

Swale Borough Council  
Local Plan Part 1 Examination

Further representations following reduced time at hearing

Matter 3 MUX1: South West Sittingbourne

**3.1 Is the MUX1 allocation justified by robust evidence, including landscape character assessment and sustainability appraisal as the best option for delivering the borough's housing?**

I wish make the following further representations having listened to the evidence presented to the hearing but been limited by the time constraints the Inspector was restricted by.

By the proposer of the site's own evidence the site has been campaigned for some 15 years but rejected by the Council, one assumes, on justified policy grounds being:

1. Grade1 Agricultural Land
2. Of Landscape value particularly to local residents
- 3 Providing a Countryside Gap to the village of Borden

It would appear that the Council have been persuaded, on the basis of the required uplift of dwellings in the OAN, to use this as the excuse to overlook the justified grounds referred to above and include the land in the Main Modifications. This being in spite of the overwhelming local opposition.

The Council have failed to demonstrate that the use of this BMV Grade 1 agricultural land is “necessary” as required by Para 112 of the NPPF. This is evidenced by the site having been ranked 62<sup>nd</sup> in the Ranked Assessment of Reasonable Non-Allocated Site options (SBC/PS/106) but elevated into the Main Modifications above a considerable number of sites of lesser quality land without any clear justification.

On the above evidence the site should be excluded from the Main Modifications as there are numerous other more highly ranked sites available and the Council by their own evidence have a surplus to their requirements.

The site also, from the evidence presented to the hearing , has many other constraints, not least of which being traffic infrastructure.

The only protection available to the local residents and constituents is the Local Plan process as it is clear that the Council are being strongly influenced by the site promoter who stated the intention to shortly submit a planning application in advance of the Inspectors final report.