

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

15 FEBRUARY 2021

WOODLANDS CEMETERY EXTENSION

Members will recall from the November 2020 meeting, that it was agreed that the basic layout drawing of the cemetery extension would be passed to South Hams District Council as a representation of the Town Council's ambitions for the area.

The initial phases of the works would include boundary works (hedge planting), groundworks and tree pruning.

The Parks Consultant and Parks Ranger subsequently met on site with the South Hams District Council Senior Specialist, Rob Sekula, and Grounds Maintenance Manager, Mark Capper, to discuss the proposed layout in more detail. The District Council officers were supportive of the Town Council's ideas for the extension area, and Mr Sekula took the information to start the process of preparation of the site.

Mr Sekula enquired amongst his planning colleagues as to the status of the site in terms of preparing the cemetery extension, and was informed that, even though the ground was acquired for a cemetery, the proposal would require planning permission. He has since started to liaise closely with other colleagues, including Environmental Health specialists.

Feedback on initial enquiries is as follows:

- Groundwater – groundwater/contamination assessment instructed.
- Drainage – no issues.
- Trees – the ITC tree safety report has included the group of trees behind the mortuary for many years, so we have detail on condition.
- Ecology – a preliminary ecology appraisal (PEA) has been instructed.
- Heritage – no issues – the site is classified as a 'non-designated heritage asset' accordingly.

For the planning process, layouts, methodologies, and path treatments are also required.

The proposed tree, hedge boundary and ground works are all on hold whilst the planning process is underway. Accordingly, Mr Sekula will keep the Town Council informed as the matters progress over the next three months.

In terms of the Christmas lights stored at the Chapel, it can be reported that the Methodist Church took some of the lights, and others were scrapped, as proposed at the November 2020 parks committee meeting. As a result, the chapel is now clear.

It is **recommended** that Members note the planning process in terms of the cemetery extension.

Keith Rennells – Parks and Open Spaces Consultant

Jonathan Parsons – Town Clerk