

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 17/09/2025 10:41 PM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Brookers Farm Luddesdown Road Luddesdown Gravesend Kent DA13 0XE
Proposal:	Retention/installation of 57 wine tanks and grape presses.
Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	[REDACTED] Rochester Medway

Comments Details

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

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	I am objecting to the retention/installation of 57 wine tanks and grape presses at Brookers Farm, Luddesdown. Luddesdown is designated as part of the Kent Downs National Landscape. It is in an area specifically renowned for its remoteness and tranquillity, particularly when juxtaposed to the hustle and bustle of the Medway Towns and Gravesend. The roads are single track and grass-banked, apart from where in the last few years vineyard lorries have been illegally eroding the verges and gouging out passing places. Vineyard Farms Ltd was refused permission to build a wine processing plant and visitor centre in Bush Valley, Cuxton, in the Kent Downs National Landscape, both in 2022 by Medway Council and in 2023 at Appeal. In Luddesdown, what has started with 'retrospective' temporary planning permission for two storage fermentation tanks in 2021, has led to 'retrospective' temporary consent for an additional 41 tanks in May 2023; a 'retrospective' application for track construction to a previous compost area, now a plastic dumping ground in November 2023; notification of an additional 9 fermentation and storage tanks ('unknown status') November 2023; the withdrawal of a notification in December 2023 for installation of the Cellar Door being used to sell wine and farm produce, but which it has been selling; and now in August 2025 an application for the 'retention'/installation of 57 wine tanks and grape presses (an additional 5 tanks). In other words, a large-scale wine-processing plant. Surely 57 wine tanks/presses, the development of the Cellar Door, and the expansion of the (Golden) Lion pub qualify as Major Development within the National Landscape, albeit development by a backdoor piecemeal method with a surprising number of retrospective requests for planning permission? I am not aware that any planning officer has overseen the substantial digging out of the chalk downland behind Brookers Farm to make way for the addition of tank after tank. Loss of tranquillity was one of the main reasons the Inspector cited for refusal at the 2023 Appeal, along with Vineyard Farms' lack of a necessary plan required by the NPPF to consider the processing of grapes outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It appears these two elements have not been addressed in this planning application either.
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The effect of this huge number of processing tanks is that now, at harvest time, lorries are travelling along unsuitable roads constantly during the day and at all hours late into the night, creating excess intrusive noise especially in the evenings. At the Appeal, the Chief Executive of the company said that at harvest time processing would continue throughout the night for about a month. These are unsocial hours.

Traffic is felt not just around Luddesdown, but principally on the one route leading to the village from the A228 through Cuxton. These towering 6 axled lorries require a car (let alone a returning lorry) to reverse to any wider bit of road, frequently mounting the kerb within the built-up area. Any decision on this application needs to take into account the logistics of such large-scale lorry movements on narrow country lanes both in Gravesham and Medway.

The vineyard has continued to expand with an assumption that it will be allowed the processing plant because it has continued to plant vines. At the time of the Appeal, it was also processing grapes from the company's Essex vineyards, and may still be doing so.

This is a company that, despite environmental claims, is moulding the National Landscape to its own requirements. Its planning application should be looked at together with all its other applications as a major development, and considered in the light of the council's requirement to positively enhance a protected landscape.

Kind regards