# Plans submitted for housing estate spark concerns in Five Oak Green



Outline plans have been submitted for the development of an estate comprising up to 130 homes in Five Oak Green, a village in Kent, which has raised concerns among local residents regarding potential flooding and the strain on existing infrastructure. The proposed estate spans 26 acres across two farming fields within a designated Green Belt area and includes plans for a cycle link to the local primary school, aimed at improving access for residents.

The proposal was put forward to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, under which half of the new homes would be designated as affordable housing. The developers, B.Yond Homes Ltd, have cited the council's identified need for 6,000 new homes to be built between 2006 and 2026, with an allocation of six per cent required in village areas like Five Oak Green. Located approximately six miles from Tunbridge Wells and under five miles from Tonbridge, the site has gained interest due to its proximity to these urban centres.

B.Yond Homes Ltd, which is associated with Rydon Group Ltd, referred to the site as "Grey Belt" in their application. This term, which has gained traction following its adoption in government planning policy last year, refers to Green Belt land that has been previously developed or does not contribute effectively to the purposes of Green Belt designation.

Key features of the proposed development include a dedicated off-road cycle and pedestrian link to Capel Primary School, which would replace the existing narrow pavement, as well as a new 30-space staff car park complete with two disabled bays and a "daily mile" track for outdoor exercise activities. Moreover, the plan suggests the installation of a "village gateway" to enhance road safety by discouraging speeding near the school.

In their submission, B.Yond Homes emphasised that a significant portion of the site falls within Flood Zone 1, which is regarded as low risk for flooding according to the Environment Agency's mapping. However, they acknowledged that the north-eastern corner of the site does intersect with Flood Zones 2 and 3. B.Yond Homes stated: "Most of the site lies outside of the active floodplain and is suitable for accommodating residential development, it is however, clear that the floodplain affects a significant number of existing residential properties to the east of the site," outlining their intention to incorporate drainage systems to manage surface water effectively.

Despite these reassurances, local residents have expressed strong opposition to the proposed development. One resident, Simon Payne, described the situation as "heartbreaking and deeply concerning," highlighting that past flooding in 2020 saw water redirected onto the land to protect local homes. He warned that constructing 130 properties could exacerbate flooding issues for surrounding areas, saying, "Building 130 properties on here will almost certainly mean that all waters will flood Sychem Place and the main road regularly."

Another resident, Victoria Everest, expressed her worries about the implications for local services, including the village school and NHS resources, stating that the current infrastructure is already under pressure. She noted the potential for residential roads to become congested due to increased traffic during school drop-off and pick-up times, alongside concerns for the traditional hoppers’ huts that serve as temporary homes to seasonal visitors in the area.

As the proposal moves through the planning stages, the community in Five Oak Green continues to voice their trepidations regarding the impact of such developments on their village's character and functionality. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will ultimately decide the fate of this proposal after considering the feedback from local residents and assessing the broader implications for the area.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.landatfinchesfarm.com/faqs/> - This URL provides details about the development plans at Finches Farm, Five Oak Green, including measures to mitigate flooding and improve infrastructure. It supports claims about drainage systems and the focus on affordable housing.
* <https://docs.planning.org.uk/20231019/238/S2MOA9TYJDW00/lwhymolnmwlmll4f.pdf> - While not directly related to the development in Five Oak Green, this PDF discusses general planning principles and redevelopment proposals, which can serve as background information for similar projects.
* <https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/471952/TWLP_124-Matter-3-Issue-2-Five-Oak-Green-Bypass.pdf> - This document addresses strategic planning in the Tunbridge Wells area, including infrastructure developments and traffic impacts. It supports broader discussions around housing growth and traffic in the region.
* <https://www.landatfinchesfarm.com> - This site details proposals for residential development at Finches Farm, highlighting aspects like public open space and flood attenuation measures. These elements align with concerns and features discussed in the article.
* <https://forms.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/404444/SI_146c.pdf> - This PDF provides information about the development's traffic impact and site access, supporting claims about infrastructure and vehicle trips generated by the proposed development.