme Two: Landscape and Blue and Green Infrastructure Work Stream

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
2.1	The Town Council will identify areas where trees and hedgerows make a significant contribution to local character and biodiversity.	Ongoing project, with STC having listed two parcels of ancient woodland as Assets of Community Value and registered an Intention to Bid on one of them in December 2023.	STNP – Aim L3	STC STC Action: STC to use the Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment to extract and collate all instances where trees or hedgerows are acknowledged for their contribution to the character. This to be provided to the Planning Committee members to encourage application of Policy L4 in the assessment, as well as initial creation of, planning applications.
2.2	The Neighbourhood Plan supports the development of new public open space and leisure opportunities in the town. This includes new public open space, community use and leisure opportunities at Sevenoaks Quarry (the Tarmac Site) in Greatness when sand extraction has been completed. The timetable for the delivery of this open space must be agreed by the local planning authority (as the decision-making authority) in conjunction with STC, prior to residential development commencing on this site, and subsequently conditioned in any Grant of Planning Permission	Further update is awaited via submission of Full planning applications for the Sevenoaks Quarry site, providing detail on the previously Reserved Matters.	STNP – Policy L5 – Open space delivery timetables	STC Collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks District Council
2.3	The Town Council will work with and support Kent Wildlife Trust to enhance access to the Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve and improve 'on-site' facilities		STNP – Aim L6	STC Collaboration with: Kent Wildlife Trust

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
				<p>STC Action: To pursue discussions with Kent Wildlife Trust following change of administration, in particular about providing access via Otford Road to encourage greener modes of transport and access via Sevenoaks Station, as well as STNP related matters.</p>
2.4	The Town Council will support improvement and restoration proposals for Bradbourne Lakes developed in consultation with the local community	This is registered as an Asset of Community Value. Update is awaited on a HLF funding bid which is understood by STC to be in the process of production.	STNP – Aim L7	Collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community
2.5	The Town Council will develop new allotment provision adjacent to their site on Bradbourne Vale Road		STNP – Supporting text of Policy L8	STC STC action: STC to pursue registration of the land as an Asset of Community Value.
2.6	Preparation of policy guidance on planning applications for private water supply via boreholes	<p>For 5 year REVIEW stage:</p> <p>A recent planning application for a borehole to supply private water to a golf course highlighted the potential future need for planning considerations on this as the effects of climate change and droughts worsen.</p>	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC STC Action: To keep this item under review and conduct further research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - STC to investigate viability of a policy on this via the STNP. - STC to contact the Environment Agency to enquire as to the implication of private supply

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
				boreholes, as well as the current state of the water table.
2.7	<p>Separation of Policy L1 (Biodiversity Net Gain, see below full policy) from advice on ecological networks via new Policy.</p> <p>Policy L1: Proposals for new development should whenever possible deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity retaining natural features that support wildlife, establishing ecological networks and including new habitats that respond to the local context and the character of the site. [...]</p>	<p>For 5 year REVIEW stage:</p> <p>Policy L1 so far has been especially unsuccessful. It has been recommended a number of times by the Planning Committee on planning applications that propose new fencing, and rejected in the Case Officer’s report. SDC Development Manager, Aaron Hill has noted that the wording of Policy L1 does not require features such as ecological networks, rather, provides examples of how 10% BNG can be achieved with hedgehog holes as one of these examples. Separating it into a new policy and strengthening it by requiring any new fencing to be permeable to wildlife could help to achieve the intention with which the policy was set in the first place. BNG is also not applicable to Householder applications, as they are exempt under Biodiversity Net gain</p>	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	<p>STC</p> <p>Separation of Policy L1 into two separate policies approved by STNP M&I Group 22-01-2024. Pending ratification by Planning Committee.</p>

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		legislation and national guidance, so separating the two could allow for policy requirement of biodiversity-friendly features, without requiring net gain.		
2.8	Amend Aim L7 (below) to include additional sites, or add an additional Policy to include support for improvement or restoration proposals to Millpond, as well as Bradbourne Lakes. Current Aim: Aim L7: The Town Council will support improvement and restoration proposals for Bradbourne Lakes developed in consultation with the local community.	<p>For 5 year REVIEW stage:</p> The Independent Examiner in his procedural matters letter, drew attention to a local resident’s concerns with whether Millpond was adequately protected. At the time of its response, STC was satisfied that Millpond, as a public open space, was adequately protected, however since then the status and health of the pond has deteriorated. STC was unable to amend its aims or policies to include Millpond explicitly, as the Independent Examiner did not recommend it, however did amend Objective 4, which previously only related to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure, to protecting	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC Addition of Millpond approved by STNP M&I Group 22-01-2024. Pending ratification by Planning Committee.

