

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 21/03/2025 7:31 AM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Golden Lion Luddesdown Road Luddesdown Gravesend Kent DA13 0XE
Proposal:	Erection of a rear and side extension and refurbishment of the Golden Lion pub including landscaping, parking and associated works.
Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] Sole Street Cobham Gravesend

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Consultee
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	Luddesdown lies entirely within the Kent Downs National Landscape, a designation that reflects its exceptional natural beauty, tranquillity, and cultural value with characteristic rural narrow historic lanes, limited infrastructure, and rich biodiversity, In response to a recent traffic and community values survey-with over 9,900 responses-local voices expressed strong and consistent feelings about how increased traffic affects their day-to-day lives, access to the countryside, and the sustainability of the area's character. The source data is located here: https://www.luddesdown.org/our-community-values Across multiple-choice questions, the sentiment was overwhelmingly cautious to negative regarding increased traffic, particularly along Luddesdown's rural lanes: - 98.5% believe increased traffic would damage the rural character, tranquillity, and amenity of the area. - Over 94% agreed that traffic impacts are a crucial factor in decisions affecting land use and infrastructure within Luddesdown. - 99% objected to the assumption that private driveways could serve as passing places for through traffic. - 96.5% said it is not safe or acceptable to reverse significant distances (100-120m) on lanes like Gold Street under any conditions. These figures show near-unanimous agreement that Luddesdown's existing infrastructure cannot safely support increased motor traffic without significant degradation to its safety, character, and accessibility. Qualitative Sentiment: In-Depth Themes and Reflections The open responses offer a rich tapestry of lived experience, emotional connection to place, and deep concern for the future. The following themes consistently emerged:
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1. Incompatible Infrastructure and Lived Danger

"Gold Street is a narrow country lane that struggles with the volume of current traffic... any additional traffic would be dangerous, ruinous and not in keeping with the ethos of the AONB."

Residents describe frequent near-misses, physical damage to verges, and unsafe encounters on roads not designed for modern traffic volumes or large vehicles. Many recount having to leap into hedges or reverse long distances due to a lack of formal passing places. Several referenced blocked driveways, damaged property, and the inability of emergency vehicles to reach homes during congestion.

2. Risk to Vulnerable Road Users

"There are no pavements. We walk with our children and dogs. It's already risky. Lorries and vans will make it far worse."

Horse riders, walkers, cyclists, and children-many of whom use the lanes daily for recreation or commuting-are seen as increasingly vulnerable. Multiple responses mention public rights of way being crossed by traffic, no lighting in winter, and speeding through blind bends.

Several respondents referenced Duke of Edinburgh groups, elderly walkers, and schoolchildren as especially at risk, with one comment warning, "Do we have to wait until someone is seriously injured?"

3. Erosion of Tranquillity and Loss of Mental Wellbeing

"We come here for peace of mind. We'll have to go elsewhere if this continues."

Luddesdown is repeatedly described as a place of calm, reflection, and connection to nature-a "rare sanctuary" that helps people cope with stress, illness, and the pace of urban life. The quiet lanes and footpaths are cherished not just for recreation but as essential to mental and emotional wellbeing.

A striking number of respondents mention how the rural quiet and open access support healing, reflection, and health-an intangible but deeply valued part of the landscape.

4. Environmental and Landscape Impact

"This is one of the last unspoilt villages in Kent. Its designation should mean something."

Respondents strongly associate traffic increases with harm to the natural environment. Concerns include:

- Air and noise pollution degrading air quality and disturbing wildlife.
- Wildlife displacement, particularly birds and small mammals.
- Damage to hedgerows, trees, and verges from vehicles mounting banks.
- The visual intrusion of vehicles into a protected and historic landscape.

The Golden Lion proposal, as presented, does not yet demonstrate the level of rigor expected for a scheme of this scale and sensitivity. What's lacking is:

1. Consistency in the number of covers therefore all other impacts
 2. Number of covers set according to road capacity, rural character, tranquillity and amenity
 3. Road capacity set according to data on access via local roads, congestion and preserving the rural character, tranquillity and amenity
 4. Analysis of cumulative effects of noise (inc music events, outside drinking etc), all traffic generation - Not incremental analysis as given (not limited to diners but including drinkers, shoppers at the wine store, other events)
 5. Light assessment (none provided at all !)
 6. Reliable baseline data for light, noise, traffic given developments on site possibly outside planning controls and might void the premise (inc neon signage)
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