



Meopham Parish Council
St Johns Centre
Wrotham Road
Meopham
DA13 0AA

Planning Department
Gravesham Borough Council
Sent by email

Dear Avril

**Re: Application 20250143
Land On The Western Side of Ridge Lane, Meopham**

Following discussion by our full council meeting; the Council wishes to provide the following response:

Having reviewed the Planning Application, I refer to the Planning Statement item 6.1: Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that: "Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances." As evidenced by the cover photo on the Planning Statement, a large area of woodland has been completely cleared for this building conversion, leaving a significant gap in an otherwise near-continuous tree canopy. Planning Statement item 6.9 acknowledges that "...the site is designated as 'priority habitat' as deciduous woodland, the trees within the site were removed at the beginning of 2020."

Work started on 8 April 2020 and was completed 1 Feb 2023, without a planning application or approval. A high fence was erected around the site to obscure the view of the building works; the conversion was done surreptitiously, upon speculation that retroactive planning approval could be gained at a later date. Although a stable building existed previously and the footprint and dimensions of that building have been adhered to, the previously existing building was never a residence for humans.

In addition, the planning application shows disposal of foul sewage as "unknown" and that there are "no" plans for waste storage and collection.

Destruction of woodland and illicit building activity is of significant harm to the Green Belt; retrospective planning approval will serve to encourage further such destruction. Therefore Meopham Parish Council objects to the application and encourages enforcement action.

Yours Sincerely

Lisa Winter
Clerk and RFO