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		<p>green and blue infrastructure. This was considered minor enough to be permissible.</p> <p>Protection of Millpond and similar sites could be added either via a new aim/policy, or by amending Aim L7 which currently only supports improvement and restoration proposals at Bradbourne Lakes, to include other such sites.</p>		
0.1	<p>Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan’s policies.</p> <p>Existing evidence base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Transport Strategy • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan 	<p>Evidence base documents relevant to Theme Two are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan <p>Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed.</p> <p>It was noted that work undertaken on the Masterplan had been incorporated into the STNP.</p>	<p>Examination Process – Independent Examiner</p> <p>The function of the Appendices are to “inform the policies within the Plan”, and on this basis the Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the appendices to be retained.</p> <p>He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised</p>	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
			therefore that it be reviewed.	

[Page deliberately left blank]

Theme Three: Movement and Public Realm Work Stream

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.1	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes walking and cycling and supports the removal of barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement across the town.</p> <p>In particular the Town Council will support initiatives that reduce these barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement and will promote new routes that provide safer streets and convenient access to schools and other community assets.</p>	<p><i>Officer note:</i> On 11th March 2024, Tarmac’s representatives indicated that they were not planning on refurbishing the pedestrian bridge which provides access from the Tarmac site to Sainsburys Supermarket. Recommendation to keep this matter under review.</p>	<p>STNP Policy M1</p> <p>Supporting text of Policy M1</p>	
3.2	<p>The Town Council will work with KCC’s Public Rights of Way and Access Service to improve and enhance the network of public rights of way within Sevenoaks.</p>	<p><i>Officer note:</i> There are at least two currently known projects, being the imminent purchase of Longspring Woods by the Town Council, and the other being the less immediate development at Sevenoaks Quarry – both of which provide opportunity to enhance PROWs within Sevenoaks. Longspring Woods could be linked to Sevenoaks Common via PROW routes SU38 and SU43, as well as having SU36 enhanced and extended into the woods. Sevenoaks Quarry has a PROW which Tarmac have indicated</p>	<p>STNP Supporting text of Policy M1</p>	<p>STC Collaboration with: Kent County Council</p>

