



The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP  
The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

05 November 2024

## Planning Decision Highsted Park, Sittingbourne

Dear Angela,

As the newly elected Member of Parliament for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, I like you was elected on a manifesto commitment to get Britain building again.

This commitment is a central part of the Government's growth agenda and I know that like me you will consider it important that every part of the country benefits from the 1.5m new homes we are pledged to deliver by the end of the Parliament.

I am writing to you today in support of local proposals for 7,150 of those much-needed new homes along with 5,000 new jobs and privately funded highways infrastructure that could be delivered within this Parliament.

This planned development at Highsted Park represents a strategic opportunity for economic growth, privately funded infrastructure delivery, job creation, and much-needed housing provision in the area – moreover, this is a project that can be delivered within this Parliament. The benefits for my constituents in Sittingbourne and Sheppey and the Kent economy more widely are considerable.

I am concerned though that the planning history of this application 21/503914/EIOUT, which was first submitted to Swale Borough Council over three years ago, suggests that the strategic nature and benefits of this application may have been unreasonably delayed.

In summary, I see these benefits as including:

- It would deliver 7,150 new homes, contributing circa 400 new homes annually to the local economy over the next 20 years
- It provides a much-needed new motorway junction onto the M2, to alleviate the current problems caused by Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey relying on a single motorway junction.
- It includes the privately funded delivery of the Southern Relief Road to connect the M2 and the A2, removing traffic from Swale's multiple Air Quality Management Areas
- It would achieve a biodiversity net gain of 20%



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- It would provide an additional 80-acres of commercial land, nearly doubling the size of the existing Kent Science Park cementing it as a centre of international significance, building on its success in life sciences and freeing it from its current accessibility constraints
- It would create three new primary schools and a secondary school
- It would deliver new health facilities working closely with the local NHS bodies
- It would provide new sports facilities including a new stadium and training facilities for Sittingbourne Football Club
- It would create several thousand new jobs over the construction lifespan of the development.

I believe that this development at Highsted Park meets the grounds for a call in as set out in legislation, in particular that it may have a *significant long-term impact on economic growth and meets housing needs across a wider area than a single local authority*.

I believe that a decision by you as Secretary of State to call in this application would not only be in the interests of my constituents and their families but would also have a significant long-term impact on economic growth through the injection of an estimated £14.2bn into the economy, as well as making a sizeable contribution to the necessarily ambitious new homes target we have committed to deliver.

As the Member of Parliament for Sittingbourne and Sheppey I am requesting that you call in this application.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin McKenna MP  
Member of Parliament for Sittingbourne and Sheppey