

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 09/04/2025 10:44 AM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Blackthorn Farm Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend Kent
Proposal:	Request for a screening opinion in accordance with The Town and Country Planning Act (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 in respect of the residential development proposal at Blackthorne Farm, Culverstone Green, Meopham.
Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] Carters Hill Lane Meopham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	I am writing to formally object to the proposed development at the above location due to significant concerns regarding its impact on local wildlife habitats and infrastructure. Under UK law, particularly the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, it is imperative that the planning process takes full account of the potential harm to both wildlife and the ability of local infrastructure to accommodate additional demand. 1. Impact on Protected Species The site in question is home to several species that are legally protected under UK and European legislation. These include species listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as barn owls and bats, and species protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, such as great crested newts and various bat species. The proposed development presents a significant risk to these protected species through habitat destruction, disturbance, and potential mortality. Failure to undertake a comprehensive ecological survey, including appropriate surveys for bat roosts, nesting birds, and other protected species, would be a violation of legal obligations. No assurance has been given that the development will not harm or disturb protected wildlife, contravening their protection under UK law. Moreover, if the development proceeds without proper consideration of these species, it would risk a violation of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which specifically protect species and habitats of national and international importance. 2. Destruction of Important Habitats The site contains significant habitats that support local biodiversity, including areas of ancient woodland, wetlands, and grasslands, all vital for the health of
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the ecosystem. These habitats provide shelter and food for a variety of species, many of which are already under threat. The destruction or degradation of these habitats due to development would have a severe and lasting impact on local wildlife populations. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, local authorities are required to take biodiversity into account in all their functions. The proposed development threatens to fragment and destroy these habitats, which could lead to the displacement or local extinction of species that rely on them for survival.

In addition, the removal of these habitats would contravene the UK's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Habitats Directive. Ensuring the protection of such valuable ecological sites is a fundamental responsibility of the local planning authority.

3. Lack of Mitigation Measures

Even if an ecological survey has been conducted, the proposed development lacks adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of wildlife habitats and species. According to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), any development that could result in harm to biodiversity must be subject to a thorough assessment and include measures to avoid, mitigate, or compensate for any negative impacts. In the case of this development, there has been no indication of appropriate measures to protect the species at risk, nor have provisions been made for creating new habitats or compensatory schemes.

The absence of a clear plan to mitigate the adverse impacts of the proposed development further underscores the importance of rejection. Without effective mitigation, the development could result in irreversible harm to local biodiversity, breaching the guidelines set out in both national and international law.

4. Local Infrastructure Strain

In addition to environmental concerns, I also wish to raise significant objections regarding the local infrastructure, which is already struggling to meet the demands of the current population. The area's schools, healthcare facilities, and transport networks are currently operating at or beyond capacity. Local schools are oversubscribed, with limited places available for new pupils, and significant additional demand would result in even greater pressure on an already stretched education system. Similarly, local GP surgeries are at full capacity, and securing appointments is increasingly difficult for existing patients.

This development would add a considerable number of new residents to the area, worsening the strain on public services. The planning application fails to demonstrate how these increased demands will be addressed. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that local authorities consider the ability of existing infrastructure to support new developments, ensuring that necessary improvements are in place to accommodate additional demand. No clear plans have been provided to upgrade local infrastructure, particularly in relation to schools, healthcare services, and transport.

The lack of a comprehensive infrastructure strategy suggests that the development is not being properly planned in terms of its long-term impact on the community. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that any development is sustainable and that public services can meet the needs of both current and future residents.

5. Legal Obligations of the Local Planning Authority

The local planning authority has a legal duty to assess the impacts of any proposed development on biodiversity and ensure that any new development does not adversely affect protected species or habitats. Under the Habitats Directive and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the authority must ensure that any development does not negatively impact sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Furthermore, the local authority must ensure that local infrastructure is capable of supporting new developments, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which requires adequate consideration of the capacity of local services to meet the needs of an expanding population.

The planning application, as it stands, does not sufficiently demonstrate how the legal requirements regarding both environmental protection and infrastructure provision will be met.

Conclusion

In light of the above concerns, I strongly urge the local planning authority to reject this application. The development poses a significant risk to local wildlife, particularly protected species and habitats, and fails to address the critical infrastructure needs of the local community. The lack of sufficient mitigation measures for environmental harm, combined with the already overstretched local services, makes this development unsustainable and inconsistent with both national and local planning policies.

I ask that the planning authority give full consideration to these issues and reject the proposed development in its current form. It is crucial that proper assessments are conducted, and that necessary infrastructure improvements are made before any new development is allowed to proceed.

Thank you for considering this objection.

Kind regards