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		<i>they will be providing enhancements to during development.</i>		
3.3	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and provision of additional cycle facilities to support new development.</p> <p>The Town Council will promote the development and implementation of the [Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy and the LCWIP] and any updating that may be required to reflect other changes in the town.</p>		<p>STNP Policy M2</p> <p>Supporting text of Policy M2</p>	
3.4	<p>The Town Council will work with the District Council to encourage increased provision for cyclists and with Kent Council Council PRow and Access Service and Kent Highways and Transportation to upgrade the status of public footpaths or convert them to cycleways, where appropriate, and progress the delivery of cycle routes in the town.</p>		<p>STNP Supporting text of Policy M2</p>	<p>STC Collaboration with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks District Council • Kent County Council
3.5	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes the delivery of a new walking and cycling route that connects Bat and Ball / Otford with Dunton Green</p>	<p><i>Officer note: Sevenoaks Town Council has commissioned a Feasibility Study for this route, which has been delayed due to difficulty in contacting landowners.</i></p>	<p>STNP Policy M3</p>	
3.6	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the introduction of a 20mph speed limit close to schools and in some residential areas</p>	<p><i>Officer note: Sevenoaks Town Council held a public consultation on the Joint Transportation Board's revised proposals for 20mph</i></p>	<p>STNP Aim M4</p>	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		<p><i>limits in Sevenoaks Town, which closed December 2023. The results are attached alongside Town Council and independent consultant reports, and the JTB will consider the scheme and consultation results on 20th March 2024.</i></p>		
3.7	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions across the town</p>	<p><i>Officer note: The Town Council’s Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) requests details from KCC as to why the pedestrian guard rails were installed on the bend of Hitchen Hatch Lane onto London Road – and whether the design could be rethought to dissuade commuters from bypassing the sheltered pavement to walk on the road. Also on the HIP is request to find out why one of the pedestrian crossing indicators were removed at Bat & Ball junction crossing, as well as request to work with KCC and Tarmac on designs for the Bat & Ball junction to ensure that the proposed roundabout prioritises safe pedestrian crossing.</i></p>	<p>STNP Policy M5</p>	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.8	<p>The Town Council will progress proposals to refurbish Bat and Ball station and improve access to the station</p> <p>The Town Council will continue to improve access to the station and surrounding area and investigate the potential to provide additional car parking should this be required.</p>		<p>Policy M6</p> <p>Supporting text of Policy M6</p>	STC
3.9	The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals to improve transport interchange facilities at Sevenoaks station		Policy M7	
3.10	The Neighbourhood Plan supports enhancements to bus services and facilities to serve the town	<i>Officer note re 3.10 and 3.11: STC's previous bid for SDC CIL funding for an electric No. 8 bus was rejected, however SDC have said STC can re-apply in future. Recommendation made via 3.16 to update Policy M8 or M9 at STNP 5 year review stage, to include support of electric buses.</i>	Policy M8	
3.11	The Neighbourhood Plan supports measures that will encourage a shift towards the use of greener modes of transport by businesses and residents		Policy M9	
3.12	The Town Council will work with the District Council, and Kent County Council to ensure that, wherever possible, HGV movements are directed away from the town centre.	<i>Officer note: This is one of the Priorities in the Town Council's HIP, and Kent County Council have recently completed a traffic survey in the Town Centre to investigate the issue and whether HGVs can be</i>	Aim M10	<p>STC</p> <p>Collaboration with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks District Council • Kent County Council

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		<i>redirected via positive signage. This is awaiting engineer advice.</i>		
3.13	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for public realm improvements within the town centre particularly linking key town centre destinations. Such improvements should be part of a town centre wide strategy to help improve the pedestrian experience in the town centre. It should be informed by the character and heritage assets within an area.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the Neighbourhood Plan will support innovative proposals, such as shared surfaces, to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce the impact of traffic in both the town and neighbourhood centres.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the removal of street clutter, including unnecessary street furniture and the adoption of a coordinated palate of materials and street furniture for the town and neighbourhood centres.</p> <p>A town centre public realm strategy should be prepared to guide public realm improvements across the town. This should include an analysis of existing movement patterns, review of the paving quality and audit of street furniture/signage and clutter across the town centre. The strategy should set out key priorities for the public realm across the town centre addressing the issues above and any others identified.</p>	<p><i>Officer note: See attached Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns Masterplan specification documents.</i></p>	<p>Policy M11</p> <p>Supporting text of Aim M12 (below)</p>	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.14	The Town Council will identify locations across the town where repairs and improvements to paths and pavements are required to improve the pedestrian environment.		Aim M12	
3.15	Installation of real time travel information throughout the town, improvements to bus shelters.	These were proposed as examples of what type of enhancements would be supported by Policy M8 at the Examination stage.	Examination Process	STC
3.16	Amend Policy M8 and/or M9 to include support of electric buses Current Policies: Policy M8: The Neighbourhood Plan supports enhancements to bus services and facilities to serve the town Policy M9: The Neighbourhood Plan supports measures that will encourage a shift towards the greener modes of transport by businesses and residents.	For REVIEW Stage In line with STC's Green Community Investment Plan and STC's intention to invest in an electric No 8 bus. STC's previous bid for SDC CIL funding for this project was rejected, however SDC have said STC can re-apply in future.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC
0.1*	Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies. Existing evidence base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Transport Strategy • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan 	Evidence base documents relevant to Theme Three are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed.	Examination Process – Independent Examiner The function of the Appendices are to “inform the policies within the Plan”, and on this basis the Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		It was noted that work undertaken on the Masterplan had been incorporated into the STNP.	appendices to be retained. He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised therefore that it be reviewed.	

*Action 0.1 applies to all Work Streams, with different evidence base documents feeding into each Theme. Comments under each Work Stream for Action 0.1 will be collated once available, in order to have a final list of which evidence base documents should be prioritised for updating.

