

# Biddenden Parish Council

## Proposed Gladman Development

This was discussed at the Biddenden Parish Council (BPC) meeting on Tuesday August 3<sup>rd</sup>. The meeting was attended by Councilor Neil Bell as well as a number of parishioners who had been keen to discuss the proposals and the impact they felt it would have on the village. BPC voted unanimously at the meeting to object to the proposed development and committed to offer another opportunity for Parishioners to collectively discuss it in more detail.

**This meeting will take place next Wednesday August 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM in the New Village Hall and you should contact Alison Swannick - BPC Clerk - should you wish to attend.**

As well as BPC submitting a detailed objection to the proposals, we would encourage anyone with concerns to submit their own comments directly to Ashford Borough Council's Planning Department. With approximately 500 households in Biddenden, a significant volume of objections being raised by individuals will help to emphasize the depth of feeling in the Village. For those who do wish to raise their own objections, we are sharing some themes from the discussions at the meeting that might help you to do so;

- 1. Gladman previously submitted an application for a development of 110 new houses in 2018 and that application was rejected at the time. While they are entitled to submit a new application and this is clearly for a smaller scale development, many of the concerns highlighted in 2018 still apply in 2021.*
- 2. For local planning context, Biddenden already has an agreed 'local plan' that provided a framework for future development up to 2030. The nearly completed Maltings development on North Street fully met the commitments for sustainable growth in housing stock. The proposed Gladman development clearly exceeds the commitments of the agreed local plan.*
- 3. An additional 50 homes effectively grow the village by 10%. We believe this is unsustainable given the limited facilities we have as a relatively small village (e.g., no doctors surgery, fire service, finite school places etc.). We are also seeing increasing evidence of our drainage and sewerage systems being compromised by existing demands.*
- 4. The Gladman proposal suggests that the proposed development would bring additional amenity to the village however we believe the opposite. It would bring adverse urbanization to what is currently an attractive rural setting that includes a number of listed buildings. Furthermore, it would detract from existing public footpaths/rights of way across picturesque open countryside. We believe it would inevitably harm local wildlife habitats – and potentially those of some protected species.*
- 5. Finally, there are some concerns about public safety given the volume of traffic on Biddenden's roads already and the condition of the existing North Street footpaths. Our local infrastructure is simply not set-up to deal with potentially another 100 cars in and around the village every day.*