

20260521

Dear Mr Hart,

I refer to your letter of 26 May and am writing to object to the application form approval of Conditions 2,5,8,9,11 and 12 attached to planning permission ref No 20250721. Specifically Conditions 2 and 9. Perhaps I am too verbose but my comments exceeded the limited space allowed in your online form. My objections are as follows:

Mini Roundabout (Condition 2).

No application appears to have been made for Conservation Area consent, without which the proposed alterations within the Conservation Area cannot be implemented. The Lower Higham Conservation Area Appraisal states at several points that the development of Lower Higham is centred around the cross roads. Replacing these with a mini roundabout will be visually intrusive to the detriment of the Conservation Area, as described in the Supplementary Planning Document.

As set out in para 3.2 of the Lower Higham Conservation Area Appraisal "The village is subject to heavy lorries driving to and from the former Nuralite Works site along Canal Road as well as skip lorries along Lower Higham Road (sic). This use has a visually detrimental effect on road verges, hedges etc in and adjacent to Lower Higham and may also cause some pedestrian danger", not to mention horses. Lower Higham benefits from 'Dark Skies' due to the lack of street lighting and the fact that the existing Lights have all been replaced by the Parish Council with LED downlighters, which has been of significant benefit to nocturnal animals, bats, etc. Any consent, if granted, should make it clear that no additional street lights should be installed.

The diagrams and sketches referred to in the application documents (on SCP 230503-0105) have not been submitted (or as a minimum they have not been uploaded on the website) and so the Regulatory Board does not have sufficient detailed information upon which to make a decision and the public are denied the relevant information upon which they can base their comments, contrary to the provisions of statute. However it would appear that yellow lines are proposed to stop residents parking outside their houses. It is unclear whether deliveries will be allowed (there is no gas North of the railway line, and in common with many rural areas, oil fired heating is a feature of many dwellings). Does the Applicant expect delivery lorries to park on the roundabout (which they will need to do from necessity)? What arrangements is the Applicant making for alternative car parking areas so that existing dwellings/ residents are not disadvantaged by its high handed proposals. The Applicant should meet the costs of providing alternative arrangements. The application documents appear to suggest that there will be a plethora of road signs, further detracting from the visual amenity of the Conservation Area.

The application area for the mini roundabout appears to include part of my garden and orchard but I have not received any communication from the Applicant.

No sweep lines have been provided to demonstrate that the proposed roundabout is of sufficient size for buses and articulated 40 tonne HGVs. At present the crossroads is used by school buses to turn around and then they park on the railway

bridge awaiting school children (some of whom walk down Gore Green Road or Lower Rochester Road).

Traffic Management (Condition 9).

I object to the request to allow staff and others to commence work at 7 am and finish at 7 pm as set out in Paragraph 3.1 of the Construction Traffic Management Plan. All traffic movements should be restricted to the proposed hours of 8 am to 6 pm, in the interests of not disrupting residents too much from traffic noise. Similarly if Saturday working is to be allowed, this should not result in traffic movements before 8 am.

The CTMP majors on 50 vehicle movements an hour, in fact table 4.1 on page 14 shows that this will depend on the phasing of demolition/remediation and construction. as a result, there is insufficient information to allow the Planning Committee to approve the proposal as there is no information as to how the number 50 has been calculated.

I note that KCC and GBC have been consulted on the CTMP, however part of the proposed routes are actually the responsibility of Medway Council, and consent should not be granted before they have commented on, and approved, the proposals. Medway Council should also be referenced in paragraph 5.4 (second bullet point).

I also object to the proposal to allow staff to use other routes as set out in paragraph 6.1. Higham village is already congested past the school and shops, additional traffic will only make this worse, increasing congestion.

Although not shown on SCP 230503-0105, Canal Road narrows significantly and is only 1 vehicle wide before it meets that part owned by Network Rail. This causes problems with the existing traffic flows and it is not unknown for vehicles to have to reverse out of Canal Road into Lower Rochester Road in order to allow traffic jams to clear. The originally proposed traffic light control system has been removed from the application. A Traffic Marshall/banksperson should be based where Canal Road becomes part of the KCC Highway network in order to facilitate/control traffic entering onto the public highway in order to avoid movement conflicts and deal with the effective blocking of Canal Road when residents have heating oil delivered or their septic tanks emptied, which currently causes some heated 'discussions' between vehicle drivers, which Kent Police have previously been involved in resolving.

You will note that I have copied this to my Ward Councillors.

Kind regards

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature and name of the sender.