[Page deliberately left blank]

Update to Monitoring Report:

Planning applications decided by Sevenoaks District Council and with reference to the STNP, since the last report to STNP M&I Group on 22nd January 2024

Purpose: To record the successful application of Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan policies against Planning Applications within Sevenoaks Town, in order to decide or influence decisions and conditions.

Decisions made since 15th January 2024, with full report of compiled decisions to be published on STNP Monitoring and Implementation Group webpage:

Date	Reference Number & Case Officer	Address	Proposal description	Policies & Issues measured against – as per headings/sub-headings (non-bold, if a particular issue is raised)	Document
<u>28/12/23</u> 18/01/24	23/03303/HOUSE Stephanie Payne	17 Madison Way	Demolish garage. Erection of a ground floor rear extension., two storey side extension and porch	C4 – Character, Heritage and Identity: Impact on the character of the area <hr/> C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
12/01/24	23/03482/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	19 Brattle Wood	Garage conversion. Demolition of existing single storey rear extension to replace with a double storey rear extension with rooflights. Patio with associated works. New bay, canopy and associated internal alterations. Alterations to fenestration.	C4 – Impact on the character of the area	Officer Report
<u>12/01/24</u> 26/01/24	23/03499/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	Highcroft, 3 Farnaby Drive	Re-clad existing garage. Two storey front and rear gable. Extension to existing vehicular access with associated works. New patio with associated works. Internal	C4 – High Quality Design: Impact on the character of the area L4 – Tree Protection	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)

			alterations. Alterations to fenestration. Alterations to roof. Rooflights and panels.	C4: Condition on materials L4: Condition requiring a landscape management plan	
<u>15/01/24</u> <u>18/01/24</u>	23/03280/HOUSE Christopher Park	2 The Middlings	Front extension with rooflights. Demolition of existing garage to be replaced with new basement room with new garage above. New garden access ramp to rear garden	C4 – Character Areas: Impact on the character of the area <hr/> C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
15/01/24	23/02743/MMA Sean Mitchell	Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve, Bradbourne Vale Road	Amendment to 21/01480/FUL	C4 – Character: Impact upon character and appearance of the area and Green Belt L4 – Trees L6 – Improvements to Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve	Officer Report
<u>16/01/24</u> <u>17/01/24</u>	23/03050/FUL Anna Horn	Rear of 24 St James Road	Demolition of an existing garage and the erection of an apartment block with 4 units, supported by the excavation of some land. Refuse store, cycle parking and landscaping.	C4 – Design and residential character areas: Impact on the character of the area L1 – Biodiversity net gain L4 – Trees and hedgerows: Impact on the character of the area <hr/> C4 and L4: Condition requiring Arboricultural method statement	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)

				<p>C4: Condition requiring hard and soft landscaping plans L1: Condition requiring Biodiversity Metric 4.0 compliance L1: Condition requiring Biodiversity Management and monitoring plan, and 10% net gain</p>	
<p><u>16/01/24</u> 17/01/24</p>	<p>23/03172/FUL Samantha Yates</p>	<p>Land Rear of Alexander House, 39 London Road</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the site including erection of a part 3.5, part 3 and part 2 storey building to accommodate apartments (Class C3), associated parking, waste and recycling facilities and landscaping.</p>	<p>C1 – Heritage – impact on heritage assets C4 – Character – design and impact on the character of the area L1 – Biodiversity L4 – Trees</p> <hr/> <p>C1: Condition requiring material samples C1 and C4: Conditions on materials C1: Condition requiring archaeological field evaluation works timetable and programme of post excavation assessment C4 and L4: Condition requiring hard and soft landscaping plans</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)</p>

