

22.11.2025

Dear Sir,

Re: application 20250992; land at Wrotham Road Meopham

Further to your notification of the outline application, and having viewed documentation, I take issue with numerous aspects which I had intended to address individually, but instead will restrict my comments to general areas, mainly from the design statements.

Q3 & 5 reflect the principal issues relevant, confirmed in public comments to date: it is contended the illustrative plans demonstrate accessibility of the sites: they do not in an acceptable manner, and the vehicular access and pedestrian crossings proposed for Wrotham Road will aggravate traffic problems, particularly at (the many) busy periods, and adversely affect air quality – mention of monitoring which is made, but no data provided. The 'welcome travel packs' mentioned are irrelevant, and will do nothing to help. For many years, the District and County Councils have resisted additional vehicular access, even for single properties, onto the A227: how is this reconciled with a proposal for up to 350 dwellings? The suggestion that inclusion of a parking area would serve local shops is ludicrous, evidenced by the fact that closer existing provisions are not well used. Mention is made of a bus service in the existing transport links, which is woefully inadequate with regards to frequency and operating hours.

Although generated by political preference, it is acknowledged that Councils in the region are required to have strategies and plans for housing provision. There are however more suitable sites in the local Boroughs, and a number of unbuilt provisions which would satisfy requirements if fully implemented. I do not believe it is demonstrated that the site is suitable 'Grey Belt', which needs to be checked against the 2020 study, and other policies to which the proposal is contrary.

The documents state that Meopham is a 'continual' (sic) development: it is not, and Planning Policies have long sought to retain pockets such as these fields to avoid the ribbon development which would otherwise result. To the detriment of the village.

The loss of agricultural land is contended as minimal, but this is a cumulative issue – in addition to which – although not always publicly accessible – they make a significant contribution to the visual amenity of this rural area.

I do not understand the logic of the suggested 'crown lifting and limited felling' of the tree belt adjoining Wrotham Road at the West edge of the site. What advantage could accrue from this? It would reduce screening (and limited noise reduction provided) of any development from Wrotham Road, and the reference to linking development with shops at The Parade is at least spurious: why is a visual link required, as their relative existence to each other would be obvious. Also, as the trees are deciduous, this would occur naturally between Autumn and Spring. The stated aspiration to 'retain enhance and protect landscape assets' is completely contradicted by such a proposal. Section C4 in the documentation considers a 'landscaped edge' a key characteristic to The Parade, again contradicted by the suggested tree works, and the comment relating to 'opportunities' for hedgerow planting' is not the same as their provision.

Much weight is given in the statements to quality of design, quoting numerous sources, however, no such judgement is possible without full details. Many other submissions have included such aspirations in the early stage, but which fail to materialise to the detriment of all parties.