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14/12/2025

By email only : ldf@maidstone.gov.uk

Ref No HW70565

**Response to the Heathlands Garden Settlement Supplementary**

**Planning Guidance Documents**

Dear Sirs,

Firstly, there has been scrutiny of Maidstone Borough Council on behalf of any of the surrounding parishes that this proposed development may impact on the rural nature of the inherent damage this will cause to neighbouring parishes. As Charing Parish abuts the proposed development, we can only envisage what chaos this would bring to our rural settlements over the coming years during construction and beyond.

The parish council are disappointed that since the adoption of the Local Plan Review (LPR) in March 2024 many critical areas and evidence have not moved forward to establish the viability of the proposals for a Garden Community at Heathlands.

**Charing Parish Council feel that the consultation on the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be paused to allow for a more in depth and better knowledge so that residents / parishes adjoining the proposed development can fully understand the reality on how it will affect them as residents .**

MBC have not had any direct contact with Charing Parish Council about The Heathlands project which will have significant effect on our parish. MBC may have had contact with Ashford Borough Council which the results of any meeting have not been filtered through to the parishes effected.

The main areas of objection are the severe lack of detail on the transport within the A20. MBC must be acutely aware this trunk route has at times been completely overloaded especially when operation Brock is established. The A20 becomes one long queue as it cannot cope with the the amount of extra vehicle movements on the A20, it would increase to a level that will make the development unsustainable, plus extra vehicles using country lanes in and around Heathlands turn

into rat runs which prevent the safe use of these roads by pedestrians, horses and cyclists but increasing the hazards many times. There seems to no real plan in the documents to mitigate our concerns.

Heathlands is a grandiose scheme that has the prospect of failing early in its proposed construction, with promises of school, M20 access and a new railway station being suggested and as other developments in Kent of a similar size have failed miserably in the delivery of the core components of the project as can be seen with Ashford's Chimington Green development. The developers put in the proposal's grand ideas and when the houses are being built the planned infrastructure doesn't happen because profit comes before shareholders. There doesn't seem to be any references to secure the promises of the developers actual happen.

Charing Parush Council also have concerns on the following aspects of the plan.

- How the delivery of green infrastructure will be delivered.
- Impact on climate change there's a lack of data as this will be mainly a car-based development , the quality of air quality and protection of the River Stour which runs through Charing . We have had major issues with development effecting the River Stour and the Stodmarsh Marshes . This would further add to the issues . Light pollution is also a concern with the North Downs National Landscape.

In short this is an over development of the countryside and in the view of Charing Parish Council completely undeliverable in all its guises.

Regards



C Prinn

Chair Charing PC