BORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Notes used by Cllr Small for the Parish Council's representation at the Planning Committee meeting on 17th July 2025.

24/503677/FULL - Erection of 38 no. residential dwellings, together with associated two access points, open space, landscaping, drainage, and infrastructure works.

Borden Parish Council have objected to this application on the following points – layout of the social housing, loss of the countryside gap, the loss of wildlife habitat and the sustainability of this development.

The first point of our objection is that there is a lack of integration with the design of this development. All of the proposed social housing is at on the north site and which does not promote social integration.

The second point is the loss of the countryside gap.

A landscaped area between the two distinct housing developments on this site does not form or retain the countryside gap. This application conflicts with policy DM25 of the local plan which states that "Within these gaps, unless allocated for development by the Local Plan, planning permission will not be granted for development that would undermine one or more of their purposes.". This development is not in the local plan.

Also building on agricultural land should only be granted when there is an overriding need. In Borden there is no such need with both the Wises Lane & Manor Farm developments providing a large number of new properties.

The introduction of buildings within the application site leads to a level of impact that is harmful to the setting and urbanises a semi-rural village. It effectively removes the countryside gap between Sittingbourne & Borden and will have a detrimental impact on the grade II listed properties in the area.

The third point is regarding the ecology & biodiversity net gain documents submitted by the applicant.

These documents contain a number of inaccuracies and omissions.

The ecology document states that badgers are known to be present within Borden Nature Reserve.

This untrue, it is impossible for badgers to live on the nature reserve as its an ex-landfill site with a minimal level of top soil so badgers are unable to dig. The report also fails to mention or take into account the extensive badger setts that are less than 300m away from the application site and that are now using the land & the adjoining allotments for foraging since the start of the Ufton Court development. This brings into question the accuracy and completeness of the report you will be using to help decide the application today.

Also it will not be possible to provide a 10% gain in biodiversity for this application despite the mitigation measures put in place. It is proposed to buy 5 units of grassland to offset the loss but no details regarding this in the reports.

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The fourth and final point is access to services & travel. These are key to a successful development & community.

Swale Borough Council have stated that there is a lack of public transport and have recommended that further consideration be give to the public transport links for this development. This has not been taken into account and in fact conflicts with policy DM 6 which prioritises the integration of facilities for walking and cycling into the location as well as access to local services.

The nearest bus stop is around 1km away (a 13 minute walk) and has very few active routes, the most frequent of which is one bus per hour. Any other services are at least the same distance away from the site. This will lead to a greater reliance on cars journeys on roads which are already over capacity.

This is not a sustainable development, it removes the countryside gap that is laid out very clearly in the Swale Local Development Plan and it changes the nature of the location to its detriment.