



## Newsletter

Dear Sir or Madam,

Application Reference: 19/501600/OUT

Proposal: Outline application for up to 440 residential dwellings, with associated access, infrastructure, drainage, landscaping and open space (Access being sought at other matters reserved for future consideration).

Location: Land West Of Church Road Otham, Kent ME15 8SB

We have reviewed the above application and would welcome your comments.

The plans and application form can be viewed at our office planning website. You may view the application online at <http://pa.maidstone.gov.uk/online-applications> simply follow the link to the online planning search and follow the on-screen instructions to search for this application.

# Application Submitted to build **440** Houses on Church Road.

Application Ref: 19/501600/OUT  
Proposal: Outline application for up to 440 residential dwellings, with associated access, infrastructure, drainage, landscaping & open space (Access being sort all other matters reserved for future consideration).  
Location: Land West Of Church Road Otham Kent ME15 8SB



**Downswood Parish Council secured an extension to the deadline for objections until 6th May 2019. If you are intending to object, it must be before this date.**

- An outline planning application has been submitted by Bellway Homes to build 440 houses in the field next to St Nicholas Church, Otham.

- Maidstone Borough Council are the planning authority for this area & will decide whether the application is approved.

- If it goes ahead, this development will be almost half the size of Downswood and the access for traffic is proposed to be onto Church Road only.

- If you feel that this development is not right for Downswood, we would encourage you to take this opportunity to voice your opinion by making a formal objection to MBC.

*This newsletter explains how you can do this.*

- Downswood Parish Council will be holding a drop-in session on **27th April 2019** at Downswood Community Centre from 10am – 1pm to discuss this development with residents.

Illustration: Maples  
Church Road, Otham  
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01795 5000 00





Downswood Parish Council have produced this newsletter to make residents aware of this planned development, to answer some of the common questions we've been asked about the development, & to give information & advice to people who may wish to object to it.

If you feel that this development is **not right** for Downswood, we would encourage you to take this opportunity to voice your opinion by making a formal **objection** to **Maidstone Borough Council**. It will help to read **all** of the information on this newsletter before writing an objection; you may also wish to look for additional information online about the best way to write an objection to a planning application.



**Why has there been an application to build on the field next to the Church?**

The site named in the Local Plan as 'H1(8) West of Church Road, Otham' is designated in MBC's Adopted Local Plan. It's a list of sites where housing development is **likely** to be permitted. Downswood Parish Council objected to the inclusion of the site during the initial consultation in 2016. **Very few** residents made objections at this point & the site was included in the plan that was adopted in Oct 2017. You can find it by searching for "**Maidstone Local Plan**" in any online search engine. Site H1(8) West of Church Road, Otham is on page 129.



**What's in the application that has been submitted?**

The outline planning applications purpose is to **approve** the traffic access points onto Church Rd. If it is approved by MBC, it effectively **guarantees** that the future **full** planning application will be green lit.

The plans show there will be **2** access points to the new estate, both onto Church Road. It is likely that most, the traffic from the new estate will come through Downswood to get to Willington St or up to Ashford Rd via Spot Lane. This will turn Deringwood Drive from a quiet road that now only serves Downswood into a main road for traffic servicing the new estate. **To see the application & all the documents:** <https://pa.mick Kent.gov.uk/online-applications/> & enter **19/501600/OUT** in the search box.



**On what grounds can I object?**

MBC will only take into account material planning considerations' when looking at your objections. The most common of these are:

- Highway safety
- Traffic generation
- Road access
- Adequacy of parking, loading or turning
- Deficiencies in community or social facilities, for example spaces in local schools
- Capacity of local infrastructure such as public drainage or water systems
- Visual amenity (but not loss of private view)
- Noise and disturbance resulting from the finished development (but not construction)
- Layout and density of building
- Loss of trees
- Local, strategic, regional and national planning policies
- Nature conservation
- Archaeology

Where any of the planning application differs from the description in the Local Plan is grounds for objection. If you think that the it will have a negative impact on anything on this list, then you should focus on that in your objection.



**What are **not** considered grounds for objection?**

There are some considerations that Maidstone Borough Council will not take into account as part of an objection. These include:

- The perceived loss of property value
- The loss of an individuals' private view
- The impact, noise or nuisance of construction work
- Ownership disputes over rights of way
- Personal morals or views about the site and its' appropriateness



**Would Downswood see any benefits from this development?**

Developers are required to contribute to a local community infrastructure fund when they build houses, which is to contribute to schools, roads & other local needs for the new residents. Parish Councils can receive some of this money, as well as an increase in funds from Council Tax via the new residents. This means that Otham Parish Council **not** Downswood, will receive **all** of the financial benefits.





# How do I object?

All objections must be made in writing to Maidstone Borough Council. Verbal comments, made anywhere, will not be accepted as an objection.

You can submit your comments: Through Maidstone Borough Council's Planning Portal at <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Via email, to [planningcomments@midkent.gov.uk](mailto:planningcomments@midkent.gov.uk)

Or write to: Mid Kent Planning Support, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ

**Please be aware that in order to be considered** your objection must be dated & the date of your objection **must** be before **6th May 2019** Provide your name and address.

Anonymous comments will **not** be taken into account. State the application number (**19/501600/OUT**) & site address

(Land West Of Church Road, Otham, ME15 8SB).

## Frequently Asked Questions



Can I object even though MBC didn't send me a letter about it?

Yes & you have until **6th May 2019** to do so. You can object to any planning application, **whether or not** you have received a letter informing you.

I think I already objected to this last year – why should I do it again?



If you **haven't** done this recently, you **haven't** objected. This is the first & **only** time you will be able to do so. If you have any issues with the development object **directly** to MBC through the means described above. **If you need help then please come to the Community centre on 27th April 2019 to have a chat with us prior to sending your objection in.**



Could you give us a draft letter to use?

**No**, it can harm the chances of a successful objection. Objections do not carry the same weight if they are seen to have been written in a standardised form. It indicates that the response has been coordinated by one interested party, they need to be individual & you need to use your own words to express how the development will affect you.

Can I write to my MP, Borough or County Councillor?

You can, but it is not likely to have any impact. The planning process is the responsibility of MBC & MPs have no meaningful involvement.

Should we organise a petition?

**No**, for the same reasons as avoiding copying a standard letter.



Published by Downswood parish council 2019







**Need help and  
advice concerning the  
proposed development?**

# **Come to our drop-in session**



**Downswood Community Centre,  
Chiltern Close, Downswood, ME15 8XG  
Saturday 27th April 10am - 1pm**

Downswood Parish Council and the Downswood Community Association will be holding a drop-in session from 10am – 1pm at Downswood Community Centre on 27th April 2019 for any Downswood, Otham or Bearsted residents who would like to understand more about the development

If you are intending to make an objection, you may wish to join us at this session to discuss it before submitting Maidstone Borough Council.

This will be an opportunity to view & ask questions about the plans in detail & to talk to Downswood Parish Councillors, Borough Councillor Gordon Newton and Kent County Councillor Gary Cooke about how best to make your voice heard.