

Tilden Gill Development

My name is Paul Young and I live in Belgar Farmhouse. I am representing the Belgar Residents Group, a single group of residents of the Belgar settlement.

After the deferral of the application in December we met with Redrow and their team. It was clear their approach was only to discuss one thing (and one thing only) despite the representations from you and us on a number of matters of concern.

They have reviewed and made one revision to the plan for the site – there is now a 15m buffer for units 54 and 46, but then a reduced buffer of around 7.5m for unit 55 and only about 5m for the garage to units 63 and 64.

While we are pleased that the 15m buffer has been applied to units 54 and 46 – we don't understand why this same buffer has not been applied consistently to the sensitive boundaries around the site – and again with no explanation.

If a 15m buffer is appropriate for the setting of the ancient woodland, and is appropriate on one part of the boundary to the listed buildings, then we think it is self-evidently justified that it should be consistently applied to the whole of the boundary and its listed setting.

We are happy to agree that 15m is the appropriate distance, and Redrow seem to have accepted this too, if only for some (not all) boundaries. We believe that it is possible to accommodate this buffer consistently without making a significant difference to the layout or capacity of the site.

Secondly, Redrow have confirmed to us that they are not going to investigate the root protection zones for the TPO trees along the boundary, even though it is far from proven that they aren't impacting them. - The 15m buffer would resolve this issue. Without it we fear that the TPO protected trees will be damaged during construction, and may well then be compromised and ultimately lost.

We also wish to highlight to members of the committee that an application to formally create a public footpath has been lodged with Kent County Council – this is by other members of the community, supported by evidence of long-standing usage over many years (and still to this day despite the current shuttering stopping easy access, it is very well trodden).

We fully believe that this footpath will soon be properly recognised on the definitive plan, and therefore that the layout will have to give this some weight so that it continues to fulfil its role as 'a green corridor' (a term endorsed by the WKPS).

WKPS has again echoed our all our concerns as well as the siting of the three storey flats next to the AONB and heritage site - where (it is stated by them) as being 'intrusive'.

We and WKPS are extremely concerned that the developers have stated that this is their final amendment. A large development such as this one should respect the planning system and the representations made by local residents and the Town Council.

This shouldn't be a process of implementing changes by tiny degrees at a time until everyone's patience is exhausted.

We note that the planning officer is, on balance, recommending approval of the scheme as proposed, and we appreciate that Members may feel that they cannot resist this any longer.

But we plead and urge Members to continue to reject this proposal until the best possible justified outcome is achieved.

Objections have been the same from the start of this process and consistently reiterated.

In conclusion then, we remain of the view that the current proposals aren't yet good enough – they are getting closer, but are still not able to demonstrate an approach that resolves the issues and risks:

- they don't *consistently* protect **the setting** of the listed Belgar farmhouse and barns
- they have not shown that the TPO trees will be unaffected
- they do not address your and WKPS' concern re the location of the 3 storey flats

We believe that these remain legitimate planning concerns that should be addressed in the design. We urge the Planning Committee to seek further amendments to the Reserved Matters.

Tilden Gill Development application number 18/00448/AS

Firstly, I would like to make clear that I and other local residents accept that this development will go ahead and nothing we say now will stop it. However, what is done on that site affects all of us and we and generations to come will have to live with the consequences of any failures made by the decision makers.

I have several areas of concern about the reserved matters some of which I will briefly mention and I will concentrate on one, the inclusion of 3 blocks of 3 storey flats. One concern is the potential flooding along the southern edge at its lowest point. This has flooded regularly to the depth of several inches, mainly in Winter. The ecology management is also concerning many local people who have witnessed the rushed, bodged job that has been undertaken so far which doesn't follow Redrows own mitigation reports. There doesn't seem to have been any work done on the effects of the development on mobile and satellite signals for existing and new residents as advised by Ofcom for new developments. This area is renowned for its very poor signals and down towards the southern boundary of the development there is often no signal at all. In this day and age most people rely on mobile phones and I do think this is an important aspect to be considered.

. One thing that has become very apparent as we've visited local residents with the objection letters to the flats is how little they know about the development. So far we have nearly 70 letters of objection and given more time we could get many more.

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The main issue with the blocks of flats is their height. In this area, Shrubcote, Priory Way, Tilden Gill Road, and Cruttenden Close, all the blocks of flats are only 2 storeys high and are of a smaller, more sympathetic size that blend in with the surrounding houses. The proposed blocks will be visually very intrusive and will not blend in with either the rest of the development or the surrounding area. I note that several comments have already been made concerning the houses in the development and encouraging Redrow to change their appearance to something more in keeping with local Kent architecture. We are asking for the same with the flats. Blocks B and C are at the highest point of the

development area and alongside the AONB, Redrow couldn't have placed them in a more visually intrusive and unsuitable place. A veritable eyesore. Block C is extremely close to the boundary with the footpath and some rear gardens of Shrubcote. Residents are concerned that placing of these 3 blocks along the northern edge abutting Shrubcote and Tilden Gill Road will cause loss of privacy and light particularly in the Winter months and potential further loss of mobile and satellite signals. Block A will be right next to the new wildlife park which seems a strange juxtaposition.

These are in addition to the matters raised by the Belgar Residents Group and the serious concerns expressed about the access proposed and loss of accompanying car parking for existing residents of Priory Way.

In conclusion, there are several outstanding issues that need to be addressed by Redrow. I feel the Chief Planning Officers recommendation to pass the application at the next meeting on Weds is more for convenience than concern for how this development of 100 dwellings will impact the local people who are going to lose the beauty and amenity of this treasured area.

Victoria Bance
B.Sc.Hons Town Planning