

From: Louisa Dobson [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2025 17:19
To: Consultations
Subject: Formal Objection – Proposed Development of 170 Houses at Rattington Street (Site N32), Chartham

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To whom this may concern,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development of 170 houses on Site N32, Rattington Street, in the village of Chartham.

While I fully support the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield sites — such as the nearby Chartham Paper Mill (Site N31) — I strongly oppose the development of greenfield Site N32 for the reasons outlined below.

1. Highways and Transport Infrastructure

- Rattington Street is a narrow lane, with no footpaths or cycle routes, sharp bends, and single-track bridges. It is not suited to heavy traffic.
- Shalmsford Street, where the primary school is located, is already congested and dangerous for pedestrians.
- Speed Watch has recorded 136 speeding vehicles in 20 sessions over two years, mostly between 7am–11am, showing the road is used as a rat run.
- There is no car park for the train station, and the bus service is unreliable.
- An estimated 470 extra vehicles (from this and the Paper Mill site combined) would overwhelm current infrastructure.
- One of the proposed access routes is privately owned and will not be available for use.

- The last traffic survey was conducted over 7 years ago and is now out of date. A new assessment is urgently required.

2. Public Health and Wellbeing

- Increased vehicle emissions will affect air quality, especially around the school.
- GP services are already under pressure, and the school is often oversubscribed.
- The proposal does not support community health or wellbeing.

3. Heritage and Landscape Impact

- The development would permanently alter the views and rural character of the Stour Valley landscape.
- It risks the coalescence of Chartham with St Augustine's, undermining the village's identity and violating the Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment.
- The Neighbourhood Plan clearly states the need to preserve village character and green space.

4. Flooding, Drainage, and Environmental Risk

- The site is adjacent to the Chartham Conservation Area and near the River Stour and Nailbourne, both prone to flooding.
- More hard surfaces will increase surface water runoff and flood risk.
- The potential environmental impact on Stodmarsh Nature Reserve due to nitrates and phosphates must not be overlooked.
- Development in this area is inconsistent with the NPPF's commitment to sustainable and environmentally sound development.

5. Agricultural Land Loss

- This site is high-quality agricultural land, used for arable farming for over 30 years.
- The NPPF urges protection of “Best and Most Versatile” agricultural land (grades 1–3a).
- Given food supply risks due to climate and geopolitical instability, protecting productive land is critical.
- Natural England's 25-year plan emphasises the need to preserve soil quality and sustainable land use.

6. Ecological Impact

- The site includes ancient woodland, home to bats (a protected species), owls, badgers, foxes, and other wildlife.
- Fragmentation of the habitat will cause long-term ecological damage.

- Kent Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust have been alerted to concerns.

7. Incompatible with Strategic National Policy

As Prime Minister Keir Starmer recently stated:

“Brownfield first... Nobody’s talking about building all over the countryside. That has to be preserved, of course.”

— BBC Radio Derby interview

Site N31 (Paper Mill) offers a far more appropriate location for development, without destroying Chartham’s rural identity or valuable farmland.

In conclusion, I respectfully urge that the proposal for Site N32 be rejected on the basis of:

- Infrastructure inadequacy
- Public health and road safety risks
- Harm to landscape and heritage
- Environmental and flooding concerns
- Loss of valuable farmland and habitat
- Contradictions with national and local planning policy

Thank you for taking the time to consider this objection. Please confirm receipt of this email.

Yours sincerely,

Louisa Dobson

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