

20th October 2025

Mrs Alison Webster
Planning Case Officer
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1AU

Dear Mrs Webster

Application Reference 20250889

Outline Planning Application, Buckland Farm, Chair Road, Higham

[REDACTED] My wife resides with me and we live [REDACTED] to the above-mentioned property. [REDACTED] have lived at my property for the whole of my life. We also declare an interest as we "farm" the acre-field within this site and have done for over fifty years, firstly by kind permission of the former owner, then latterly by Tenancy Agreement with the children and currently grand-children of said owner. We have never had the intention of ceasing this Tenancy and requests to purchase this land have politely been declined.

There are two separate ownerships of this site. The area more formally known as "Buckland Farm" has a different owner who has leased out the buildings to small businesses for nearly all of the time he has had ownership since the late 1980s. We also lease a small parcel of grazing land adjacent to the aforementioned field from this owner and again have never had the intention of ending the Licence/Lease held for the past 20 years or so thus far.

The land is on the edge of SSSI and RAMSAR and SPA. Our house is listed within the Environment Agency Flood Warning Alert being on the edge of the Flood Plain.

The area has a high-water table and Environment Agency / Southern Water have an Inspection Chamber in the current pond which they monitor on a regular basis. This is referred to as a "small stagnant pond" in the Reports but does not indicate the relevance of this feature. The 'new' pond designated in the plans is not one and the same and is on an area of land to the north of the current buildings which is basically the edge of marshy land and the fields behind are prone to flooding.

The Reports submitted with the Planning Application have been undertaken in 2025. 2025 has been an extremely dry suffering drought conditions. Therefore, this does not show a true reflection of the extent of flooding that is able to occur, which have been witnessed over a life-time, in the fields and especially with the current "stagnant" pond.

The area is of historical, archaeological importance as well as traditional farming history. The whole area of Buckland Farm is prime green belt and none of the land or buildings are redundant or laying idle neither presently nor historically.

In contradiction within the Employment Use Viability Assessment, loss of business and employment is evident with the difficulty in businesses relocating and there has been long-term employment. It is unfortunate that the buildings may have not been upgraded to standard in the past and now not meeting the required SPC but it is possible for this to be mitigated if every step has been taken to ensure standard is met, in that it is possible for an exemption be applied.

KCC do not indicate a fair assessment on the traffic flow in Chalk Road as it is not "low" as indicated. It is very high with more Industrial vehicles using this road than the A226. It is the designated route to and from the B2000 and heavily used by RS Skips who are based in Queens Farm Road, Shorne. Their movements alone are almost double the allowable amount and include trailers with skips four high and large waste removal vehicles. Chalk road is a very dangerous road for vehicular movements. Their figures also do not show a true representation of RTAs. Just west of Buckland Farm a young girl was killed being knocked over by a car and in the Michele Cottages area a young girl had significant injuries being hit by a car.

This proposal of 40 houses is double the amount of houses already in Chalk Road. This means four times as many vehicles as it is estimated that each household have on average at least two cars. Previous applications for a single house have already been refused. An estate of this size would mean an increasing demand on water supply and sewerage systems. There is no mains gas in the area with the only power supply being electricity.

The bus service and train service is limited with a lot of weekend train services carrying out rail engineering work due to the close proximity of Hoo Junction. The bus rail replacement service does not always travel down through the village to the station and instead uses the A226 (a mile and a half away) alighting passengers for Higham south of the village. Just to the north of Buckland Farm is an Electricity Sub Station for the railway. The only access to this is by vehicle is via Buckland Farm.

The Doctor surgery is under threat of closure with the nearest surgery within the practice at Cliffe Woods or alternatively Cliffe or Wainscott; all of which are not easily accessible by public transport which could take a whole day to travel to and from just for a ten-minute appointment.

The village primary school is oversubscribed with many local children not getting places and some having to go to other school locations.

Buckland Farm is situated in the north of the village and all the amenities are at least 1km or further away which is fine if you are healthy but the gradient to the south of the village is very high meaning more people would prefer to use their cars.

The fields to the north and west of Buckland Farm are still agricultural in use and access to and from the fields by the same entrance to a housing estate is not conductively viable.

Finally, the Ecology Report does not show that a full assessment has been carried out and the Report itself indicates that more surveys need to be done. Such a Report is detriment to the ecological environment and the retention of existing ecological habitats cannot be retained if not reported fully and especially if the answer is to just "move to a new green infrastructure". The Report does not indicate that a protected bird species was detected within the vicinity of the proposed development and, therefore, the possibility that there is more protected wildlife and should not be missed, especially as the marshy fields are also a haven for migratory birds throughout the year.

It is for the above reasons that we object to this application.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular box used to redact a signature.