

 Worcester Close,

Istead Rise,

Gravesend,

Kent.

DA13 9LB

Dear Mr Lawal,

Please find attached my objections to the planning application number 20251233 Land
At Rose Farm Downs Road Istead Rise Gravesend Kent.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



1 Number of dwellings

The Esquire document titled “Design and Access Statement document” states that: “The design process has followed the mandatory guidance set out for medium size sites (10 to **150** dwellings)”.

The Esquire document titled “Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy” states that: “2.4 The proposed development will comprise **154** residential and associated access and landscaping”).

The Esquire document titled “Marrions” states that: “**154** residential dwellings”).

The Esquire document titled “Heritage Impact Assessment” states that: “erection of up to **154** residential dwellings”).

It does not appear that this application is following the appropriate guidelines for the proposed number of houses i.e. large size sites. The inconsistencies are also a concern as how can a planning application be submitted when the number of dwellings varies?

2 Flooding

The site of the proposed development slopes towards Down Road which was previously a riverbed before the water was diverted underground. The development will significantly reduce the amount of arable land available for water to soak away. Drainage will move the water to Down Road which is already at capacity during heavy rainfall. The Esquire documents reference a “surface water drainage pond”, however it is not clear what if any contingency will be in place should the drainage pond reach capacity.

The relief of the proposed site (see Figure 1 OS Map) indicates a valley on the slope (OS grid reference TQ62914 69328 to TQ 63333 69780) which is likely to channel the bulk of the runoff water (indicated by the red arrows) into Down Road approximately opposite to Upper Avenue. The height difference from the southern side of the proposed development to Downs Road is over 25 metres. Once in Downs Road, drainage water then flows in a north-westerly direction and there is regular flooding at the junction of Downs Road and Broad Ditch Road (indicated by the red circle on Figure 1 OS Map and Figure 2 Flooding Broad Ditch Road).

