

Appeal by Gladman Developments Limited

Site: Land at the Hill, Bekesbourne Lane, East of Bekesbourne Hill, Bekesbourne, Canterbury, CT4 5EA (also referred to by the parties as “The Hill, Littlebourne”)

PINS Ref: APP/J2210/W/25/3373183

LPA Ref: CA/23/00484

Inquiry dates: 17-19 February 2026

OPENING FOR CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

1. This is the Opening Statement for Canterbury City Council (“CCC”) at the inquiry held for the appeal by Gladman Developments Limited (“the Appellant”) against the refusal of permission for 300 homes at the site, Land at the Hill, Bekesbourne Lane, East of Bekesbourne Hill, Bekesbourne, Canterbury, CT4 5EA.

CCC’s case

2. CCC’s case for the appeal is that planning permission ought to be granted by the Inspector, subject to a 106 agreement. CCC is not defending any of the 5 reasons for refusal, nor calling any evidence.
3. The Application first came before the Planning Committee on 13 May 2025. An Officer Report had been prepared for the 13 May 2025 meeting, which recommended granting permission subject to s.106 contributions and conditions. The Planning Committee deferred the application to gain further information about specific concerns raised about the development. The application then came before the Council’s Planning Committee meeting of 08 July 2025, where a further OR had been prepared, addressing the matters asked about in the meeting of 13 May 2025, which had led to the deferral. The further Officer’s Report also recommended approval subject to s.106 and conditions. The Planning Committee voted to refuse permission for 5 reasons for refusal.

4. Legal advice was subsequently sought by the CCC, and at a further meeting of 11 November 2025, the Planning Committee reviewed the decision. At that meeting, (to quote from the publicly available Minutes of the meeting), *“councillors carefully reconsidered the justification and the evidence on which they based their reasons for refusal of the application. A proposal was put that the Council does not continue to defend the reasons for refusal at the inquiry and this was seconded. When put to a vote, the proposal was AGREED.”*
5. Further to the vote of the Planning Committee on 11 November 2025, CCC then informed the Inspector and the Appellant that it would not defend any reasons for refusal nor call any evidence.
6. A Statement of Common Ground (‘SoCG’) has been agreed, which details the matters in agreement between CCC and the Appellant. The SoCG details the relevant background including details about the appeal site, as well as the reasons for refusal, and the policy framework. The particulars set out within that document are not repeated here.
7. CCC has worked with the Appellant and with Kent County Council in respect of the s.106 agreement and CIL compliance, those matters are addressed in CCC’s CIL Compliance Statement, and can be discussed further in the s.106 session.
8. CCC stand ready to assist the parties with any matters as required.

Peter Cruickshank
6 Pump Court Chambers
16 February 2026