

REFERENCE NUMBER 202260223

Re: Land North of High View, School Lane, Higham, Rochester, Kent. ME3 7HP

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to register my strong objection to the proposed Planning Application for up to 50 residential dwellings to be built within our historic village for the following reason:

1. This development is based on a political imperative to build homes as a means of raising funds for local councils through the ratings system with inadequate consideration of Brownfield sites.
2. The land in question is Green Belt protected and should not be built on. There is capacity within Gravesham for building on Brownfield Sites, such as the old Maternity Hospital in the centre of Gravesend. This has been monument to the failure of the Borough Council for many years and sites such as this should be built on first, before the wholesale development of farm land which in future years would support growing of crops rather than used for housing.
3. The supply of drinking water to all communities is of great concern following an announcement in recent weeks that neighbouring South Eastern Water could not guarantee adequate supplies of water to support future housing development. This is a wake up call that water, prime provider of life, is in short supply and calls into question that expansion of building programmes is of no consequence to utility companies.
4. It is known that the main sewer taking waste away from the southern part of the village using School Lane is operating over capacity and, following heavy rain, regularly overflows with both storm water and sewage cascading down the hill towards lower Higham and the area around the railway station. It is noted the developers intend using this same sewer for 50 more residential properties. This is not acceptable.
5. It is the intention that the Doctors' surgery in Hermitage Road, Higham is to close in Spring 2026 leaving our village without a village surgery. Clearly, a further proposed development has a negative effect on an already serious problem.
6. Road traffic is already at high volume on our village roads, roads evolved to serve horse and cart traffic but now morphed into routes serving the industrial areas to the north of the village and regularly used by 44 tonne and even heavier vehicles carrying building plant. Additional traffic generated by fifty more dwellings using an entry/exit point on the brow of the hill in School Lane is a recipe for disaster. Additionally, it should be noted that the village school has accepted pupils from outside the immediate area resulting in a large volume of vehicles in both direction on School Lane twice per day, traffic that was never envisaged and a problem not considered by the Education Authority. The safety of all road users (pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders and motorised vehicle users) is further compromised by the placing of fifty more dwellings and the resultant volume of vehicles generated by those homes using an already overloaded School Lane and network of village roads.
7. The two main local hospitals, Darent Valley Hospital and Medway Maritime Hospital, are working severely over capacity with patients having to be accommodated into areas not originally designed for care of in-patients. Further strain on an already overburdened system by the proposed development will only add to this problem.

8. Higham Primary School, situated on School Lane, is oversubscribed. There is insufficient capacity in the school's current form for children from the proposed development to use the school.

In view of the forgoing, I call that the Borough Council reject this development and retain the land in question for continued farming activity required for the future health and prosperity of our Country.

With regards

