Campaign to Protect Rural England Kent

20260815

Outline planning application for the development of 67 dwellings, public open space and associated works, with approval sought for the principal means of vehicular access from Newlands Lane. All other matters are reserved

Woodlands Farm, Wrotham Road, Culverstone

We are CPRE Kent, the countryside charity. Founded in 1926, CPRE is one of the country's longest established and most respected environmental charities. CPRE Kent is the largest of the CPRE county branches. We represent 1,138 individual members across the county, together with 145 parish councils.

Our vision is of a beautiful and thriving countryside that enriches all our lives and is valued by everyone. Our mission is to promote, enhance and protect that countryside.

We believe that the planning system is a toolbox for achieving better – for people, nature and the economy – while supporting the delivery of badly-needed homes to end the housing crisis.

CPRE Kent OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds that the proposed development will constitute unsustainable development in the countryside, specifically:

1. not Plan-led development;
2. not sustainably located and
3. loss of green belt

These objections are set out in more detail below.

Not Plan-led development

This site is not allocated for development in the Council's adopted development plan or its emerging Local Plan. The Council's draft Local Plan is at an advanced stage, with Regulation 19 consultation having been competed over the summer and submission expected by 31 December 2026.

Policy DM4 of the 2026 NPPF states that relevant policies in the emerging plan may be given weight according to the stage of preparation – and the more advance its preparation, the greater weight may be given.

CPRE Kent Queen's Head House, Ashford Road, Charing, Kent TN27 0AD
www.cprekent.org.uk Phone 01233 714540 Email planning@cprekent.org.uk

Registered charity (number 1092012), limited company registered in England (number 4335730)

We acknowledge that the Council does not have a 5-year having land supply and that its Housing Delivery Test results confirm there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, other sites have been allocated within the Council's draft Local Plan to meet its housing need.

Not sustainably located

Policy S5 of the NPPF sets out that development outside settlements should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects.

With regard to residential development the NPPF sets out that development would need to be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station and be physically well-related to the station or settlement within which the station is located.

The application site is approximately four miles from Meopham station. This is approximately at one hour and 20 minute walk, much of which would be alongside the fast-moving A227 where for long stretches pavements do not exist. As such development in this location could not be described as being sustainably located or well related to a train station.

Policy TR3 of the NPPF provides further policy tests with regard to supporting sustainable patterns of development and underlines the requirement that the location of development "should limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users".

Loss of green belt

CPRE Kent objects to the principle of development that would result in the loss of green belt.

Policy GB7 sets out the circumstances whereby development within the green belt is not considered inappropriate. This includes residential development that would be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected train station (as per policy TR3) and in the case of other development it would utilise grey belt land and meet an evidenced unmet need and be in a sustainable location (TR3) and in the case of major development involving the provision of housing comply with policy GB8 (golden rules for affordable housing etc).

Clearly, the proposed development does not meet the policy test set out at section (g)(i-iv) of policy GB7 and in addition fails to meet the requirements set out in policies S5 and TR3.

Conclusion

Since its publication in August 2026 the national decision-making polices in the NPPF are a material consideration in determining the merits of planning applications.

In accordance with policy S3 it is acknowledged that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, CPRE Kent is firmly of the view that the provision of 67 dwellings at Newland Farm would not be in accordance with NPPF policies S5, TR3 and GB7 and therefore planning permission should be refused.