



House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7107

January 2017

Dear Maidstone Resident

Re: Proposed closure of Invicta Park barracks, Maidstone

The Government recently announced the closure of 91 military properties across the UK as a part of the Defence Estate Review, including Maidstone's Invicta Park Barracks. It is a closure I very much oppose. I agree there is a need for modernisation and consolidation of our military estate but I believe Invicta Park Barracks is a special case and there has been little or no local consultation thus far.

For over 200 years Maidstone's identity has been intrinsically linked to the military and the barracks is a core feature of the town. Its closure will affect some 800 service personnel and their families as well as our County town both economically and socially, and through loss of the army's longstanding civil community support.

Maidstone has a special affinity with the hugely respected Nepalese community which is an integral part of the county town. Serving Gurkhas, their families and veterans also nurture very close and vital relationships together. In many other regiments postings to different locations is commonplace, but Gurkha soldiers generally reside in a single location for much of their careers. The effect of relocation would therefore be devastating and, I believe, contrary to the Military Covenant.

Closure would have a significant and negative effect upon retention and recruitment of service personnel and I am also concerned that the site will become just another huge housing estate, increasing the burdens upon local infrastructure and removing an important aspect of the local economy.

Whilst I am opposed to this closure you may disagree. Either way I would like to know your views which I will be pleased to share. Overleaf is a short survey for completion and return to me at The House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA or scan and email the completed survey to me at helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk and sign the online petition: www.ipetitions.com/petition/save-maidstone-barracks. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen".

MP Outreach Survey

**TAKE A MINUTE AND
SHARE YOUR VIEWS
WITH YOUR MP**

Should Maidstone's military barracks close to make way for hundreds of new houses, to the likely detriment of 800 service personnel, our much-loved Nepalese community and the County Town of Kent?

Please tick one box;

remain operational be closed I am undecided

Scan and email your response to helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk

Or post it to Helen Grant MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Please sign our online petition here:

www.ipetitions.com/petition/save-maidstone-barracks

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

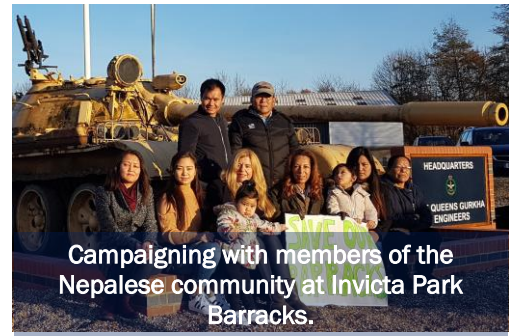
Post Code: _____

Please tell me your views on this issue;

Are there other issues you wish to raise?

"I believe the decision to close Invicta Park Barracks is unsound. It will be a negative step for the army, for Maidstone and, no doubt, for the established Nepalese community".

**Lt Col J B Awford (ret)
Former Commanding Officer - Invicta Park Barracks**



Campaigning with members of the Nepalese community at Invicta Park Barracks.



HM The Queen visits Invicta Park barracks
February 2011



Former officers' quarters at Invicta barracks built in 1797 – now the historic White Rabbit Inn



Gurkha soldiers helping with the floods
Christmas 2013



Helen Grant meets Lt Col Jim Hawkins,
new C.O. of Invicta Park Barracks,
December 2017