

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 and principal amongst there are:

- a) The additional traffic on the A227, which already suffers from severe congestion at peak times and whenever there is any form of disruption. This problem will be severely exacerbated by potentially almost another 1,500 cars using the road, especially at peak times. Local side roads are totally inadequate to support the extra traffic load. The lack of adequate public transport means that house building will inevitably lead to an increase in traffic
- b) The traffic problem will also be worsened by the Lower Thames Crossing. It has long been acknowledged that the A227 will be used as a cut through once the crossing is finished, but during the construction phase similar problems are inevitable as work is carried out on the A2/M2 and traffic will attempt to circumvent this work by using the A227 as a cut through from the M20.
- c) Meopham's current medical facilities simply will not be able to cope with an increase in population of this magnitude. The age profile of the population means that medical needs exceed the national average. Hospital provisions are already below the national average to meet the catchment area of 500,000 that Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust currently supports and increasing the population will only exacerbate this problem.

Food security is becoming increasingly vital to the UK and these sites all sit on prime agricultural land, which has been farmed and produced food for centuries. Once concreted over this agricultural land will be lost forever and is incapable of being replaced. There is nothing "grey" about these sites; they are green.

Gravesham has a comparatively local housing need according to all available figures and this could be satisfied by ensuring that existing brownfield sites, ideal for social housing, are developed first. 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

