

Dear Sirs

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 20250993

I am writing with my objection to the above planning application. This application is one of a number of significant planning applications either submitted or shortly to be submitted to Gravesham Borough Council. As such there are a number of comments common to all, but I have also included comments specific to this application.

Because of the size and scope of the applications I believe that they should be consolidated for the purposes of determining whether an EIA is required. The proposals would have the effect, if all approved, of increasing the population of Meopham by approximately one-third and turn it from a village to a town.

Meopham does not have the infrastructure to deal with such an increase, my objections are as follows:

- a) The A227 already hosts considerable amounts of traffic and there is severe congestion at peak times and whenever there is any disruption. There could potentially be up to a further 1,500 cars using the road, especially at peak times, and local side roads would not be able to support the increase. Public transport is severely inadequate therefore inevitably leading to many more cars amongst the increased population.
- b) The advent of the Lower Thames Crossing will inevitably lead to the A227 being used as a cut through, not only when the crossing is finished, but also during the construction phase, work will be carried out on the A2/M2 and traffic will attempt to get round this by using the A227 as a cut through from the M20.
- c) Has Meopham Medical Centre been consulted on how many extra doctors will be needed to service the increased population? Meopham's current medical facilities simply will not be able to cope with an increase in population of this magnitude. The ageing population means that medical needs in Meopham are higher than the national average. Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust currently supports a catchment area of 500,000 people, with hospital provisions being below the national average needed to support this level. How will they cope with the increase in the population expected and provide us all with the service we expect to receive?
- d) It has been said that people and children would be expected to cycle to and from Meopham in the absence of public transport. The A227 is already a very dangerous road and totally unsafe for cyclists. The increase in traffic will only exacerbate the danger.

These sites all sit on prime agricultural land, which has been farmed and producing food for centuries. Once concreted over this agricultural land will be lost forever and will *never* be replaced. We need to become more independent in food production in the future, not less. With the necessity to reduce our carbon footprints, how can it be the right thing to do to take away our ability to grow our own food, and thus increase the need for food imports. Totally hypocritical. There is nothing "grey" about these sites; they are green.

Gravesham has a comparatively local housing need according to all available figures and plenty of brownfield sites exist which when developed would more than adequately satisfy the need for social housing. For example the site of the old hospital in Bath Street would be ideal for development for social housing as it is close to shops and transport links, thus negating the need for private cars, which is entirely different to the case with the Meopham proposals.

Besides all of the above applying to this application I would like to draw attention to the proximity of the Helen Allison School for SEN pupils. SEN educational needs were recently highlighted by the Government and any proposal which would adversely affect such pupils (in terms of stress and sensory overload) should not be allowed. It was noticeable in the application that the proposer had not received the agreement of the Head Teacher to these plans.

In addition Longfield Road is extremely narrow at this point and suffers from parked cars, heavy congestion at school entry and exit times and many large waste lorries on their way to Longfield.

Yours faithfully

