

## Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 18/03/2026 8:51 PM from [REDACTED]

### Application Summary

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address:      | Land North Of High View School Lane Higham Rochester Kent ME3 7HP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Proposal:     | Application for Outline application with all/some matters reserved for the development of up to 50 residential dwellings (including affordable housing), vehicular access road from School Lane, internal roads, car parking, landscaping, public open space, and other associated works and infrastructure. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access. |
| Case Officer: | Mrs Lisa Fisher                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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### Customer Details

|          |                                                 |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Name:    | [REDACTED]                                      |
| Email:   | [REDACTED]                                      |
| Address: | [REDACTED] Fairview Drive Higham Rochester Kent |

### Comments Details

|                 |                                              |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Commenter Type: | Neighbour                                    |
| Stance:         | Customer objects to the Planning Application |

Reasons for comment:

Comments: I am writing to formally object to planning application 20260223 concerning the proposed development on Green Belt land between School Lane and Taylors Lane in Higham, Kent.

My objection is based on the inappropriate development of designated Green Belt land, the significant harm to biodiversity and protected species, and the negative impact on local infrastructure and community wellbeing.

Firstly, the site lies within the Green Belt, where there is a strong presumption against development except in very special circumstances. No such circumstances appear to have been demonstrated. The proposal would result in a permanent loss of openness and contribute to urban encroachment, undermining the fundamental purpose of Green Belt policy.

I recognise the need for new housing; however, this should be prioritised on brownfield land to protect these valuable green spaces. Greater emphasis should be placed on identifying and bringing forward underused or vacant buildings, which could be acquired and repurposed for residential use, making more efficient use of existing land and infrastructure. There are likely to be many such opportunities within Gravesham, and their conversion and improvement would not only help meet housing demand but also support the regeneration of town

centres and surrounding communities, delivering wider social and economic benefits where investment and renewal are much needed.

Secondly, the ecological value of this site and its surroundings is considerable. The land sits in close proximity to woodland, Cliffe Pools, the Thames Estuary, and extensive salt marsh habitats, forming part of a wider and highly sensitive ecological network. Development in this location risks fragmenting habitats and adding pressure to already important conservation areas.

The site itself supports a wide range of wildlife. My wife has personally recorded the presence of nightingales in this area, a species of significant conservation concern in the UK. As demonstrated in the Chattenden (Lodge Hill) case, nightingales are highly sensitive ground-nesting birds, and even nearby development-without direct habitat loss-will lead to their decline due to disturbance.

The surrounding area also supports owls, woodpeckers, jays, sparrowhawks, buzzards, and bats, all of which rely on quiet, dark environments. All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, making it an offence to disturb them while nesting. Bats are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and are particularly vulnerable to artificial lighting and habitat disruption.

In addition, the area supports small mammals such as hedgehogs, rabbits, and badgers. European badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, and hedgehogs are a priority species in significant decline.

The proposed development would introduce a harmful "urbanising effect" through increased noise, lighting, traffic, and human activity. These changes fundamentally alter the habitat and drive species away, even where woodland is retained. Additionally, residential development brings indirect impacts such as domestic pets, particularly cats, which are known to prey on birds and small mammals and are difficult to control.

Beyond ecological concerns, this proposal would place further strain on already limited local infrastructure. The village primary school is already very close to full capacity, and the recent announcement of the closure of the local doctor's surgery highlights the lack of capacity in essential services. Additional housing in this location would exacerbate these existing pressures.

Finally, access to open green space is vital for the health and wellbeing of local residents. The loss of this land would reduce opportunities for recreation, negatively impacting mental health and quality of life, particularly in a rural community where such spaces are very highly valued.

In conclusion, this proposal conflicts with Green Belt policy, fails to adequately protect biodiversity and protected species, and would place unsustainable pressure on local infrastructure while reducing valued green space. The harm caused by this development would clearly outweigh any potential benefits.

I respectfully request that the Council refuse planning application 20260223.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

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Kind regards