



The Midhurst Society

1 Gilbert Hannam Close
Midhurst GU29 9FY

On 3 September 2018 we sent the following email to Tony Dignum, Chichester DC, copied to Steve Morley and Gordon McAra

Sir,

I am writing on behalf of The Midhurst Society to express our concern that Chichester DC is considering accepting an offer to build a Care Home on the derelict site adjacent to The Grange Centre in Midhurst. I would be grateful if you could read out these comments at the Cabinet Meeting on 4 September.

Recent activity on social media has indicated there is strong resistance to the idea of a care home on this site. There are several care homes in and around Midhurst, and there can be no justification for using this prime location for yet another. On our own Facebook page we have seen an incredible amount of support for the idea of a swimming pool: 2,500 views; 21 shares; 162 likes; 97 comments. There have been no adverse reactions. Looking at rising national levels of obesity a swimming pool would appear to be an excellent idea and one which would complement the existing facilities in The Grange Centre.

It is admirable that CDC is seeking to maximise the financial returns for the ultimate benefit of the taxpayer, but that should not involve providing something that is not wanted or needed. I would suggest that the remit of any local authority is to provide the best services affordable that provide the best overall benefit.

I understood that in the SDNP Local Plan the site had been identified as suitable for retail development. There is no mention of a care home. I appreciate that in the current economic climate there is little appetite from retailers to invest in new developments, but if the Local Plan is to be disregarded it is important that all options are considered.

I would like to ask the following questions:

1. What statistical evidence is there to justify a care home
2. What research has been conducted into examining alternative uses for the site if the Local Plan is to be ignored?
3. In what way is CDC financially involved in this site?
4. In what circumstances would CDC allow Midhurst to arrange redevelopment of this site?

And I would like to suggest the following course of action:

1. All decisions on the future of the site are deferred;
2. The views of the people of Midhurst are sought on alternative uses, including but not restricted to a swimming pool;
3. Midhurst Town Council and/or The Midhurst Society or similar organisation should put forward proposals based on the opinions expressed by the people;
4. Any proposals put forward should include financing options to the extent that CDC are unable or unwilling to provide funding.

Sincerely,

Harvey Tordoff

The Midhurst Society

"Making Midhurst a better place to live, work and enjoy"