

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 8:53 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

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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 object to this application for prior approval for the conversion of an agricultural building into five holiday-let accommodation units. This proposal would introduce a substantial commercial visitor use into a highly sensitive rural location. The site lies within the Green Belt, within a Conservation Area and in close proximity to designated heritage assets. In my view, the proposal would result in an unacceptable change to the character of the area and fails to respect the qualities that make this location special. The surrounding area is characterised by its quiet rural nature, limited traffic, agricultural setting and sense of seclusion. These qualities are increasingly rare and are fundamental to the character of the locality. The proposed development would introduce a level of activity entirely different from the existing use. Five separate holiday accommodation units would generate a continual cycle of arrivals, departures, deliveries, servicing visits and visitor activity throughout the year. This would represent a significant intensification of use and would inevitably erode the tranquillity that currently defines the area. The impact is likely to be particularly noticeable because the site is located on a dead-end rural lane rather than within a settlement or location already
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characterised by visitor activity.

The significance of the Conservation Area derives not only from the appearance of individual buildings but also from its wider rural setting, historic character, peaceful environment and low level of development activity.

The introduction of a commercial holiday accommodation enterprise at this scale risks undermining these characteristics. Increased traffic, parking, lighting, outdoor activity and the general comings and goings associated with short-term visitor accommodation would alter the character of the area and diminish the qualities that the Conservation Area designation seeks to preserve.

The site is situated in close proximity to designated heritage assets, including listed buildings and a scheduled/listed monument.

The significance of such assets is derived not only from their physical fabric but also from their setting. The existing agricultural landscape contributes positively to that setting. The proposed development would introduce a level of activity and commercialisation that is at odds with the historic rural context in which these heritage assets are experienced.

Particular consideration should therefore be given to whether the proposal would preserve the setting of nearby heritage assets and maintain the historic character of the surrounding landscape.

The proposed holiday accommodation would be heavily dependent upon private vehicle use. There are no realistic public transport options directly serving the site, and visitors would inevitably rely on cars for access and day-to-day travel.

The creation of five holiday accommodation units in such a location would increase traffic movements along a narrow rural lane that currently serves a limited number of properties and agricultural uses.

While agricultural diversification can play an important role in supporting the rural economy, the scale of this proposal appears excessive for its location. The creation of five separate holiday accommodation units represents a significant commercial tourism use rather than a modest diversification of an agricultural building.

The Local Planning Authority should carefully consider whether the intensity of the proposed use is appropriate within such a sensitive rural, heritage and conservation setting.

This proposal would introduce a level of commercial visitor activity that is incompatible with the quiet rural character of the area. It would harm the tranquillity of the Conservation Area, erode the setting of nearby heritage assets and result in a significant intensification of activity on a secluded rural lane.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that prior approval be refused.

Kind regards