

# PLANNING APPLICATION OBJECTION

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**Application No: CB/22/03378/OUT**

## **Introduction**

I'm a resident of neighbouring Shillington and a Parish Councillor, and I **OBJECT** to the above referenced planning application (the "Proposed Development").

There are many legitimate reasons to object to this application, especially for the residents of Gravenhurst.

My starting point is that the Proposed Development is outside of the Settlement Envelope and Local Plan. The principle of new development should therefore be *per se* unacceptable, and, for substantially similar reasons be considered unsustainable under the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF").

However, as a resident of a neighbouring village rather than Gravenhurst itself I have focussed below on the impact I foresee from increasing traffic volumes throughout the wider area.

## **Unsustainable traffic volumes in the area**

I'm a founding member of Shillington's Speed Watch group. Since inception we have witnessed a significant increase in traffic flow through the village, especially but not exclusively during peak times. This is a direct result of developments in Meppershall, Stondon, Gravenhurst and the surrounding area, and the reasonable expectation that people travel by car through Shillington to neighbouring towns such as Hitchin for employment. I'm concerned that the Proposed Development will further increase traffic volumes beyond sustainable levels.

Our country roads and their layout - winding, narrow in places, accommodating parked cars outside cottages resulting in one lane flow in village centres, and with a lack of clear visibility from most junctions - are simply not designed for such excessive use. Were the

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Proposed Development to be approved it would add to the long-term prognosis that our villages will be ravaged by excessive and dangerous vehicle movements.

Speeding is already prolific and serious interventions or mitigations have thus far not been funded by either Central Bedfordshire Council or Bedfordshire Police. The ratio of speeders to law-abiding drivers is too high already and is not reducing. Without significant mitigation throughout our surrounding villages, I am concerned that there is a significant risk of serious road traffic collisions occurring, including with walkers, cyclists, horses and their riders all of whom reasonably use our roads alongside vehicular traffic.

We regularly walk with our dog, run and cycle around Shillington and Gravenhurst (and it's unavoidable to use the roads for most of the routes). There is a legitimate expectation that our country roads are shared by cars, cyclists, walkers, and horseback riders, but given the Proposed Development and increasing through- traffic movements, our opportunity to safely do so would be adversely impacted further.

Yours,

Blake Stephenson