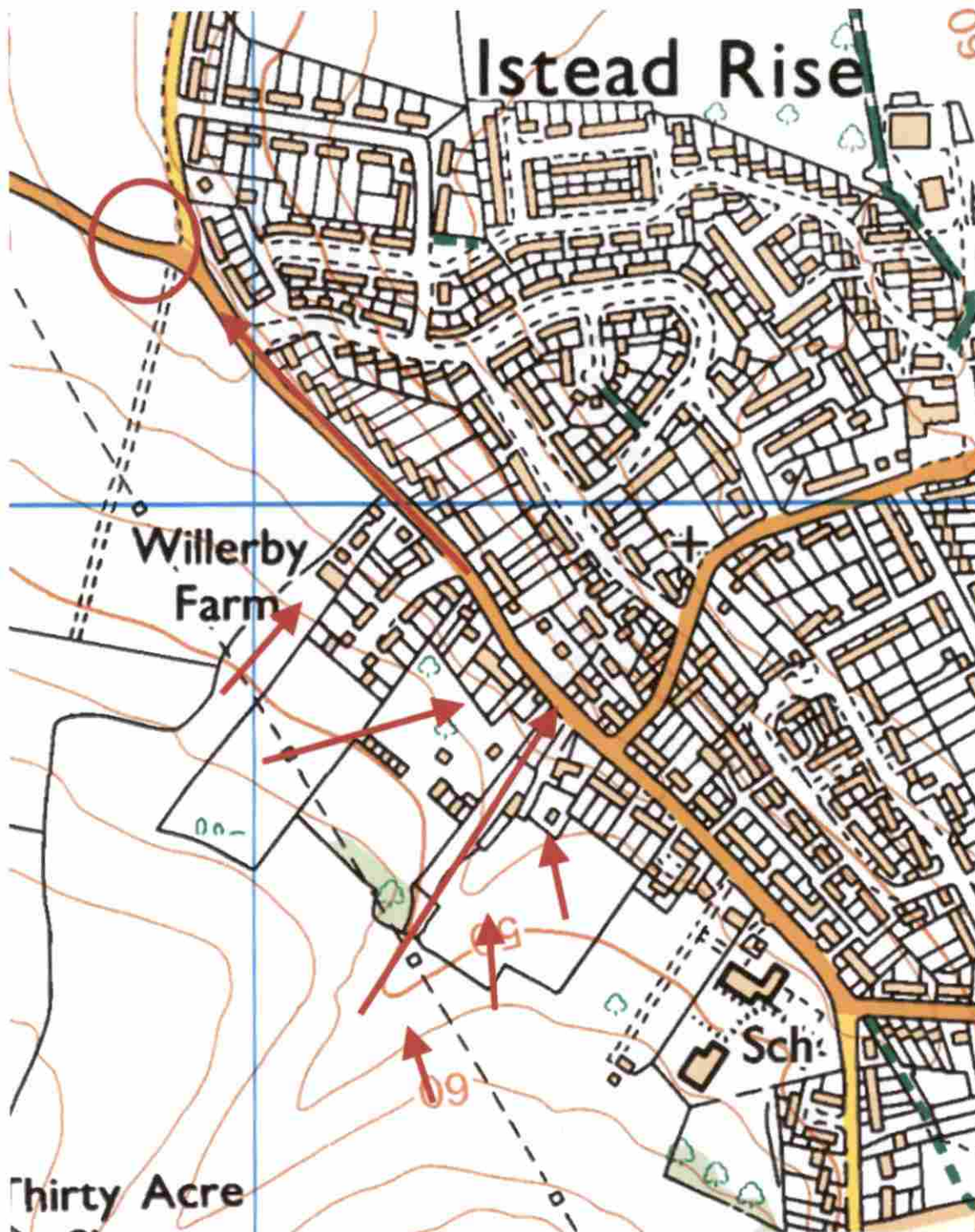


Figure 1 OS Map

Relief of site will push more run off water into Downs Road drainage system thus restricting one of two (Broad Ditch road / Wrotham road) ingress/egress points from the Istead Rise estate. The picture below was taken on 16th January 2025.

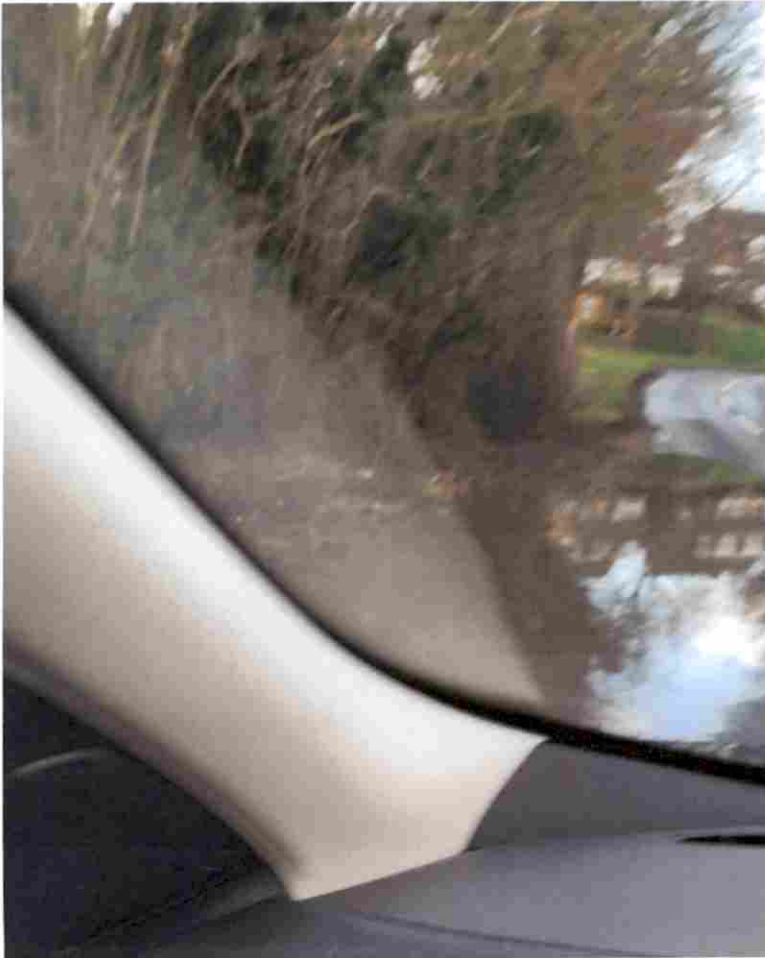


Figure 2 Flooding Broad Ditch Road

Should the proposal be successful, in the event this flooding gets worse, who will be accountable for resolving it post construction?

