



August 31 2025
Planning Department
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1AU

Dear Sir or Madam,

Application Ref. 20250764 – Change of Use of Land for Stationing of Eight Mobile Homes for Gypsy and Traveller Use, Land South of White Post Lane, Cobham

I hereby submit Cobham Parish Council's formal objection to the above application on the following grounds:

1. Impact on the Metropolitan Green Belt and Rural Character

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, where both national policy and the Gravesham Local Plan impose a strong presumption against inappropriate development. The introduction of eight mobile homes, ancillary day rooms, extensive hardstanding and landscaping would constitute an urban encroachment, fundamentally altering the openness and rural character of this agricultural land. No very special circumstances have been demonstrated to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the development of such a large scale use is incongruous with both its immediate setting and the surrounding area.

2. Highway Safety and Access

White Post Lane is a narrow rural highway devoid of footways and street lighting. The additional vehicular movements generated by eight households, together with service vehicles, would exacerbate existing safety hazards for drivers, cyclists, horse riders, and pedestrians. The submitted transport statement fails to demonstrate that safe access, adequate visibility splays and sufficient turning space can be provided without adverse impact. In addition over the past several years the owners of this site and the adjacent sites have caused significant damage to the trees and wildlife either side of White Post Lane as they delivered illegal static caravans and large mobile homes to the site, blocking the road and closing it without the proper notices or process that KCC demands.

3. Flood Risk and Drainage

The locality is known to experience surface-water flooding due to heavy clay soils and limited drainage infrastructure. The proposed hardstanding areas and



impermeable surfaces risk increasing runoff onto adjacent land and the highway. No detailed Sustainable Drainage Strategy (SuDS) has been provided to show that the development will manage flood risk in accordance with national guidance (PPS25/NPPF) and local policy requirements.

4. Ecology and Biodiversity

The conversion of semi-improved grassland to permanent residential use would result in the loss of habitats supporting ground-nesting birds, reptiles and invertebrates. The application is unsupported by a comprehensive ecological assessment or biodiversity mitigation and enhancement strategy, as required by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Gravesham Local Plan policies.

5. Sustainability and Accessibility

The site's remote location, distant from shops, schools, medical facilities and public transport links, would necessitate reliance on private motor vehicles. This conflicts with the Council's objectives to promote sustainable travel, reduce carbon emissions and support accessible communities. The applicant has not demonstrated that there is an overriding need that cannot be accommodated on a more sustainably located site.

6. Precedent and Retrospective Development

It is noted that works have already been undertaken without the benefit of planning permission. Granting retrospective approval would set a concerning precedent for further unauthorised caravan developments in the open countryside, thereby weakening the Council's ability to control future inappropriate development.

7. Planning History and Previous Enforcement

The site has long planning history of traveller applications all after illegally commencing works. However this application for so many caravans both static and visiting is much larger than anything retrospectively applied for before. The adjacent site which recently won an appeal, did so on the basis of a specialist need and a singular residence, we can see no such need for so many sites and as such it should be seen in light of the Feb 2025 appeal decision and be rejected. It should be noted part of the site overlaps with this site, so we question how the application is even valid.

Finally there is an existing injunction on the site, which again we strongly urge the council to use.



Residents are rightly upset and concerned that White Post Lane has become a magnet for the traveller community, and a development of this scale is just not acceptable in a small lane, by a small village.

The owners of the site are aggressive to local people, block the road at will, illegally tap into services, burn their rubbish on site, dump other rubbish around the site and by the road, and generally do not want to be part of a small village community, there are better places for a traveller community to be sited within Gravesham, on the basis of their own behaviour, let alone the damage to green belt and to residents of Cobham Parish and the surrounding community.

For all of the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that Gravesham Borough Council refuse planning permission for application 20250764 in accordance with relevant national and local planning policies.

I trust that this objection will be given full weight in your determination.

Cobham Parish Council Planning Committee