

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 28/08/2026 4:11 PM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Land North Of The Drove Way Istead Rise Gravesend Kent DA13 9JY
Proposal:	Development for up to 100 residential dwellings (Class C3), including the formation of new accesses from The Drove Way, the provision of new areas of public open space and all other associated infrastructure and ancillary works (all detailed matters reserved other than means of access).
Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison

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Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] The Drove Way Istead Rise Gravesend

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	I'm writing to object to application 20260649 - up to 100 houses on the fields behind The Drove Way. I live six houses from where the site access would go. That's context, not the objection itself; what follows is about planning policy. First, and most importantly: the council has already looked at this exact site and turned it down. Gravesham's new Local Plan is at Publication stage now, heading to examination and adoption in 2026/27, and land at The Drove Way was put forward during that process. It didn't make it in. Instead the plan allocates Nash Bank (c.60 homes) and Rose Farm on Downs Road (c.150 homes) for Istead Rise, with smaller sites at Willerby Farm and Longfield Avenue. A sustainability appraisal and Green Belt review sit behind that decision. Waving through a standalone application for the very site the plan excluded, before that plan has even been examined, undercuts the council's own evidence base. It's also Green Belt land, and I don't think the usual justification applies here. The fields, hedgerows and woodland are doing what Green Belt is supposed to do - keeping the village from sprawling into open countryside. This isn't previously developed land, so it shouldn't count as "grey belt" under the revised NPPF, meaning it needs very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm, not just a general housing shortage. And that shortage argument cuts less than it might seem: the NPPF's presumption in favour of development is switched off specifically where it would conflict with Green Belt policy, so Gravesham being
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behind on delivery doesn't help this application.

Then there's the question nobody seems to be asking: what does this look like added to everything else already happening here? Rose Farm, a few hundred yards away, is a live application for 154 homes (ref. 20251233) that's drawn over 1,500 objections. Add the other Local Plan sites, the housing coming forward in Meopham, and a proposed 145-acre data centre nearby, and this one small village is looking at several hundred new homes converging on it at once. Rose Farm's own pupil numbers already require expanding the primary school from one form of entry to one and a half - and that's before this site's children are counted. None of the applications I've seen assess transport, school places, health provision or water capacity cumulatively; each is judged as if the others don't exist. I don't think that's a fair way to test whether the village can actually cope.

Because right now, it can't easily. The lanes and the A227/New Barn Road junctions are already tight at peak times. There's no train station, the bus service is limited and non-daily, and there's no safe walking or cycling route to Gravesend or Meopham, so nearly every trip from a new estate would be by car. The GP surgery is reportedly full. Shopping and parking are basic. I'd want to see current, independent evidence from KCC, local health providers and the water company that they can actually serve this level of cumulative growth, rather than taking the applicant's word for it.

Two smaller points worth putting on record. This is productive farmland, and food security is a legitimate planning consideration - an Agricultural Land Classification survey should establish its quality rather than assuming it's low-grade. And the hedgerows and woodland here support owls and other birds of prey recorded nearby, so the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain needs independent checking, not just sign-off on the applicant's own ecology report. Kent is also recognised as seriously water-stressed, and I'd want written confirmation from the water company that supply and drainage capacity genuinely exists before any more homes are approved in this village.

Taken together, I don't think this application should be approved: the council's own plan process has already rejected the site, the Green Belt case isn't made, and its impact is being judged in isolation when it plainly shouldn't be. I'm asking for refusal. If the council leans towards approval anyway, it should first require a cumulative assessment covering all of Istead Rise's committed and proposed development, with any permission tied to independently verified biodiversity net gain and confirmed water and drainage capacity.

Kind regards