



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Grahame Gould
Case Officer
Development Control
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TR

12 September 2014

Dear Mr Gould

Planning Application: MC/14/2395

I am writing with regard to the above application. As I am sure Medway Council will be aware, this planning application is of great interest and concern for many local residents and, as Member of Parliament for Chatham & Aylesford, I would like to state my own objection to these proposals in the clearest possible terms.

In general, I have consistently opposed any development in the Capstone Valley area since I was elected as the local Member of Parliament because I strongly believe that any form of large residential development permitted in the Capstone Valley area would set a dangerous precedent and establish a foothold for developers, attract more applications and ultimately jeopardise an important and valued green space in Medway.

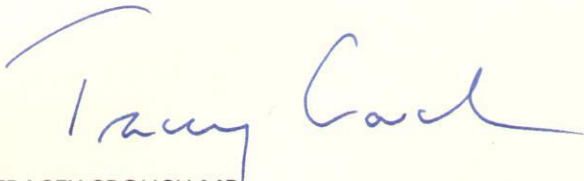
With this in mind, and while I appreciate a whole range of concerns about this application will be raised as part of the consultation, I would like to draw Medway Council's attention to the following points concerning the application:

- The development of 450 dwellings will demonstrably over-burden local infrastructure and amenities. The local road network is already heavily congested at peak times and with the likelihood of at least a further 800 cars associated with a development of this size, the situation will worsen considerably. It is not known what improvements, if any, could be made to the local road network in order to cope with such a large increase in traffic.
- Local services such as the Lordswood Healthy Living Centre and primary schools are already under pressure from an increasing population. While reference is made to a s106 package in the Planning Statement, as with the local road network, it is difficult to understand what potential measures would help alleviate the obvious pressure an additional 450 dwellings in the area would bring.

- As one of the South East's largest urban conurbations, green space in Medway is relatively limited and the Capstone Valley area is a vital "green lung" and serves as an important buffer between Chatham, Gillingham and Maidstone. It is vital that this buffer of undeveloped land and green space is maintained between these areas and that applications such as this one are rejected.
- The application would have a devastating impact on the nearby wildlife habitats and woodlands. There would also be an unacceptable and irreversible loss of visual amenity to the wider area which sits on the fringe of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Furthermore, Medway Council should also be considerate of existing pathways that may be used for recreational purposes, such as walking or rambling, and what impact an application such as this will have on them.
- It should also be noted that the site will be situated within close proximity to the recently approved Asbestos Waste Transfer Station, which along with local residents I campaigned strongly against on public health grounds. Further development in such a close proximity to this site is therefore inappropriate on the same grounds.
- As I believe Medway Council would agree, the need for housing in Medway can more readily be addressed through consideration of existing earmarked sites and brownfield sites than through this application.

It is for these reasons that I urge Medway Council to heed the many concerns of local residents and reject this application at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracey Crouch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'T' and 'C'.

TRACEY CROUCH MP