				<p>L4: Condition securing tree protection methods</p> <p>L1: Condition requiring ecological enhancement details</p>	
17/01/24	23/03412/CONVAR Samantha Yates	Ephesus, 57-59 High Street	Variation of condition 5 (opening times) of SE/97/2051	C4 – Impact on the character of the area (and heritage assets)	Officer Report
19/01/24	23/03454/LBCALT Abbey Aslett	The Hardware Centre, 36-42 London Road	Conversion of the rear part of commercial unit into a flat	C1 – Impact on Listed Building and their Setting	Officer Report
19/01/24	23/03453/FUL Abbey Aslett	The Hardware Centre, 36-42 London Road	Conversion of the rear part of commercial unit into a flat. Alteration to fenestration.	C1 – Impact on heritage assets and character of the area	Officer Report
19/01/24 24/01/24	23/03114/FUL Anna Horn	7 Mount Harry Road	Demolition of existing dwelling, outbuildings and garages and the erection of three detached residential dwellings (C3 Use) with associated parking, landscaping and works.	<p>C4 – Design and residential character areas: Impact on the character of the area</p> <p>L1 – Biodiversity net gain</p> <p>L4 – Trees and hedgerows: Impact on the character of the area</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials</p> <p>L1: Condition securing 10% Biodiversity Net Gain</p> <p>C4: Condition on hard and soft landscaping treatment details</p>	Officer Report <hr/> Decision Notice (Approval)

				L4: Condition securing tree protections	
<u>23/01/24</u> 23/01/24	23/03339/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	Oakley, 19 Grassy Lane	Proposed single storey rear garden room extension, replacement entrance porch and veranda, painting of the exterior of the dwelling house and proposed outbuilding.	C4 – High Quality Design: Impact on the character of the area L4 – Tree Protection C4: Condition on materials L4: Condition securing tree protections	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>24/01/24</u> 24/01/24	23/03077/FUL Christopher Park	Weald Heights, Bourchier Close	Extension of the existing garden patio with associated landscaping, boundary treatment and associated works.	C4 – Character Areas: Impact on the character and appearance of the area L2 – Drainage L4 – Trees and hedgerows L4: Condition securing tree protections L2 and L4: Condition on hard and soft landscaping details	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>25/01/24</u> 26/01/24	23/03500/CONVAR Abbey Aslett	Flats 1 & 2, 43 Bethel Road	Removal of condition 6 (fenestration) of 23/02672/FUL	C1 – Heritage C1: Refusal ground of being harmful and fails to preserve the character and appearance of the asset	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Refusal)
<u>29/01/24</u> 30/01/24	23/03384/HOUSE Samuel Odell	4 Quaker Close	Conversion of existing detached garage to habitable room and store, to include new rendered elevations, new openings to rear	C1 – Heritage and Identity: Impact on Listed Buildings and their Setting	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)

			elevation, roof alterations with solar panels and open Pergola.	<p>C4 – Character: Impact on the character of the area</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials</p>	
29/01/24	23/02649/FUL Stephanie Payne	9 Crownfields	Sub-division of land. Erection of detached dwelling with associated parking	<p>C4 – Character, Heritage and Identity</p> <p>L1 – Biodiversity* - Officer could not enforce 10% net gain due to the Policy's reliance on the metric which is not yet applicable to minor proposals.</p> <p>L4 – Trees</p> <p>Policy not considered, but relevant: L2 – Flooding. This issue was considered to be significant in the Officer Report, and the lack of information provided on it was a ground for the application's refusal, however Policy L2 was not applied.</p>	Officer Report
30/01/24	23/03542/HOUSE Abbey Aslett	63 Bosville Drive	Create additional storey on existing bungalow with rooflights. Ground floor Juliette balcony. Removal of chimney stack. Alterations to fenestration.	<p>C4 – Impact on the character of the area</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials</p>	<p>Officer Report</p> <hr/> <p>Decision Notice (Approval)</p>

<u>31/01/24</u> 01/02/24	23/03252/HOUSE Samantha Yates	51 The Rise	New Front Porch with amendments to canopy. Alterations to fenestration.	C4 – Character C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>31/01/24</u> 02/01/24	23/02990/HOUSE Stephanie Payne	10 Park Lane	Single storey side and rear extensions with a roof terrace with steps. Privacy screening. Alteration to fenestration. New oriel bay window. Variation of the sunken terrace shape. Reposition of steps leading to ground floor terrace	C1 – Character, Identity and Heritage: Impact on Heritage Assets C1: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>01/02/24</u> 05/02/24	23/03125/HOUSE Samuel Odell	5 Brattle Wood	First floor part front extension. Hall extension. New oak porch. Alterations to fenestration. Internal alterations. Landscaping.	C4 – Impact on the character of the area C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>01/02/24</u> 08/02/24	23/03353/HOUSE Samuel Odell	55 St Johns Hill	Ground floor rear extension with rooflight to replace existing conservatory	C1 – Heritage: Impact on the Locally Listed Building C4 – Character: Impact on the character of the area C1: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>02/02/24</u> 05/02/24	23/01379/FUL Sean Mitchell	93 Hitchen Hatch Lane	Extension and renovation (including fenestration updates) of existing building to allow for 3 additional flats. Demolition of existing garage to facilitate the erection of new build block containing 4 flats and under croft parking area. Landscape alterations.	C1 – Heritage: Impact upon the character and appearance of the area and locally listed building C4 – Character L1 – Biodiversity L4 – Trees C1 and C4: Condition requiring further details on external finishes	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)

