



17 October 2023

To whom it may concern

Hearing Statement relating to SAP50, land off Short Street, Chillenden

We believe that the Local Plan is unsound in relation to the inclusion of site SAP50 (land off Short Street, Chillenden) for the following reasons:

1. Chillenden is a small hamlet of 45 properties comprising listed buildings, older properties and converted farm buildings. The small number of new properties (in the last 40 years or so) were built on infill land, on the sites of previous buildings (brownfield sites) thereby conserving the rural nature of the hamlet. Site SAP50 is on agricultural land, a greenfield site located outside the current habitation boundary. The site also includes a conservation area, it adjoins a Grade II listed property and is bisected by a well-used footpath which allows residents and walkers to avoid the narrow lanes. The recommendation for executive houses on this site would have a detrimental impact on the look and nature of Chillenden due to the modern styling of this type of property and also the increase in traffic volume that will necessarily be created, along very narrow lanes with no passing places or footways. Despite the inaccurate statement in the Landscape Assessment (that the site is well-screened by hedges and trees) it is obvious to anyone looking at the site that it would not be possible to screen any development from view from either the Grade II listed Chillenden Windmill or the Sandwich Road as the boundary hedges are not anywhere near high enough.
2. Chillenden is situated in the bottom of a 'bowl' and as such experiences regular surface water flooding after periods of heavy rain. Torrents of rainwater coming off the fields higher up regularly flow down all the roads leading into the village and existing drainage struggles to cope with the amount of water, which results in high volumes of water flowing and collecting on Station Road and Short Street. This is a frequent occurrence, every time it rains heavily, even for a short period of time. Site SAP50 acts as an essential run-off/soakaway for surface water from these roads. Several Chillenden properties have experienced flooding and overflowing drains in recent years and any development on the site would result in the village losing this essential run-off land and putting properties adjacent to the site at an even higher risk of flooding. It should be noted that the Barns off Short Street are situated significantly below the surface level of site SAP50. Our property (Yew Tree Barn) is also significantly lower than Short Street's road level (3 feet in both cases) and surface water frequently collects in the road adjacent to our house.

The proposed site has been shown, via an independent assessment (attached) to be a flood risk for adjacent properties should development take place. This risk is increased by the impacts of climate change and the increasing incidence of flash flooding and storm flooding. The declaration of a climate emergency by DDC recognizes the impacts of climate change

and thus proposed building on this site is contra to The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 with regard to adaptation and mitigation: "Development plan documents must include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change."

3. The size of the development site was originally 1.02ha but this was reduced by 40% to 0.66ha having taken into account the flood risk area of the site. It is of great concern that the indicative number of properties proposed for the site was not reduced proportionally by 40% (ie. from 5 to 3).
4. The site should not have been included in the Local Plan because statements against and serious concerns about the development of SAP50 listed in (i) the Heritage Assessment, (ii) the Habitats Regulations Assessment, (iii) the Sustainability Assessment and (iv) the Environmental Impact Assessment appear to have been ignored.
5. The site is not suitable for development because there is no possible access to SAP50 off Short Street via the existing concrete track, without vehicles driving over our property or our neighbours' properties due to the tight turning area. Access could only be managed by creating a new entrance road and additional junction off Short Street which would require the removal of the hedgerow, which is contrary to the statement in the Housing and Employment Site Allocations document which states that the hedgerows should be retained and enhanced.

DDC states on its website that the Local Plan "provides the planning policy framework to guide the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities for housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as the basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places." 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 II listed building, comprising a conservation area and surrounded by fields does not fulfil any of the Local Plan's criteria. The developer's statement contains inaccurate information and is aimed at making money for the landowner and not contributing in any way to the principles of the Local Plan. For all the reasons outlined above, SAP50 should not be included as a potential site for housing development in the Local Plan

From Andrew and Rosalind Beeching