

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 20/06/2026 8:50 AM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Abbey Farm Barn Church Street Higham Rochester Kent ME3 7LS
Proposal:	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed; Change of use of an agricultural building into five holiday let accommodation units, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R.
Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] Church Street Rochester

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	I strongly object to this application.

The application site is located within the Green Belt, within a Conservation Area, and in close proximity to designated heritage assets, including listed buildings and a scheduled/listed monument. The proposal seeks to convert an agricultural building into five separate holiday-let accommodation units, introducing a substantial commercial visitor use into a highly sensitive rural location.

Unsuitable Intensification of Use:

The proposed conversion would result in a significant intensification of activity compared with the existing agricultural use. Five holiday-let units (capable of accommodating multiple unrelated groups simultaneously) would generate a continual turnover of guests, increased vehicle movements, deliveries, servicing requirements and associated activity throughout the year.

This level of commercial activity is out of keeping with the character of the surrounding rural area and would materially alter the quiet and secluded nature of the locality.

Highway and Access Concerns:

The application site is located at the end of a rural dead-end lane that serves a very limited number of properties and currently experiences low levels of traffic.

Unlike many rural roads, this lane is not a through route and is used predominantly by residents and those with a specific reason to access the area.

The proposed development would introduce a materially different pattern of use. Five holiday-let units would generate a continual flow of guest arrivals and departures, visitor traffic, deliveries, servicing vehicles and maintenance visits throughout the year. Given the nature of short-term holiday accommodation, occupancy turnover is likely to occur frequently, resulting in significantly more vehicle movements than the existing agricultural use.

The proposal would therefore transform the character of the lane from one serving a small residential and agricultural community to one accommodating regular visitor traffic. This change would be particularly noticeable because of the secluded nature of the location and the absence of through traffic.

Harm to Residential Amenity:

The proposal is likely to result in increased noise, disturbance and general activity arising from the operation of five holiday-let units. Holiday accommodation is inherently different from permanent residential occupation, with a regular turnover of occupants, arrivals and departures at varying times, and increased use of external spaces during evenings, weekends and holiday periods.

The resulting disturbance would be harmful to the amenity of neighbouring residents and would erode the tranquillity that currently characterises the area.

Impact on Heritage Assets and the Conservation Area:

The site occupies a highly sensitive heritage setting. The surrounding area contains listed buildings and a designated monument, and lies within a Conservation Area whose significance derives in part from its rural character, historic setting and relative tranquillity.

The introduction of five commercial holiday-let units would inevitably bring increased traffic, parking demand, lighting, outdoor activity and associated domestic paraphernalia. These changes would urbanise an agricultural setting and risk causing harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to the setting of nearby heritage assets.

Particular weight should be given to the statutory duty to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to the requirement to give special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and other designated heritage assets.

Extent of Works Required:

The existing building is understood to contain asbestos-containing materials. The conversion of an agricultural structure into five holiday accommodation units is likely to require extensive intervention and alteration. This raises questions as to whether the proposal genuinely constitutes a straightforward change of use within the scope of permitted development rights or whether the extent of works required goes beyond that envisaged by Class R.

The Local Planning Authority should carefully scrutinise the nature and extent of the proposed works and whether the proposal is appropriately brought forward under the prior approval process.

Commercialisation of a rural setting:

The proposal would introduce a commercial tourism use into a quiet rural location, fundamentally altering the character of the site and surrounding area.

Conclusion

This proposal would introduce an intensive commercial holiday accommodation

use into a quiet rural location that is highly sensitive from both a heritage and landscape perspective. The development would result in increased traffic, noise, disturbance and activity, harming the character of the area, the amenity of neighbouring residents and the setting of nea

Kind regards