				<p>L4: Condition securing tree protections</p> <p>L4: Condition on landscaping details</p> <p>L4: Condition requiring boundary treatment details</p> <p>L1: Conditions requiring Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, and 10% Biodiversity Net Gain</p> <p>C4: Condition prohibiting unapproved external lightings</p>	
02/02/24	23/03515/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	Royston, 27 St Johns Road	Demolition of existing lean-to. Erection of single storey rear extension with associated works. Landscaping with associated works.	<p>C4 – High Quality Design: Impact on the character of the area</p>	Officer Report
05/02/24	23/03296/FUL	37 High Street	Change of use to a taxi office	<p>C1 – Heritage: Impact on heritage assets</p> <p>C4 – Character of Area: Impact on the character of the area</p> <p>L1 - Biodiversity</p>	Officer Report
<u>06/02/24</u> <u>09/02/24</u>	23/03490/FUL Stephanie Payne	Land South of 47 St Johns Hill	Proposed erection of a two bedroom, detached house.	<p>C1 – Character, Heritage and Identity</p> <p>C4 – Character, Heritage and Identity: Impact on the character and appearance of the area</p> <hr/> <p>C1 and C4: Conditions requiring details on external materials</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u></p> <p>Decision Notice (Approval)</p>

				<p>L1: Condition requiring details on ecological enhancements</p> <p>C4: Condition prohibiting unapproved external lightings</p>	
<p><u>07/02/24</u> <u>09/02/24</u></p>	<p>23/03477/FUL Stephanie Payne</p>	<p>Sevenoaks School, High Street</p>	<p>Wooden cabin adjacent to existing running track for School and visitor use</p>	<p>C1 – Impact on the character of the area and heritage assets</p> <hr/> <p>C1: Condition on materials</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u> <u>Decision Notice</u> (Approval)</p>
<p><u>09/02/24</u> <u>14/02/24</u></p>	<p>23/03519/HOUSE Christopher Park</p>	<p>5 Redlands Road</p>	<p>Demolition of existing conservatory and part garage, and removal of chimney; erection of part single, part two storey side and rear extensions; roof alterations, rooflights, solar panels, air source heat pump and alterations to fenestration, landscaping and boundary fence.</p>	<p>C4 – Character Areas: Impact on the character of the area</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials of external finishes</p> <p>C4: Condition requiring additional details of the air source heat pump</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u> <u>Decision Notice</u> (Approval)</p>
<p><u>09/02/24</u> <u>15/02/24</u></p>	<p>23/03571/HOUSE Summer Aucoin</p>	<p>5 Farnaby Drive</p>	<p>Erection of a garden studio.</p>	<p>C4 – Character: Impact on the character of the area</p> <p>L4 – Trees: Tree and Hedgerow protection</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials</p> <p>L4: Condition on construction method to ensure preservation of adjacent trees and hedgerows</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u> <u>Decision Notice</u> (Approval)</p>

