



## PAUL CLARK MP

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### Dear Constituent

You might be aware that Medway Council have recently received a planning application from the Arcelor Mittal company, which if approved would allow for the storage of 2500 tonnes of Ammonium Nitrate at Chatham Docks.

Ammonium Nitrate, whilst harmless when stored safely and under controlled and secure conditions, can be mixed with other chemicals to produce a significant explosive reaction. It is used as a component in military explosives and takes the form of a white powder at room temperature.

I have been contacted by a number of local people saying they are concerned about the storage of this explosive material in such close proximity to residential areas. I am visiting all of the streets that are close to this site over this weekend, to talk with local residents and explain what I am doing to ensure that local feelings are expressed in the strongest possible terms to those making decisions at Medway Council. In addition to this, I am also providing my constituents in the area with a fact-sheet that answers some of the most common questions that people have been asking.

Furthermore, a number of people have told me they are particularly concerned that the consultation process conducted by Medway Council has not been as comprehensive as we would all want and expect. All regular planning applications must go through a process of public consultation, to allow those affected by an application to have their say. In this instance, the consultation process started on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2008, with just 21 days to reply. Yet the site notice advertising the planning application was not posted for local residents to see until 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008, leaving just 14 days before the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008 deadline.

Additionally, it is not clear who was sent letters as part of the consultation process. I believe from conversations I have had with constituents that Laurel Road residents have not been consulted despite this street being one of the many residential areas that surround the docks. I have written to the Council to express my concerns, as your MP, about this application and particularly that local residents do not seem to have had a fair opportunity to offer their views on the matter.

I would also encourage you to contact me and let me know your feelings about this process, so I can pass your comments on to Council officials as well as getting a better understanding of how you feel about this application. Let me know by completing the enclosed survey and, if you wish, you can add your name to a petition of local residents who oppose the storage of potentially explosive chemicals at Chatham Docks.

Yours sincerely

Paul Clark MP

KEEPING IN TOUCH

