

Dear Canterbury City Council Consultations,

Comments on Local Plan Consultation re Brooklands Farm

Policy W4 - Land at Brooklands Farm

It is deeply regrettable this proposal involves so much farmland in a country that can already not produce enough food for its population. It's ironic the needs of a growing population for housing, schools etc., is at odds with a growing need to produce food.

If there is inevitability this site will be used for development, there are two major issues that need to be addressed before any detailed considerations are made about planning specifics.

Firstly, the proposed diversion of South Steet leaves the most dangerous section of road unaltered. The section proposed to be diverted is mostly safe and needs no more than limited widening in some areas and drainage to stop deterioration of the surface as currently suffered. The more dangerous section of road, east of Red Bridge towards Radfall Hill, has blind summits, bends and is narrow along much of its length. Lack of drainage on this section regularly creates pot holes. These dangers make the road especially dangerous for cyclists. This section of road needs to be diverted before any new traffic, including contractors' vehicles, is likely to use the route. Perhaps the whole of South Street can be diverted through the north east section of the proposed development leaving the existing road for only cyclists and pedestrians?

Secondly, the site, especially the field south of South Street, is of archaeological importance. It contains the western end of a First World War trench system that stretched from Convicts Wood to Shrub Hill in the east. The summit of the field held a rare circular traverse. See HER <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKE97705> for outline details. I can provide more detailed information including evidence of the trench's First World War origin. It should be noted a similar era trench on The Chatham Land Front at Bobbing was excavated prior to development. Significant findings about its construction were uncovered. This trench, because of its circular traverse, has potential to be of greater interest. As with the Bobbing trench, revealing and preserving at least section of the trench will be in the public interest. This should be done before development of this field is considered. For more information on the Bobbing excavations see these hyperlinks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCngnNulA9o>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11123549/Britains-forgotten-trenches-World-War-One-Archaeologists-unearth-network-Kent-countryside.html>

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/issue.xhtml?recordId=1168130&recordType=GreyLitSeries>

Second World War slit trenches / weapons slits were dug in the north east corner of the field to protect a road block. It is unclear from the proposal where an additional access to the new Thanet Way would be built but it is likely these features would be lost. They should be excavated, recorded and surrounding areas detected before any development in that area. For the HER link for the conflict archaeology sites see here:

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKE97705>

When the New Thanet Way was built Iron Age archaeology was found on the fringes of this field. It seems very likely more evidence exists in the field, perhaps especially around the summit as previous work suggested the site might have been a small oppidum. A thorough survey should be conducted with results published before any development is approved for this site. See HER links below:

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKE15651>

<https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKE15792>

I hope this agricultural land can be preserved, but if development is approved, the concerns and considerations above should be addressed first to improve road safety and enlighten history of the site.

Alan Nutten

[Draft Canterbury District Local Plan \(2040\) - online version \(accessible\).pdf - Google Drive](#)

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