

LYNSTED with KINGSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL

PRESENTATIONS TO SWALE PLANNING COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2022



Julien Speed, Chairman, Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Council

“Lynsted Lane by reason of restricted width, poor alignment and sub-standard junction with London Road is considered unsuitable as a means of access to the proposed development. The existing road network in the vicinity of the site has insufficient capacity”.

Not my words, that’s KCC, objecting to houses on the West side of the Lane. Yet they don’t object when it’s on the opposite side. They’ve been hoodwinked by developers pretending they only want to build 10 houses, when we know they plan 50.

The highways case is flawed. A Road Safety Audit based on one site visit in the summer holidays. No traffic counting. A parking survey undertaken at half past midnight on one weekday and one Sunday, non-compliant with the Lambeth Methodology. No attempt made to survey what happens during the day, when people from surrounding villages park in the Lane to visit shops and services on the A2. Delivery vans, buses and HGVs then cause total gridlock. Real-world conditions ignored in favour of selective evidence.

Displacing parking further south on the blind bend is a serious loss of amenity to residents, no longer able to park outside their own homes. Those from nearby villages, without convenient parking will drive to Faversham instead. Teynham’s already seen 30 businesses close since 1998, this would tip more over the edge.

There’s no active travel option. Local primary schools are full. No secondary school. The one remaining GP re-locating to Sittingbourne. KCC axing every bus route in Lynsted. The train station a long walk and a lousy service. It’s a recipe for more cars and more pollution.

The site is located outside the settlement boundary of Teynham. These boundaries don’t have fuzzy edges.

Policy DM31 makes clear farmland development will only be permitted when there’s overriding need that cannot be met on land within the built-up area boundaries. Development on BMV land (which this is) will not be permitted unless it’s allocated for development by the Local Plan (which it isn’t). Or where there’s no alternative site on land of lower grade. There are brownfield sites for 10 houses.

Policy ST3: “at locations in the open countryside, outside the built-up area boundaries, development will not be permitted, unless supported by national planning policy and able to demonstrate it would contribute to protecting and enhancing the countryside”.

So, this plan is contrary to local policy, but also national policy.

NPPF chapter 16 para 201 states consent should be refused unless harm is necessary to achieve public benefits that outweigh that harm. Ten expensive houses offer no benefits, only disbenefits, to the Lynsted Lane community. They ruin the setting of three Grade 2 listed buildings and close an Important Local Countryside Gap.

The lack of a five-year supply does NOT mean houses should be built in the wrong place. The tilted balance is NOT engaged here.

At the last committee, you voted unanimously against this application. Nothing whatsoever has changed since and I urge you to reject it again on the wide range of breaches to local and national policy.

Thank you.

Jacqueline Langdon-Bassett, Parish Councillor and Lynsted Lane resident

I speak today for the residents of Lynsted Lane who live near the London Road and vehemently oppose the planning application for these 10 houses.

They would immediately increase the flow of traffic which is already at high capacity by at least 20 cars, the majority of houses these days are a 2 car family and many have even more. These will be cars leaving and returning between 2 and possibly 8 times a day turning in and out of this very narrow lane.

As residents our homes are constantly invaded by fumes from idling cars, lorries, buses and industrial vehicles that are caught in traffic jams, trying to pass parked cars and huge earth moving lorries that thunder up and down the lane, using it as a rat run from Lenham to Tonge and the new houses being built in Bapchild.

We're not happy with the idea of a Give Way sign 55 metres from the busy A2. Those travelling north to join the A2 will be expected to "take a gamble" on whether traffic will arrive from the A2 as there is no line of sight on which to judge safe movement. We will have more idling and 'stop-start' noise and emission pollution right underneath our front windows. This is an area immediately adjacent to an AQMA.

Building more houses will add to the already heavy parking which occurs in the lower part of the Lane. Restricting parking here will push residents further up, making us park on a dangerous blind bend. I speak for myself and others who come home late at night, in the dark, wet and the cold. I will have to park away from my property, in a deserted area, opposite fields, sometimes having to carry heavy bags. This makes for a feeling of vulnerability and worry for my safety - who is in those fields, behind the bushes!! This loss of amenity is an unreasonable imposition by the developers.

Drivers from surrounding villages will also be confronted by long walks down Lynsted Lane for goods and services. But the evidence from the A2 shows that people would rather break the law on yellow boxes and double yellow lines than walk 10 metres, let alone 200 metres.

I also ask you to look at the bigger picture. Ten houses are being applied for, but the developer's submission to the Local Plan consultation makes clear they intend to build 50.

10 houses = 20 cars, 50 houses = 100 plus cars travelling multiple times throughout the day. We feel the developers have deliberately only applied for 10 at this stage, to avoid the extra scrutiny that 50 would be subjected to.

Residents believe it's a cynical ploy to set a precedent for future developments off the new access road that will cause even wider harms to us, and to local businesses who will lose footfall from surrounding villages.

Mike Whiting, Borough Councillor, Teynham & Lynsted Ward

Mr Chairman, I am grateful to you. What I say, I say also on behalf of Cllr Bowen [absent, ill].

It is very disappointing that officers have brought this application back to committee after members voted unanimously against it last time.

In my view, the new highways technical note does not meet previous concerns.

We know that KCC highways objected to a proposed development on the other side of Lynsted Lane. I believe those objections apply equally to this application. Yes, this is for ten homes, but as we have heard the end game may be as many as fifty.

If that is the end game then it should surely fail the test of prematurity, given where we are with the new Local Plan.

This development is in totally the wrong place. Any reasonable and objective assessment reveals the real-world harms to our community it would cause.

And Lynsted Lane is a community in its own right, one that has evolved over the centuries, in keeping with the historic pattern of ribbon development.

That community will have the amenity value of convenient and safe parking torn from it.

Under the highways proposals, residents and their visitors will have to drive 200 metres south along Lynsted Lane, past two blind bends, simply to park their cars. Where delivery vans will safely park is anyone's guess.

Mr Chairman, I believe, as do the residents, that the proposed changes to the highway are based on false assumptions about the parking behaviour of residents and visitors and the volumes of traffic in Lynsted Lane.

The placement of Give Way signs at the narrowing of the Lane fails to meet the criticism that drivers will have no line-of-sight to oncoming traffic. Members, you can't give way to traffic you cannot see.

Those from surrounding villages use what parking spaces there are to access goods and services along the A2. If they cannot park as they do now in the lane they will likely go elsewhere.

In my view, Mr Chairman, this half-baked traffic scheme will increase the threat to road users, cause backing up onto the A2, creating congestion in the air quality management area.

The only GP in the village is relocating to The Memorial, affecting thousands of patients. Local bus and rail services are in decline, shops on the A2 are already struggling. Ask yourself, members, will footfall from ten new homes reverse all of this? Of course it won't.

Will we see fewer cars on the road? Of course we won't, and Lynsted Lane will get busier still as a result

As shown in the 200-plus submissions, just about every interest in this community is harmed for the sake of just ten homes.

That harm far outweighs the public benefit of these new houses.

Mr Chairman, in closing, the last time your committee considered this application, one member in voting against said "this is the easiest planning decision I've ever made".

I hope all members will follow his lead and vote for refusal this evening.

Thank you.