

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 09/01/2026 4:54 PM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Land At Rose Farm Downs Road Istead Rise Gravesend Kent
Proposal:	Outline planning application for the demolition of 64 Downs Road and erection of up to 154No. residential dwellings (including affordable housing), with all matters reserved except for access. Creation of a new access from Downs Road.
Case Officer:	Adeoye Lawal

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Customer Details

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

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	Istead Rise is widely recognised as a peaceful, family-friendly residential village, historically valued for its quiet atmosphere, strong community spirit, local shops, green spaces, and close proximity to countryside walks. The scale and nature of this proposed development is fundamentally at odds with the established character of the area.

INSUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

There is simply insufficient infrastructure in Istead Rise to support an increase of this scale in the local population. I would expect to see clear and robust evidence demonstrating how essential services will be expanded to meet demand.

Local GP practice managers have already confirmed that practices serving this area are oversubscribed and operating beyond the capacity of their salaried GPs. As a Business Manager within the NHS, I can also advise that GP practices operate using an adjusted population list size, which reflects the specific health and care needs of their registered population, rather than just raw numbers.

Istead Rise has an existing high elderly demographic, and these patients understandably require more frequent and complex GP input than the average patient. This places additional and ongoing pressure on GP services. It is reasonable to assume that similar demographic pressures exist in neighbouring Meopham. Introducing a significant number of new residents without firm and

funded plans to expand primary care capacity is irresponsible and risks further restricting access to essential healthcare. This ultimately places existing residents at risk through reduced access to timely medical care.

The village primary school is also a small facility designed specifically for a small community, and local hospitals are widely known to be under extreme pressure, frequently operating in emergency mode due to insufficient capacity. Without meaningful investment and confirmed service expansion, this development would place an unacceptable strain on already overstretched infrastructure.

HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC IMPACT

Over the last decade, I have witnessed a significant increase in traffic using Downs Road, particularly as a rat-run when there are incidents on the A2. Despite this, no effective safety measures or speed-management solutions have been implemented. Vehicles regularly travel at excessive speeds along Downs Road, including emergency vehicles.

This issue is of particular concern given the presence of a small primary school on Downs Road. The risks to pedestrian and child safety are already evident, and any further increase in traffic generated by this development would significantly exacerbate an already dangerous situation. Only recently, a vehicle overturned on Downs Road, underlining the very real dangers that exist.

IMPACT ON WILDLIFE AND RURAL CHARACTER

Istead Rise, New Barn and Meopham have strong historic roots in farming and surrounding rural land. These areas support a wide variety of wildlife, including squirrels, bats, hedgehogs, pheasants, partridges, sparrowhawks and owls. The proposal fails to adequately address the potentially catastrophic impact this development would have on local wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

OVERDEVELOPMENT AND LOSS OF COMMUNITY IDENTITY

This proposal represents a clear case of overdevelopment. There must be a balance between rural and urban environments, and this development threatens to erode that balance entirely. By effectively bridging the gap between Istead Rise and New Barn, the scheme would permanently alter and harm the setting, identity, and special character of the community.

PARKING, SERVICES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

I understand that tradespeople will not be permitted to park vans within the new estate. It is unclear where these vehicles are expected to park, with Downs Road being the most likely option, despite frequent enforcement activity by traffic wardens in this area.

The local shop parade already struggles to cope with the current volume and size of vehicles. Additional demand from new residents will only worsen congestion and parking problems, leading to traffic backing up onto the main route into Istead Rise. Public transport provision has also been significantly reduced over recent years, further demonstrating that the necessary infrastructure to support this development is simply not in place.

IRREVERSIBLE IMPACT

This is not a small, incremental development that could be monitored and adapted over time. It is a large-scale proposal, and once built, its impacts will be irreversible. Should it later become apparent that the development does not work for the area, there will be no opportunity to undo the harm caused.

For all of the reasons outlined above, I strongly object to this planning application and urge the planning authority to give full consideration to the long-term consequences for infrastructure, safety, environment, and community character.

Kind regards