

**The Drove Way
Istead Rise
Northfleet
Gravesend
Kent
DA13 9JY**

27 August 2026

Ms Rebecca Harrison
Planning Services
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
Kent DA12 1AU

Dear Ms Harrison

**Planning Application – Land North of The Drove Way
Ref 20260649**

I write to formally object to this proposal on the following grounds: -

Loss of Green Belt and Damage to Ecology & Biodiversity

The land in question is designated Green Belt - under no circumstances should it be used for housing, or re categorised. It is vital to maintain this essential agricultural farm land to protect food security and natural habitats.

GP and Hospital Capacity

The local GP surgeries are already at full capacity and have stated as such in recent times. Any additional population would only serve to increase the call on already overloaded NHS services and Darent Valley Hospital.

Educational Capacity

Local schools are at capacity already. To increase the population by this significant degree would only reduce the available places in local schools and colleges.

Village Characteristics

100 more residential units would reasonably yield a minimum increased population of 400. Such an increase would significantly alter the essential characteristics of Istead Rise village.

Public Transport Links

Istead Rise is poorly served by public transport, the bus service is limited and unreliable, thus the village is car dependent.

Meopham railway station is inaccessible by foot due to there being no footpath for much of the distance between Istead Rise and Meopham, along what is an already busy A227 a 40 -50 mph road.

There is no cycle path between Istead Rise and Meopham making cycle journeys along this fast road hazardous. Going towards the Gravesend is hazardous by foot as a busy roundabout has to be negotiated.

In these increasing times of traffic issues on the A2, M20 and M25 the A227 becomes a rat run.

Significant Increase in Road Traffic and Noise Both During Construction and Beyond

There is only one way in and out of The Drove Way. It is essentially a cul de sac and to open it up would alter the characteristics.

The road and pavement surfaces are already in a very poor state and in need of significant remedial works. The necessary heavy vehicle traffic during the years of the construction phase would put additional stress on these surfaces.

The construction phase will cause intolerable noise and disturbance inconvenience to residents - I note here that the residents of Worcester Close and Bramley Close have recently endured more than 18 months disruption for the construction of just 8 flats. Such a development as proposed would take years longer to complete.

The proposed new homes once occupied would need -as mentioned above, private transport, resulting in a significant increase in traffic on The Drove Way (and the wider environs of Istead Rise). Realistically this would lead to an additional 150 to 200 vehicles for the size of the proposed development. A daily minimum of 2 journeys – that is 400 additional journeys along what are already congested roads (where cars frequently have to park two wheels on the pavement to allow access), which together with the increasing use of home delivery services to the proposed development will lead to further congestion on The Drove Way, within Istead Rise and at the junctions with the A227 and Downs Road in and out of the village.

Drainage and Water Supplies

The Drove Way already suffers from drain blockages as a regular occurrence. During one major issue 2 to 3 years ago residents were advised that the sewer pipes serving the houses were much smaller gauge than they should be, and served many more properties than they should – hence the overload. To add to what is an already overloaded system would be foolhardy.

Concluding

The essential nature of the village would be jeopardised by the influx of possible 400 (or even more) residents. In the borough of Gravesham there are Brownfield sites which have been allowed to rot for years – for example the Tollgate Motel site which is a disgrace and has been derelict for almost 30 years, also the old Gravesend Hospital site which has been an eyesore for more years than many can remember - both sites are detrimental to the boroughs appearance, but could provide the space to enable the council to achieve their new home objectives without ruining the lives of communities in rural areas.

The plan is ill conceived, inappropriate in size and does not reflect or benefit the needs of local people. It should be rejected in its entirety.