12/02/24	23/03428/HOUSE Abbey Aslett	9 Crownfields	Garage conversion to create habitable accommodation. Single storey entrance porch with flat rooflights and associated internal alterations. Proposed double garage and associated landscaping.	<p>C4 – Impact on the character of the area L2</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials L2: Condition requiring a surface water strategy using a SuDS C4: Condition requiring hard and soft landscaping details</p>	<p>Officer Report</p> <hr/> <p>Decision Notice (Approval)</p>
<p>21/02/24</p> <hr/> <p>23/02/24</p>	23/03185/FUL Anna Horn	Wetton Cleaning Services Ltd, Estate House, 2 Pembroke Road	Conversion and extension of the existing property to create 8 x new dwellings and new office provision.	<p>C1 – Heritage Assets C4 – Design and residential character areas: Impact on the character of the area L1 – Biodiversity net gain: Ecology L4 – Trees and hedgerows: Impact on the character of the area E1 – Business space: Employment use</p> <hr/> <p>C1 and C4: Condition requiring details of external surfaces C4: Condition requiring details of hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments L1: Conditions securing biodiversity net gain and</p>	<p>Officer Report</p> <hr/> <p>Decision Notice (Approval)</p>

				requiring a biodiversity management and monitoring plan.	
<u>28/02/24</u> 28/02/24	23/03232/HOUSE Stephanie Payne	10 Wildernesse Mount	Installation of Samsung Air Source Heat Pump on Front Elevation, with associated acoustic timber fence panelling	C4 – Character, Heritage and Identity: Impact on the character of the area C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
28/02/24	23/03705/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	Medway, 28 Vine Avenue	Single storey and part two story rear extension, internal alterations and changes to fenestration. Removal of existing chimney, roof alterations and installation of an external flue.	C4 – Design: Impact on the character of the area	Officer Report
<u>04/03/24</u> 04/03/24	23/03528/LBCALT Abbey Aslett	43B London Road	Change of use from Class E to 1 dwelling. Alterations to fenestration. Internal alterations. Removal of air conditioning units	C1 – Impact on Listed Buildings and their Setting C1: Refusal ground of being harmful to the character and significance of the Grade II listed building, and failing to preserve the significance, character and appearance of the asset	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Refusal)
<u>04/03/24</u> 04/03/24	23/03527/FUL Abbey Aslett	43B London Road	Change of use from Class E to 1 dwelling. Alterations to fenestration. Internal alterations. Removal of air conditioning units	C1 – Impact on heritage assets and character of the area C1: Refusal ground of being harmful to the	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Refusal)

				character and significance of the Grade II listed building, and failing to preserve the significance, character and appearance of the asset	
<u>04/03/24</u> 05/03/24	23/03293/HOUSE Samuel Odell	3 Knole Paddock, Seal Hollow Road	Proposed side dormer.	C1: Impact on Listed Buildings and their Setting C4: Impact on the character of the area C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>04/03/24</u> 06/03/24	23/03697/HOUSE Christopher Park	20 Lea Road	Two storey rear extension, insertion of rooflights and porch canopy.	C4 – Character Areas: Impact on the character of the area C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>04/03/24</u> 07/03/24	23/00060/HOUSE Summer Aucoin	The Dene, 9 Kippington Road	Replacement of existing glazed conservatory with new, partly glazed extension and alterations to driveway.	C4 – High Quality Design: Impact on the character of the area C4: Condition on materials	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)
<u>06/03/24</u> 07/03/24	23/03410/FUL Sean Mitchell	Royal Oak Hotel, High Street	Change of use from hotel accommodation to two dwellings, garden curtilage and parking.	C1 – Heritage: Impact on the listed building C2 – Development of vacant or under-utilised sites: Principle of development	<u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)

				<p>C4 – Character: Impact upon character and appearance of the area L1 – Biodiversity: Biodiversity and trees L4 – Trees: Biodiversity and trees</p> <hr/> <p>C1 and C4: Condition on materials C1 and C4: Conditions on hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments C1, C4 and L4: Condition securing tree protections L1: Condition requiring biodiversity enhancement plan C1 and C4: Condition requiring refuse storage and cycle provision details</p>	
<p><u>11/03/24</u> 11/03/24</p>	<p>23/03567/FUL Samantha Yates</p>	<p>22 Burntwood Road</p>	<p>Extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling and subdivision of the plot to create an additional dwelling accessed via a new vehicular crossover from Burntwood Road.</p>	<p>C4 – Design: Impact on the character of the area L1 – Biodiversity: Trees and Landscaping L2 – Sustainable drainage L4 – Trees and hedgerows: Impact on the character of the</p>	<p><u>Officer Report</u> Decision Notice (Approval)</p>

