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From: Alice Bodle [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 June 2024 19:55
To: Consultations
Subject: Draft Local Plan Consultation - Objection Letter

Categories: Blue category

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Miss Alice Bodle

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2nd June 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 strongly oppose the projected development of 2000 residences, offices, and businesses in the community 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
- More housing should be created on brownfield lands rather than green rural settings like this one.
- The market for 'off plan' purchases is decreasing significantly among developers.

- The area will be urbanised and cannot maintain its strong agricultural character.
- The CCC is not listening to local residents and is rushing through the consultation. Where is the democracy in this?
- How will the need for more GP surgeries, hospitals, schools, and other public services be met when they are already overburdened and struggling to serve existing communities?
- London Borough Councils have purchased social housing in adjacent districts, indicating a lack of ownership by local residents. The stress local residents went through opposing this development caused significant mental health and wellbeing issues.
- Anti-social behaviour is already a growing problem in Canterbury, this will only make it worse.

Traffic, C12, DS14 & DS15

- This proposal will add 2.36 persons per home to our rural areas, resulting in about 4720 people and 2440 vehicles on already congested roads with potholes.
- Congested roads will worsen for users in Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable, and surrounding areas. Rough Common is already a significant problem during rush hour times, a blind eye can't be turned off to this.
- According to the Road Safety Federation, A290 Whitstable Road is one of the top ten most dangerous roads in the UK in 2019. It has had multiple deaths and suffers continuously from congestion, not only at peak hours of the day.
- The Land Assessment describes the C12 location as "car dependent".
- CCC Officers described a strategy (DS14 & DS15, 21/5/24 Westgate Hall) to boost bus services and bicycle use, but failed to conduct necessary study and planning.
- Tyler Hill Road is a deadly 'rat run' for vehicles. The meandering country road has no pavements and would be unable to endure the increased traffic usage.
- Rough Common would be a primary route for construction traffic, which is unacceptable. It barely copes currently at rush hour times as mentioned above.
- CCC's lack of research on the deployment of extra buses and bikes raises concerns for the health and safety of inhabitants in Blean Tyler Hill and Rough Common.
- The Crab & Winkle Way will be inaccessible owing to 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.
- Only 19 schools in the last ten years have sold of precious and valuable playing fields.
- Unnecessary disruption to our children's education and expense to build another school. To date, there has not even been an 'Education Impact Assessment' undertaken on the school.
- There are no other examples of a school being knocked down for a road.
- 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's Local Plan includes a policy to conserve agricultural land. According to the Landscape Character Assessment, this area has a "strong rural character" with farming, forests, and orchards.
- The impact on existing communities, villages, cycling lanes, and green corridors will be negative.

Heritage

- The project will harm our local heritage assets, including St Cosmos and St Damian Churches, a Roman Villa, and Mediaeval Tile Kilns, which are scheduled monuments and conservation areas.
- CCC's Environmental plan emphasises the need of preserving the district's legacy for future generations.
- The gateway to the Ancient City of Canterbury, Blean Salt Road/Crab and Winkle Way, located between St Cosmos and St Damian church, will forever lose its peacefulness.

Wildlife & Biodiversity

- The CCC declared a biodiversity emergency last year, although site C12, located between The Blean Woods Complex and encircled by the National Nature Reserve, boasts abundant fauna.
- The fields, hedgerows, ponds, and Sarre Penn Valley are home to numerous rare and endangered species on the Red List. Nightingales, swallows, skylarks, song thrushes, to name a few, are welcome visitors and residents due to the variety of biodiversity and the availability of habitat for settlement and breeding.
- CCC policies highlight the need of connecting wooded areas to maintain and encourage wildlife. This is also supported by Kent Wildlife Trust.
- We simply can't keep destroying nature, it is barbaric.

Food & Farming

- Loss of land for food production in Grades 2 and 3.
- Local farmers lose their livelihoods.
- The Local Plan aims to protect high-quality agricultural land outside urban and settlement limits.

Waste Water

- Inadequate sewer infrastructure.
- Higher sewage outputs in coastal towns, preventing safe sea swimming.
- Additional wastewater treatment works in the northern part of the development may harm local properties.
- Environmental impact on wildlife and residents.
- House price impact
- Increased water pressure in Blean, affecting residents further.

This is a terrible proposal that should not be allowed to proceed. Blean, Rough Common, and Tyler Hill villages, as well as their citizens, will suffer significantly. It is a dreadful proposition, and I wholeheartedly feel compelled to speak up for wildlife and nature, protecting them from what is proposed. This is not the appropriate area for this development.

Yours sincerely,

Alice Bodle