



17th October 2023

Dear Inspectors,

HEARING STATEMENT

Please accept this letter as my hearing statement in relation to the examination of the Dover Local Plan.

I believe that the Local Plan is unsound due to the inclusion of site SAP50 (land off Short Street, Chillenden).

I am aware that many of my fellow villagers and residents of Short Street have also made representations. I am also aware that the Inspectors do not wish to hear the same arguments repeated from everyone. However these are overwhelming reasons why this site is not suitable and will inevitably be included to some degree or other in all my fellow residents' statements.

In essence the site is just about the most unsuitable one you could find in the village. It is at the very lowest point in the village and the whole village is in a bowl. Rainwater coming off the fields higher up regularly flows down the roads leading in to the village. Site SAP50 acts as an essential run off/soakaway for this surface water. Others have explained exactly why the known surface water flooding issues effectively put the flood risk in to the categories of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3.

Access is another key reason why this site should not be used. It is off a very narrow single lane on one side, Short Street, and another very poorly maintained single track road, Station Road on another. There is no pedestrian provision on these lanes. A Cart Track, which follows on from the concrete road to the sewage pumping station, goes right through the site. This track has been used continually by pedestrians, including myself, for all the 35 years that I have lived in the village. It is difficult to see where suitable access could be gained in to the site.

The fact that we have a Sewage Pumping Station in the village is because we are in a bowl. It is also situated right next to site SAP50, again illustrating that this is the lowest part of the village, and totally inappropriate for development.

I believe the Inspectors are looking at the appropriateness of Executive Homes. The village is not appropriate for Affordable Housing as there is no public transport (the three bus services a week were withdrawn in February of this year), no schools, no NHS GP Surgery and not near any employment centres. That would explain why Executive Homes had to be considered. Executive Homes would quite probably end up being second homes for Londoners or Air B&Bs. This is not going to help our housing crisis. The inclusion of SAP50 in the Local Plan does not help the country's need for new housing nor that of Dover.

The only other developments that have been permitted in all the 35 years I have lived in the village have not been on Agricultural land. They have been on brownfield sites.

As others have said a development of modern executive homes on a greenfield site in a rural hamlet with no public transport or community facilities, adjacent to a Grade 1 listed building (The Grange) and comprising a conservation area does not fit in with any of the Local Plan criteria.

In the light of all the above and the very detailed statements that many of my fellow residents have made I have to ask myself "how on earth can this site have ever been included in the Local Plan?" I have to say that it is because of the way Dover District Council have put together the Local Plan. In the case of small villages they have not carried out their own assessment of what is needed and what is appropriate. They have gone to local landowners to ask them to put forward parcels of land for consideration. Any landowner desperate for a windfall will inevitably put up inappropriate sites for consideration. Thus we end up with sites as unsound and inappropriate as SAP50.

Since making my representation when Dover District Council invited comments on the version of their Local Plan to be submitted for examination, I have been elected as a Councillor on Goodnestone Parish Council. Whilst Goodnestone Parish Council did not make their own representation at this stage I can inform the Inspectors that the Parish Council fully supports the Parishioners in their objections to the inclusion of SAP50 in the Local Plan and have asked me to convey that to your good selves.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Allen