3 Site designation

Esquire has assessed the site as “grey belt” but it would appear that the site is a mix of green belt and grey belt with green belt being the larger of the areas. As such the higher criteria must apply and the **criteria for green belt this has not been met**. Any green belt development must “require at least 50% of the housing to be affordable” and Esquire have not met this.

Urban sprawl – the Esquire proposal significantly reduces the “buffer” between Istead Rise and New Barn and does not prevent urban expansion. The application has not provided sufficient justification as to why an exception for building on a greenbelt site should be made - “very special circumstances” do not exist and the harm to the greenbelt land is not outweighed by other considerations, e.g. the Loss of farming land and the other concerns raised in this planning appeal document.

This is the same developer who, having identified potential risk to wildlife (nightingales) as part of their development in Cliffe Woods, stated in the planning application “buyers must not have children under 16 or feline pets”. How is this an acceptable level of responsibility or due diligence?

The Council’s Application Constraints webpage shows the site as green belt.

4 Infrastructure

Istead Rise shops –congestion in the car park is already causing issues as cars often use the surrounding roads to park, causing issues around the car park exit and The Drove Way.

Both Meopham & Gravesend stations have limited parking and bus times are unlikely to be suitable for typical commuters. The bus service poor at best and also unreliable. Ebbsfleet station has no direct bus service so cars would be needed by commuters wishing to use this service

The local GP surgeries have contradicted the Esquire claims that there is capacity for the additional residents. Also, take it from me as someone currently being treated for cancer – getting an appointment at Istead Rise surgery is not straightforward. My experience of Darrent Valley Hospital to date has been excellent during my treatment, but the infrastructure there is at capacity for parking and also drop off / pick up, with traffic often queuing onto the A296.

Local school places are already stretched and are not guaranteed for new residents.

National Highways have also requested a 3 month pause in the Rose Farm planning application process in order to assess the impact on A2 traffic.

Additionally Downs Road is already congested with parked cars and during the school drop off/pick up times it can be impassable. According to the National Planning Policy Framework document, Promoting Sustainable Transport, item 115: “a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved

for all users". The single access point proposed does not ensure "safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users" especially at peak school times.

Walking from Istead Rise to Gravesend is "dangerous" due to the need to cross joining and exit junctions for the A2. Walking to Meopham is dangerous as there is not pedestrian footpath from Lewis Road (Istead Rise) to Nurstead Church Lane. Whilst there is a public footpath (Nash Street to Nurstead Court), it requires crossing the A227 on a blind bend (at the junction of Nash Bank and Nash Street).

Whilst there are multiple routes in and out of Istead Rise the main two are the Wrotham Road and Broad Ditch Road. Wrotham Road is often congested and can queue from the A2 junction to the northern part of the Istead Rise estate. The Broad Ditch Road route is less popular when heading north as the New Barn Road is very narrow in places after Broad Ditch Farm. All other routes from Istead Rise are country lanes with some passing places and cannot be considered suitable for heavy traffic. The potential increase in cars will only add to the existing congestion. There is no pedestrian footpath on Broad Ditch Road or New Barn Road.

According to the National Planning Policy Framework document, Promoting Sustainable Transport, item 110: "Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes". There is no genuine choice other than the car!

Summary

The proposed development does not provide "significant benefits to the local community". Rather it will reduce our local green belt, increase pollution, increase congestion, increase the risk of flooding and put a significant and unnecessary strain on local services. For these reasons, I strongly object to the planning application 20251233 (PP-14468593) Land At Rose Farm Downs Road Istead Rise Gravesend Kent.