

Planning Application 20260815 – Woodlands Farm, Wrotham Road, Culverstone,
Gravesend DA13 0RQ

Objection to outline application for 67 dwellings, public open space and associated works, including proposed principal vehicular access from Newlands Lane

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to strongly object to planning application 20260815. I live immediately next to the proposed development site and therefore have direct and longstanding knowledge of the local road, drainage and countryside conditions.

I have serious concerns about the suitability of this site and, in particular, the proposed access from Newlands Lane.

Highway safety and the proposed access

Newlands Lane is not, in my view, suitable to serve as the principal access for a development of 67 dwellings.

There are no proper pedestrian footpaths along the lane, meaning that pedestrians are required to share the road with vehicles. Increasing traffic substantially by adding 67 homes would inevitably increase the risk to pedestrians, cyclists and existing residents.

This is particularly concerning because the junction of Newlands Lane has experienced several accidents over the years. This is not simply a theoretical concern about what might happen in the future; there is a history of accidents at the junction.

I ask the Highway Authority to properly investigate the accident history and existing highway conditions before reaching any conclusion that the proposed access is safe.

The assessment should take account of:

- * the historical accident record;
- * the lack of pedestrian footways;
- * visibility at the junction;
- * the width and character of Newlands Lane;
- * existing traffic movements;
- * vehicle speeds;
- * pedestrian and cyclist safety;
- * emergency vehicle access;
- * construction traffic; and
- * the additional traffic generated by 67 dwellings.

Existing flooding on Newlands Lane

There is also a serious existing flooding problem on the road directly opposite the

application site.

The road can flood dramatically, creating difficult and potentially hazardous conditions. This is an existing problem, before adding a development of 67 houses, roads, driveways, roofs and other impermeable surfaces.

I am extremely concerned that additional development and surface-water runoff could make this situation worse.

I therefore ask the Council to require a robust assessment of the existing drainage conditions and demonstrate, with appropriate evidence, that the development will not increase surface-water flooding on Newlands Lane or neighbouring land and properties.

The assessment should consider the existing flooding that residents experience, not simply rely on theoretical drainage calculations.

The Council should also ensure that proposed drainage infrastructure has sufficient capacity during extreme rainfall events and that exceedance flows cannot simply be directed towards Newlands Lane or neighbouring properties.

Additional traffic and the A227

The wider highway network is already under pressure.

The A227 regularly struggles with excess traffic, particularly when nearby motorways are closed. During these events, traffic diverts through local roads as motorists attempt to bypass congestion.

This demonstrates that the local road network does not operate in isolation. Traffic conditions can change significantly when the strategic road network is disrupted.

Adding traffic from another 67 dwellings would increase pressure on a network that already experiences periods of significant congestion.

I ask the Highway Authority to consider the real-world conditions experienced by local residents, including traffic diversion during motorway closures, rather than assessing the development solely against normal-day traffic conditions.

Impact on the countryside and Green Belt

I live immediately next to the proposed site and currently look out onto open countryside.

The existing landscape provides a valuable sense of openness and rural character which is an important part of living in this area. The introduction of 67 dwellings would fundamentally change that setting.

This would not be a minor change. It would introduce a substantial area of residential development, roads, vehicles, lighting, gardens and associated infrastructure where there is currently open countryside.

I appreciate that a person's private view alone is not normally a material planning consideration. My objection is not simply that I would prefer to keep my view.

My concern is the planning impact of replacing open countryside with a substantial residential development, including the effect on the openness and character of the area, the landscape setting of Culverstone and the wider Green Belt/countryside.

The Council should consider the cumulative effect of development and whether allowing this proposal would contribute to the gradual urbanisation and loss of rural character of the area.

Residential amenity

As a property immediately adjoining the application site, I am also concerned about the effect of such a large development on neighbouring residents.

Although many detailed matters are reserved, the Council should still consider whether the proposed scale and quantum of development can be accommodated without unacceptable effects on neighbouring properties.

These potential impacts include overlooking, loss of privacy, noise, lighting, increased vehicle movements and the general intensification of activity immediately alongside existing homes.

Sustainability

The absence of pedestrian footways along Newlands Lane is particularly important when considering whether this is an appropriate and sustainable location for 67 new homes.

If residents cannot safely walk along the local road to access services, facilities or public transport, there is a risk of significant reliance on private vehicles.

That in turn reinforces my concerns regarding the proposed access and the additional traffic that would be placed on Newlands Lane and the A227.

Cumulative impact

I ask the Council not to consider this proposal in isolation.

The local road network already experiences congestion, particularly during motorway closures. There is already an accident history at the Newlands Lane junction and

existing flooding problems on the road.

Against that background, the addition of 67 dwellings represents a significant intensification of use.

The question should therefore not simply be whether one additional development can theoretically be accommodated, but whether this location and this access are capable of safely and sustainably accommodating 67 additional homes given the conditions that already exist.

Request for refusal

For the reasons above, I strongly object to application 20260815.

I ask the Council to give particular weight to:

1. The proposed use of Newlands Lane as the principal access for 67 dwellings.
2. The absence of pedestrian footpaths along Newlands Lane.
3. The history of accidents at the Newlands Lane junction.
4. The significant existing flooding on the road opposite the application site.
5. The additional traffic that 67 dwellings would generate.
6. Existing congestion and traffic diversion problems on the A227, particularly when the motorway network is disrupted.
7. The effect of replacing open countryside with a substantial residential development.
8. The impact on the openness, landscape character and rural setting of the area.
9. The potential impact on existing neighbouring residents, including privacy, noise, lighting and increased activity.
10. Whether the site can genuinely be considered a sustainable location given the lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

I respectfully request that planning permission is refused.

If the Council is minded to approve the application, I ask that the Highway Authority and other relevant consultees are required to fully investigate the matters raised above, including the accident history, pedestrian safety, existing flooding and cumulative traffic impacts, before any decision is made.

I would also ask that the Council carries out an appropriate site inspection, particularly during or following significant rainfall, so that the existing flooding conditions on Newlands Lane can be properly understood.

