

Appendix 2 — Community Briefer: Why HOM 2.16 Is Unsound

A response to the proposed 1,000-home allocation and four reasons it is unsound

Details of responder: Name:

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The proposal: Policy **HOM 2.16** would allocate land at High Lane for **1,000 homes**—around a **40% increase** in the village’s housing stock. High Lane Village Neighbourhood Forum considers this scale and location unsound because the evidence does not show that the proposal is positively prepared, justified, effective or consistent with national policy.

What we are asking for: Delete HOM 2.16, or substantially reduce it to an evidence-led capacity < 250 and reassess it against brownfield and better-served urban-adjacent alternatives. If any allocation remains, essential infrastructure and environmental safeguards must be specific, funded, phased and enforceable before homes are occupied.

1. Not positively prepared

Plain English: The Plan should meet housing needs through a sustainable strategy supported by the infrastructure people will need. The evidence does not show that High Lane can absorb growth on this scale while maintaining community vitality and giving residents good access to schools, health care, shops, work and leisure.

- No rail station and limited bus services.
- Existing congestion on the A6 corridor.
- Pressure on GP, dental and school capacity.
- No complete, funded programme for transport, water, wastewater, drainage and utility upgrades.

Key Local Plan policies: Strategic Policy 1 (Spatial strategy); Strategic Policy 3 (Sustainable development); COM 1, COM 2, COM 3 and COM 7 (health, community facilities, education and health care); HOM 1, especially clauses 2(b)–(c) and 2(f); HOM 2a; and HOM 2b/HOM 2.16.

Takeaway: *It is not responsible to approve 1,000 homes until the infrastructure needed to support them is identified, funded and ready when residents need it.*

2. Not justified

Plain English: The Council must show that HOM 2.16 is the most appropriate option when compared fairly with reasonable alternatives. The evidence does not provide a clear borough-wide comparison explaining why 1,000 homes at High Lane are preferable to brownfield sites, urban capacity or better-served urban-adjacent grey-belt locations.

The Green Belt evidence for parcels HL7 and HL8 should clearly explain how each parcel was scored, why it is treated as grey belt, what exceptional circumstances justify release and how the effect on the gap between High Lane and Hazel Grove was weighed. The assessment says development would reduce that gap and weaken the sense of separation, but the Plan does not show how that acknowledged harm was balanced against the claimed benefits of allocating the site.

Key Local Plan policies: Strategic Policies 1 and 3; ENV 14 (Effective use of land); HOM 1; HOM 2a; and HOM 2b/HOM 2.16, read with the Policies Map and Green Belt evidence.

Takeaway: *The Council should not sacrifice High Lane’s Green Belt without proving that this site is more sustainable and less harmful than the available alternatives.*

3. Not effective

A policy must be deliverable, not simply aspirational. For HOM 2.16, the Plan does not clearly identify the necessary works, who will deliver them, what they will cost, how they will be funded, when they will be completed or how occupation will be prevented until essential infrastructure is ready.

- **Transport:** cumulative effects on the A6, A555 approaches, local junctions and residential roads need to be tested, with funded public-transport, walking, cycling and highway measures.
- **Services:** school, health, water, wastewater, drainage and utility capacity must be confirmed before occupation.
- **Site constraints:** mapped mining features—including the 67 mine entries cited in HLVNF’s earlier evidence—plus flood zones 2 and 3, drainage, ecology and landscape constraints may affect capacity, viability and phasing.

Key Local Plan policies: Strategic Policy 3; COM 2, COM 3 and COM 7; ENV 7, ENV 8, ENV 9 and ENV 10; CR 1; HOM 1; HOM 2b/HOM 2.16; and transport policies INF 9 and INF 10.

Takeaway: *A promise of future mitigation is not a delivery plan: without funded works, accountable delivery bodies and binding occupation triggers, HOM 2.16 is not deliverable*

4. Not consistent with national policy

National policy expects major development to be directed to places that are, or can genuinely be made, sustainable. It also requires proper justification for changing Green Belt boundaries, support for the vitality of rural communities and avoidance or mitigation of unacceptable transport, flood, land-stability and environmental effects. For HOM 2.16, the Regulation 19 evidence does not yet show that these requirements can be met at a location with no rail station, limited bus provision, existing A6 congestion and unresolved infrastructure and environmental constraints. This site proposal fails to address both NPPF paragraph 83: rural housing should enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. NPPF paragraph 110: Significant development should focus on sustainable locations, limit travel and offer a genuine choice of transport.

Key Local Plan policies: ENV 1, ENV 2, ENV 3, ENV 4 and ENV 5 cover nature, trees and landscape; ENV 13a, ENV 13c and ENV 15 cover local character and design; ENV 7, ENV 9 and ENV 10, CR 1 covers climate resilience; HOM 8; and HOM 2b/HOM 2.16 contains the site-specific allocation requirements.

Takeaway: *The Inspector should not endorse major Green Belt development where the evidence still fails to demonstrate sustainable growth, justified release and effective environmental protection*

Preferred change outcome: remove HOM 2.16 and redistribute housing to more sustainable alternatives. If the allocation is retained, substantially reduce it and test an evidence-led range, including HLVNF’s suggested 100 homes, through a fresh comparison of alternatives. Any retained development must have a comprehensive masterplan and binding requirements for transport, schools, health care, utilities, wastewater, drainage, flood and mining risk, biodiversity, landscape buffers, phasing and infrastructure delivery before occupation. **This objection does not oppose housing in principle.** It asks for the right homes in the right places, at a scale that local roads, services and the environment can support—and for the Council to publish clear evidence before committing High Lane to major expansion.