

## Alexander Gunyon

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**From:** Sam Watkins [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 June 2024 20:32  
**To:** Consultations  
**Subject:** Local Plan 2024 Consultation Comments : Policy C12

**Categories:** Blue category

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### --Email From External Account--

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the plan for development on the land north of the University of Kent (Policy C12), where 2000 homes, commercial areas and a relocation of Blean Primary School have been proposed. I believe this will be detrimental to the villages of Blean, Tyler Hill and Rough Common; please see below how this "rural settlement", on land previously deemed unsuitable, will have serious and irreversible negative impacts on our local area.

### Impact on the Roads

The building of 2000 homes and other infrastructure will result in 4000 to 6000 additional vehicles travelling in the district daily, based on two cars per household plus those commuting into the area. There are currently two primary access roads between The Blean, and Caterbury and Whistable.

The A290: this is one of the most dangerous roads in Kent with a high collision record. At the Whitstable end roundabout for access to A299 there are frequent traffic jams at peak times, and at the Canterbury end - where traffic disperses down Palmers Cross Hill or into St Dunstans the traffic will back up daily causing slow traffic around the city.

Hackington Road: winding through the woods, this road is treacherous in unfavourable weather conditions. At one end is the village of Chestfield and the busy Old Thanet Way roundabout and bottleneck under the railway bridge. At the other end is the St Stephen's area of Canterbury, with tight roads, a level-crossing and The Archbishop's School where traffic is notoriously slow at rush-hour.

The connecting roads of Giles Lane, Tyler Hill Road / Link Road / Calais Hill are also not fit for purpose for additional traffic without significant work to improve, which would cause havoc for local traffic when said work happens.

Adding 6000 additional vehicles will be dangerous for local residents in the linear villages of Blean, Tyler Hill and Rough Common who park on these roads and be dangerous for local children travelling to school.

Further, it has already been highlighted that these roads are currently at their limits with the previously proposed Northern Bypass, which has since been dropped. The design of the development is such that cars are a necessity, which has detrimental impacts on the climate resulting in global warming.

### Increased Pollution

Large scale developments bring with them pollution of all forms. As mentioned above, there will be a significant increase of vehicles which will culminate in a massive rise of noxious emissions - detrimental to the health of

children at local schools, elderly residents and local wildlife. Construction vehicles will also compound this air pollution.

Developing on this greenfield site requires the destruction of woodland and farmland, and to build requires concreting over an ecosystem that naturally drains. This land is a valley with the Sarr Penn river at the bottom - all rubble, waste, slurry will drain into the river destroying the diverse wildlife. Climate change is causing our months to be wetter than ever and the Sarr Penn is prone to flooding. Artificially damming the river with building waste will cause more flooding and back-wash of this pollution into Blean Woods.

### **Irreversible Damage to Wildlife**

As alluded to previously, the destruction of woodland and farmland and pollution into the Sarr Penn will have a disastrous effect on the biodiversity of The Blean. A large range of flora and fauna live in the area, including skylarks and swifts on the RSBP Red list - threatened with extinction; the Great Crested Newt which are protected by British and European laws; multiple bat species - also protected and endangered due to loss of habitat which this development will directly contribute to; and bluebells which are illegal to remove.

Wildlife in The Blean won't be the only group to suffer due to these plans. Mass-building elsewhere in the county has caused excess sewage to pollute the River Stour and destroy the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve. This reserve is home to many migrating birds and is critical to the re-introduction /rewilding of beavers in the UK. Developments have been stopped until this issue is resolved - which will be particularly tricky as Southern Water have asked to increase bills by 91% to upgrade their infrastructure. This is not something that will happen quickly or easily, and adding more homes to the system will only increase the cost to the public further.

Just last year, your council declared a Biodiversity Emergency and will soon publish a Recovery Strategy. I wonder if destruction of protected habitats and allowing more sewage will be part of this plan?

### **Extra Strain on Public Resources**

The proposed development will increase the population from 3,700 to over 10,000. 2,000 homes potentially bring an additional 4,000 children. Rebuilding Blean Primary School will certainly not accommodate this influx, and when it comes time for children to progress to secondary there are not enough schools or places to cater for this either.

Kent and Canterbury Hospital is in a state of disrepair and the long-promised new hospital has not appeared. The A&E's at QEQM and William Harvey are already strained by developments in neighbouring districts. Adding more people to the mix will only make a bad situation worse with Kent hospitals rated as some of the worst in the country.

Access to the new development is restricted and limiting. There is no comment on how the Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service will be able to manage the additional risk areas when these resources are suffering from a national lack of funding.

It would be remiss of me to not highlight the irony of my letter: I live in a new-build in Aylesham. I, more than most, recognise the need for affordable housing in the Canterbury district. I grew up in Blean and have only recently moved away as there was no housing that was suitable for my needs.

However, developments should be designed to have minimal impact on the existing communities. The proposed development will increase the population four-fold, all new residents will be densely situated in an urban sprawl built on a green-field site in an area smaller than the walled section of Canterbury. Such a development will destroy the heritage and culture of the area; shatter the unique identities of three separate villages; and goes against Canterbury City Council's responsibility to protect and preserve our open spaces and wildlife for future generations.

Best regards,

Sam Watkins

