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Dear Mr Long,

Welwyn Hatfield Submission Local Plan

I am writing to you as Chairman of the Save Symondshyde group. In that capacity, I submitted a response to Draft Local Plan Policy SP24 during the public consultation period last year. That response included the following statement:

Local Geology

Sinkholes

A member of the public has reported to us that there are eight sink holes in the area 300 metres north west of the proposed Symondshyde development site. We are seeking expert advice from Imperial College, London on whether there are likely to be sink holes in the area of the development site.

Preliminary advice is that both the geology of the area and the terrain are consistent with the potential formation of sink holes. A quantitative assessment of the risk of sink hole formations as a result of the changes in groundwater regime that result from a development of the type envisaged is required.

We consider that the proposed allocation of the Symondshyde site for development should be put on hold until an authoritative investigation into this matter can be carried out. We would be pleased to pass on to the Council and the Inspector the results of the preliminary investigations that Imperial College are now doing as soon as we receive them.

I now enclose a copy of the geological report prepared by two expert geologists from Imperial College, together with a covering letter from John Burland, Emeritus Professor of Soil Mechanics at Imperial College. As you can see, the result of the walkover and drone survey that was carried out on 2nd March is that there is strong evidence of sinkhole formation and possible archaeological interest on the proposed Symondshyde development site.

We consider that this is yet further evidence of the unsoundness of the proposal to build a new village at Symondshyde. We call upon the Council to require the promoters of the site to carry out a full geological survey of the area before the Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State in its present form.

Needless to say, if necessary, we will be presenting this evidence and any further evidence that Imperial College may produce, to the Inspector at the public examination of the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,

John GA Gardner

Copy to:

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