

Luddesdown Parish Council

Email: clerk@luddesdown-pc.gov.uk Website: www.luddesdown-pc.gov.uk



Luddesdown Parish Council



Wednesday 19 March 2025

Dear Mr Ghani,

The Lion Public house Luddesdown

Strategic development

I write to you in my official capacity as Chairperson of Luddesdown Parish council.

Our Parish council had its regular review meeting with parishioners on Monday evening (17/03/2024) and this letter is a further follow up to an earlier letter that was sent to you by our Clerk – Charles Amis. We are very much registering our concerns over both the short-term developments at The Lion Public House in the village and also need to re-emphasise our absolute opposition to the longer term strategic development plans of the Silverhand group.

We are told by representatives of Silverhand that at this stage it is only the short term plans directly affecting the pub that are subject to planning scrutiny – but even these would appear to show scant regard to certain planning requirements or the nature of the rural environment that Luddesdown is. (Inappropriate external signage lighting / potentially un-approved retail outlet activity / market stall activity etc.)

The nature of Luddesdown is that it is a very small rural village serviced by narrow lanes with very little off road parking. The village caters adequately (but no more) for its current number of residents (200 – 220) – I am sure you do not need me to describe the detail of the village any further.

The longer-term strategy of the Silverhand group would appear from their strategic plan to include very significant and large scale site development – including such items as a hotel and conference centre, Spa, Meeting rooms and much more – you will be aware of this detail as they have eventually advised us – their local parish council of their plans as they were included in their strategic planning document a copy of which has already been supplied to your good selves.

Specific areas of Concern

1. The shorter-term development plans (specifically for The Lion) will require a major increase in traffic flows to and from the pub and to service its enhanced restaurant and farmers market. These traffic flows will additionally require locally based parking facilities – facilities that arguably are already at times insufficient to cope.
2. The local lanes are not capable of any further increase in traffic flows. The local access roads of Gold Street, Henley Street, Luddesdown Road, Oakenden Road, Dean lane are all essentially single track lanes with very few official passing places.
3. Adverse impact on Luddesdown Rural Character and the Kent Downs National landscape.
The proposed urban scale developments significantly undermine the integrity and objectives of The Kent Downs National Landscape designation and threaten its protected status and beauty. The necessary changes to the environment will irreversibly compromise the tranquillity and rural charm and historical character that is valued by residents and visitors alike.
4. The required changes will place a major strain on the Local infrastructure and resources. No viable public transportation exists in the village.
5. Lack of consideration for local residents. Any such changes will further degrade village life through increased traffic and associated commercial activities – HGV deliveries etc.
6. There are also plans to re-route local historic public rights of way and to potentially remove historic walls and gates that currently form part of Luddesdown rural heritage.
7. The Luddesdown village area is a popular attraction to both local residents and the wider community in general for country walks, horse riding and cycling as it is currently an area that can be predicted and is essentially safe.

It is for these reasons and many more that the current Luddesdown should not be changed – it certainly should not be commercialised. There are few enough of such places left in the UK where members of society can visit and relax in the open countryside.

Luddesdown parish council is vehemently opposed to any such commercial development and fully expects Gravesham Town council to support its local opinion.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Crow

Chair of Luddesdown Parish Council