				<p>area, and Trees and Landscaping</p> <hr/> <p>C4: Condition on materials, and condition requiring further details L4: Condition requiring method statement for construction, designed to avoid harm to surrounding trees C4 and L4: Condition requiring soft and hard landscaping details, and condition requiring tree protection details L1: Condition requiring ecological enhancement plan</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

Trends and observations:

- Decision notices for approval continue to cite STNP policies more frequently, with Policy L4 being especially successful since this practice has been adopted by SDC at request of the working group.
- This practice appears to have made Policy L1 stronger, as Biodiversity Management Plans have started being required as part of planning permissions requiring 10% BNG – these conditions also require monitoring reports to be submitted throughout the 30 year period.
- A vulnerability to Policy L1 was identified in the Case Officer’s appraisal of 23/03172/FUL – whereby the development site was wholly tarmac and thus an existing biodiversity contribution of 0%. The national metric calculations would therefore not be able to secure 10% net gain, as 10% of 0 is 0. The Case Officer could not enforce 10% biodiversity net gain, however did condition that details be submitted which include ecological enhancements, via condition 11. This is a significant development for 2-3.5 storey high residential apartment buildings, and biodiversity gain is encouraged not just to mitigate the impact of climate change, but also because providing residents with access to the natural environment can have a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.

- An additional vulnerability to Policy L1 is the wording that Biodiversity net gain should be provided “whenever possible”, as observed by the Case Officer of 23/03077FUL and in their decision not to apply Policy L1 to the grant of approval. *“In terms of L1, this policy stipulates that developments should whenever possible deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain. In this case, given the relatively small area of grass and greenery to be lost, I do not consider that requiring a 10% net gain would be proportionate to the scale of the development. Furthermore, as shown above, the language used within **the policy allows for a degree of flexibility**, and only seeks to secure enhancements where possible”*
- Policy L1’s reliance on the Biodiversity metric for its application could mean it will become more successful after April 2024, when the metric becomes applicable to minor schemes. The Case Officer report for 23/02649/FUL cites the metric having not yet been implemented on minor schemes yet, as the reason they cannot measure the proposals against the policy, or refuse due to lack of net gain. **This stance does not appear to be consistently applied – sometimes L1 is used to secure 10% net gain, others it has been used to secure ecological enhancement, and other times has not been considered reasonable to enforce. The wording of the policy is “where possible and using best endeavours”, not “where considered reasonable”**
- Although all logged Decision Notices for Refusal had thus far been consistent in citing the STNP, this report observes two that did not (23/03412/CONVAR and 23/03296/FUL). This is because the STNP does not provide policy protection on residential amenity of neighbouring properties – which was the sole ground for refusal of both planning permissions.
- Policy L2 is not observed to be applied very frequently, and a notable lack of its application can be seen 23/02649/FUL, which concerns an application site featuring a large depression in which water is known to accumulate heavily during rainfall. The Case Officer report raised concerns for flooding, which could not be addressed via condition, and the application was refused on the grounds of significant risk of surface water flooding. Despite this, Policy L2 was not considered or listed as a relevant condition via the Officer Report, despite the flooding issues being notable enough for comment to be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority outside of its usual consultee requirements.
- Contrastingly, 23/03428/HOUSE, which comprises a second application regarding the same site, **did** consider and apply Policy L2 successfully, and further required via planning condition that a strategy of surface water drainage for the site using a SuDS. Policy L2 was cited as a ground for this condition, to ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into the development and to mitigate impacts of surface water flooding. The Case Officers for both applications were different, in case that impacts which policies are applied.
- **No observations of a planning application appraisal not considering the STNP against the proposals, since last report.**

Recommendation to the STNP M&I Group:

- To bring to SDC Planning team’s attention the potential inconsistency of Policy L2 (drainage) being applied to planning application decisions, using case study of 23/02649/FUL vs 23/03428/HOUSE, and to request clarification as to why this occurred.

- To request clarification on why Policy L1 is applied inconsistently, and whether it will be more strongly applied after April 2024 when smaller developments are required to produce biodiversity net gain.
- To recommend to Planning Committee that a case be made to the Examiner in the 5 year review for wording of Policy L1 to be strengthened to eliminate potential for its application to be interpreted as optional. To include in the Annual Report examples where it has been unsuccessfully applied.