

To: Planning Department, Gravesham Borough Council
Application Reference: 20260833
Site: 44 - 46 The Grove, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1DF
Proposal: Infill of the lower ground floor to provide five residential units and associated works (facing Edwin Street).

OBJECTION ON MATERIAL PLANNING GROUNDS

I am writing to formally lodge my strong objection to planning application 20260833.

This proposal represents a severe, unsustainable overdevelopment of a highly stressed site and violates critical local planning infrastructure requirements.

1. Severe Compounding Infrastructure Deficit (Elimination of Allocated Parking)

The lower ground floor area targeted for this infill is the exact zone allocated for resident parking for the rest of the building. This application creates a severe double-impact on local infrastructure: it simultaneously eliminates the vital parking provision required for the primary flats while introducing five entirely new households to the site. Stripping away the building's own internal parking assets will instantly force dozens of vehicles onto the surrounding public roads, crippling the local network.

2. Inadequate Waste Management and Environmental Nuisance (Bin Storage & Recycling)

The addition of five separate residential units creates a significant, unaddressed demand for domestic refuse and recycling storage. The application fails to demonstrate a viable, hygienic location for the large quantity of additional wheelie bins required. If these bins are stored externally along the Edwin Street frontage, they will cause a severe visual blight to the street scene, produce unacceptable odour and pest issues directly beneath existing residential windows, and inevitably obstruct the narrow footpaths on collection days, creating a public safety hazard.

3. Premature Intensification on an Untested Site Baseline

The main block of flats is not yet open to any residents. The baseline traffic, parking demand, and daily logistical pressures of the approved development have not yet taken effect in the neighbourhood. Forcing a further five-flat intensification before the primary block is even occupied or its actual infrastructure stress tested is entirely premature. The council cannot safely assess the cumulative impact of these additional units when the true burden of the main development remains unknown.

4. Severe Local Congestion and Edwin Street Capacity

The surrounding area is already exceptionally busy and heavily congested at baseline. Edwin Street suffers from near-total parking saturation daily. Because this infill eliminates internal parking, overspill vehicles will inevitably saturate Edwin Street. This narrow road cannot handle additional displaced vehicles; the resulting layout will block emergency vehicles and create severe highway safety hazards.

5. Direct Conflict with Vital Services on The Grove

The Grove serves as a vital operational corridor for two critical community hubs:

- The Local Nursery: Generates highly concentrated pedestrian traffic consisting of parents and very young children during peak morning and afternoon drop-off hours.
- The Post Office: Relies daily on unhindered, continuous access for heavy sorting vans, logistics vehicles, and short-stay retail customers.

Removing the building's internal parking spaces and increasing residential density at this exact bottleneck directly undermines pedestrian safety and threatens to disrupt essential local operations.

6. Substandard Residential Amenity (Lower Ground Level & Enclosure)

Although the block sits back from the street, the proposed lower ground floor units will still fail to provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity. Being set below street level inevitably starves the living spaces of adequate daylight and natural sunlight, creating dark, uninviting environments. Windows at this subterranean level will face structural retaining walls or lightwells, resulting in a highly claustrophobic sense of enclosure and a severe lack of privacy, as pedestrians on the higher Edwin Street level will look directly down into the private rooms below.

For these compounding reasons—most notably the destructive elimination of the building's own internal parking infrastructure—this proposal constitutes severe overdevelopment. I strongly urge the planning committee to refuse this application.

