

Mrs Meg Bodle

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26th May 2024

RE Canterbury City Council Draft Local Plan Consultation

I am writing to object to the above and in particular

Chapter 2, Policy C12 – University of Kent Development

Chapter 1, Q1 – Vision for the District

Chapter 1, Q2 – Strategic objectives for the District

Chapter 6, DS14 & DS15 – Buses and Highways

Local Impact, Chapter 1 – Q1 & Q2

I vehemently **object** to this proposed development of 2000 houses offices and shops in the village of Blean for the following reasons

- This development is twice the size of the walled part of Canterbury.
- What evidence is there to suggest that this number is deemed necessary or required in our rural Villages, other than Central Government's Targets

I attach a recording from Prime Minister Questions 8/5/24 when Mr Martin Vickers MP asked the following and the reply from the PM ' My constituents in rural villages and on the fringes of the Grimsby-Cleethorpes urban area are very concerned about over-development.

They recognise that the highway infrastructure and public services are already overloaded.

Could my right honourable friend consider amending planning guidance so that local plans and decisions taken by local planning authorities are not overridden by planning inspectors and they'd be greatly encouraged if you would agree to meet

with me and my colleagues from the neighbouring Gainsborough and Grimsby constituencies to discuss this further.'

PM; 'My honourable friend is right that sustainable development must be at the heart of the planning system and that's why we're committed to meeting the needs of housing by **building the right homes in the right places and protecting the environmental assets that matter most.**

The National Planning Policy Framework is clearly to be responsive to local circumstances.

I know that the relevant local plan, in my honourable friend's area, is due for further consultation later this year and that he'll engage with that process, but I'll happily meet with him and colleagues to discuss his situation further.'

- We know that more housing is required but it should be built on brown field sites not on green rural spaces such as this.
- Developers are experiencing a significant decrease in the market for purchases 'off plan'
- It is an "urbanisation of an area with "a strong rural character"
- CCC are not listening to the local residents but instead bamboozling this ridiculous consultation through like an out of control steam roller.
- How will the need for more GP surgery's, hospitals elderly and vulnerable, Policing, schools and other Public services be met when they are already broken and struggling to provide help and services to the existing communities?
- Social housing in nearby areas has been bought up by London Borough Councils not local people, clearly not a need for locals
- Anti Social behaviour will increase

Traffic, C12, DS14 & DS15

- This proposal will bring an extra 2.36 people per household into our rural villages which equates to an increase of approx. 4720 people and **2440 cars** on our already congested pot hole stricken roads.
- Road users from Canterbury Herne Bay Whitstable and beyond will suffer further on congested roads
- A290 Whitstable Road is in the top 10 most dangerous roads in the UK (2019) Road Safety Federation. It has had several deaths and suffers consistently with congestion not just at peak times in the day
- C12 site is described in the Land Assessment as being "car dependent"
- CCC Officers outlined a plan DS14 & DS15, 21/5/24 Westgate Hall, to increase bus services and the use of bicycles, but **FAIL to produce adequate research or detailed planning on it**

- Tyler Hill road is already a 'rat run' for motorists and dangerous. The winding country road has no pavements and would not be able to withstand the extra traffic usage
- Rough Common would be a main route for construction traffic, unacceptable
- CCC have failed to produce adequate research regarding the use of extra buses & cycles, for this reason I have a very reasonable fear for health and safety for my families and fellow residents of Blean Tyler Hill and Rough Common.
- Crab & Winkle Way would be non usable due to the access for construction vehicles

Access

- Blean School is Ofsted Outstanding with an excellent reputation; it should not be demolished to make an access point. Children staff and parents benefit from the nature rich environment that the school offers which aids learning and wellbeing
- Unnecessary disruption to our children's education and expense to build another school
- Rough Common access Kent College end is via a conservation area that includes the Crab & Winkle National Cycle Route 1 used by many on foot bike or horse and Grade II listed buildings. This would be dangerous for all users and affect wellbeing and mental health of all

Rural Landscape

- CCC has a policy to protect agricultural land in the Local Plan. They state on the Landscape Character Assessment that this has a "strong rural character" with a mix of farmland woodlands and orchards.
- This will damage existing communities' wellbeing, existing villages and existing cycle routes and green corridors that are used by the community

Heritage

- This proposal will have devastating impacts on our local heritage assets, St Cosmos and St Damian Church, the remains of a Roman Villa, Medieval Tile Kilns both of which are scheduled monuments and Conservation Areas.
- CCC in their Environmental strategy state that the districts heritage is a sensitive topic, and they are committed to protect it for the future
- Blean Salt Road/Crab and Winkle Way from St Cosmos and St Damian church is the gateway to the Ancient City of Canterbury, the tranquillity of this special place will be ruined for ever

Wildlife & Biodiversity

- CCC declared a biodiversity emergency last year, the site C12 contradicts this policy as it is between The Blean Woods Complex and has bountiful wildlife, surrounded by different parts of the National Nature Reserve.
- Numerous rare and endangered species on the red list live in the fields hedgerows ponds and Sarre Penn Valley. Nightingales Swallows Skylarks, Song Thrush and White Throat to name but a few are welcome visitors and residents because there is an abundance of biodiversity and they all have the habitat to settle and breed. Attached Merlin App confirming the above wildlife.
- CCC policies state the importance to connect up the areas of woodland in order to protect and promote the wildlife which we have. This also backed up by Kent Wildlife Trust and others.
- Broad Oak Reservoir has been given the green light in the next valley which will destroy farmland

- As a country we are nature depleted and we need to nurture and nourish what we have, once it's gone its gone

Food & Farming

- Loss of land for food production, Grade 2 and Grade 3
- Loss of livelihoods for the local farmers
- Local Plan has a policy to protect the best quality agricultural land outside of urban and settlement boundaries

Waste Water

- Sewers cannot cope with the current infrastructure
- More Sewage outputs in our coastal towns, denying people the right to swim safely in the sea
- Local properties potentially will suffer with the addition of wastewater treatment works, at the northern part of the development
- Environmental impact on wildlife and wellbeing of residents
- House price impact
- Water pressure is drier in Blean, further impact on residents

This is an ill thought through proposal that will have a negative impact on the way so many residents live, affecting wellbeing and mental health.

It will affect the habitats in our rural villages of Blean, Rough Common and Tyler Hill, along with huge unnecessary disruption to our local school, devastate our local farmers, agricultural related suppliers and local businesses, and just as important deplete our wildlife and biodiversity further.

Councillors please support the very people who voted for you and have the moral courage to challenge Central Government.

Yours sincerely

Meg Bodle