Old Post Office, 17 The Street, Borden

Borden Parish Council is writing to address several ongoing concerns regarding planning and conservation area issues at the Old Post Office. Despite recent correspondence, there appears to be significant discrepancies between the approved plans and the works being undertaken on-site that require further investigation.

Demolition and Unauthorised Alterations

While the Planning Investigation Team concluded that the demolition of the side porch was in accordance with consented plans, a review of the approved elevation drawings for application 22/501192/FULL indicates that the removal of this porch was not, in fact, included. Furthermore, following the porch's removal on February 12, 2026, a front-facing doorway was blocked and a new window was inserted, alterations that also do not appear to be part of the original consent.

Non-Discharge of Archaeological Conditions

Condition 4 of the planning permission, which requires an archaeological watching brief, has not been discharged. Although the Planning Investigation Team suggested this condition did not apply specifically to the porch removal because no footings were dug, the Parish Council remains concerned that significant demolition work has occurred—including the front of the property in January 2025—without this crucial oversight being in place.

The Parish Council has also been informed that structures at the rear of the property have been demolished.

Impact on Local Heritage Assets and Conservation Area

The site is located within the Borden Conservation Area and contains or is adjacent to significant heritage assets that are being negatively impacted:

- **Post Box (LHL067):** This asset has been left in a vulnerable state since the January 2025 demolition, partially hanging out of a remaining wall section.
- **Stables (LHL068):** The installation of very tall, black side gates in August 2024 has completely removed the public view of this heritage asset and detrimentally impacted the character of the conservation area.
- **Unauthorised Land Use:** Part of the agricultural/horse land at the rear has been converted into a residential garden for 2 The Street, involving an entrance cut through a rear wall, which likely requires a change of use application.

Validity of Planning Permission

There is conflicting information regarding the status of the planning permission. While the Swale Borough Council enforcement team suggests the permission has not expired because works started before the deadline, the owners were reportedly informed by the Council in December 2025 that the permission had expired and a new application would be required for future works.

Clarification is needed, particularly it has been reported that the owners have indicated that they intend to proceed with further works on the left elevation without further permission being sought.

In light of these points, we request that a comprehensive investigation is undertaken into whether the works currently being carried out accord with the approved management plan and heritage protections.

We also seek clarification on how these protections are being monitored to prevent further damage to the historic character of this site.