

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 01/02/2025 11:08 PM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	St Josephs Convent Of Mercy Hillside Drive Gravesend Kent DA12 1NY
Proposal:	Change of use of surplus convent buildings into two 6-bedroom townhouses, demolition of existing single-storey extensions to the west and construction of a 2-bedroom attached chalet bungalow, reorganisation of the convent car park and alterations to create a front entrance, erection of two single-storey bays to the rear elevation, dividing up the existing garden, and forming a new driveway to access the gardens to the rear.
Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] gravesend

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments: I am writing to formally object to specific aspects of the above planning application on the grounds of material planning considerations and conflicts with local policy. My concerns are outlined below, supported by evidence and relevant planning principles.

Misrepresentation of Road Ownership and Access Rights

The application contains inaccuracies regarding the ownership and access rights of the private road, which is legally divided among existing residents as stipulated in individual property deeds. Key issues include:

- Access Discrepancies: Each of the 13 existing households owns and maintains the section of road fronting their property. The applicant has failed to provide any legal evidence demonstrating entitlement to alter or claim ownership of, or access to, the road. It is important to note that the recent caution placed on the land has no legal weight and does not grant any additional access rights to the road as confirmed by my solicitor and other residents on Hillside Drive.

-Unclaimed Central Section: The unclaimed central section of the main road remains open and unregistered, as it is used by residents and services as a turning circle as a cul-de-sac style access. Reducing or removing this area would create a safety hazard, particularly for emergency services needing to enter or exit the road. Any obstruction to this turning circle would pose a significant risk.

-Maintenance Liability: The proposed development, which includes an annex and two 6-bedroom houses, would place an undue burden on the existing maintenance agreement shared by current residents. The deeds explicitly

obligate residents to fund the upkeep of the main road, as it is a shared access route. The addition of new properties would unfairly redistribute these costs to existing residents.

-Highway Safety: The increased traffic generated by two 6-bedroom houses and an annex would pose significant safety risks. The road was not designed to accommodate such capacity, and the additional vehicles from residents and guests would likely cause bottlenecks, congestion, and potential hazards. It should also be noted that the unclaimed central section of the road (T1), which serves as a turning circle for exiting the road, has remained unregistered for several years. Plans are underway for this land to be registered under the Hillside Association, ensuring continued access for all residents.

Suggested Actions:

-Require the applicant to submit a legally binding agreement clarifying the current ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the road.

-Redesign the plans to ensure that all work and access remain within the scope of the applicant's deed, without encroaching on other residents' properties or land.

-Legally commit to including provisions in current and future deeds requiring any new dwellings to contribute annually to road maintenance and adhere to the same safety and upkeep responsibilities as existing residents.

Overdevelopment and Encroachment via the 2-Bed Annex

The proposed annex represents excessive development that fails to respect the site's constraints and the character of the surrounding area:

-Scale and Density: The annex exceeds the site's capacity, resulting in a cramped layout that is inconsistent with the low-density character of the neighborhood.

-Encroachment: The plans suggest that the annex's side drive may intrude on land owned by neighboring properties, violating established deed boundaries.

-Loss of Privacy: The proximity of the annex to adjacent homes raises concerns about overlooking and overshadowing, which would harm the residential amenities of neighbouring properties.

-Policy Conflict: The proposal conflicts with local planning policies regarding design, density, and the preservation of existing boundaries.

Recommendations for Modification

To address these concerns, I recommend the following modifications to the application:

-Remove or repurpose the Annex: The development of two 6-bedroom houses alone would make efficient use of the site without resulting in overdevelopment.

-Clarify Road Ownership: Require the submission of a Land Registry-compliant plan and a legally binding agreement to resolve disputes regarding access and maintenance responsibilities.

-Talk to the Hillside Association regarding rights and obligation of the existing road infrastructure and Service.

Conclusion

While the conversion of the convent to residential use is broadly acceptable, the inclusion of the annex and the inaccuracies regarding road ownership render the current proposal unsustainable and detrimental to the interests of local residents. I urge the council to reject the application unless these material concerns are adequately addressed for the residence.

Kind regards