

Alexander Gunyon

From: Hayley Snoding [REDACTED]
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To: Consultations
Subject: Comment on Canterbury City Council Draft Local Plan 2040

Importance: High

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Name: Mrs Hayley Snoding [REDACTED]

I am responding as someone who works in and is also a frequent visitor to the Canterbury District.

I am writing to express my unequivocal disagreement with the proposed plan to construct a new town comprising 2,000 residential units on prime agricultural land that is not only vital for sustaining local biodiversity but also borders ancient forests, which are invaluable natural treasures.

The Council's actions in pursuing this development are in direct contradiction with its own established policies and guidelines, as it appears to be hastily pushing forward a flimsy and inadequately substantiated case instead of seeking a legitimate exemption from Central Government, based on Canterbury's exceptional circumstances and unique challenges. Developments of such a massive scale and magnitude should prioritize the utilization of numerous brownfield sites and previously developed land before even contemplating the irreversible and detrimental act of paving over and destroying pristine countryside and natural habitats.

It is imperative that the Council re-evaluates its approach and aligns its actions with its stated commitment to environmental protection, sustainable development, and the preservation of Canterbury's rich natural heritage. A significant drawback of the proposed site under policy C12 is its location as an isolated rural housing estate devoid of essential amenities and services. This lack of amenities implies that even in the hypothetical and unlikely scenario where the Council contemplates and implements a program to subsidize free bus access for all prospective new residents, it would still be reasonable to anticipate an influx of between 3,000 and 4,000 additional private vehicles onto the existing rural road network. Furthermore, the inherent access challenges that initially led to the rejection of this site during previous evaluations have not been adequately addressed or resolved in any meaningful way. The fundamental issues concerning accessibility and connectivity to the broader transportation infrastructure remain unresolved, casting doubt on the viability and suitability of this proposed site for residential development.

Rough Common Road, a narrow residential street with weight restrictions currently in place, would undoubtedly undergo a transformation into a major thoroughfare or trunk road to accommodate the influx of heavy construction vehicles during the development phase. Subsequently, it would be burdened with thousands of additional passenger vehicles, mostly single occupancy cars, as residents of the new housing estate use it as a primary route to access Canterbury city center, exacerbating traffic congestion and strain on the road infrastructure. The intersection between Tyler Hill Road and Blean Common has been the site of multiple incidents and accidents, highlighting the existing safety concerns and potential hazards associated with increased traffic volumes.

Moreover, in 2019, the A290 Whitstable Road garnered notoriety as one of the most perilous and dangerous roads in the United Kingdom, further underscoring the need for comprehensive traffic management and safety measures to mitigate risks to motorists and pedestrians alike. In the aftermath of heavy rainfall events, numerous gardens in the Blean and Tyler Hill areas experience significant flooding, with one particularly persistent and substantial puddle along the Crab & Winkle Way remaining for an extended period of six months. This recurring flooding issue can be attributed to the geological composition of the area earmarked for development, which is predominantly comprised of London Clay with superficial deposits of Head material (a mixture of Gravel, Sand, Silt, and Clay). These soil conditions render traditional drainage solutions, such as soakaways and field drainage systems, ineffective and inadequate for satisfactory water management. The proposed construction of 2,000 new housing units, along with the associated impermeable surfaces like concrete and tarmac, would exacerbate the existing flooding problems in the area. Even with the implementation of mitigating measures like Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), the underlying soil characteristics of the site make it highly unlikely that such systems would function effectively, leading to regular and widespread flooding throughout the entire region, regardless of the mitigation efforts employed.

Neither can I understand the need to build more properties, when the existing developments in and around both Canterbury and Thanet largely remain unsold. Exacerbated by the increased cost of living and housing prices, and the fact that the new builds which are not affordable as often claimed, are causing a stagnant housing market. Nether are there the jobs in the local area to support people moving to the area from other regions.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Hayley Snoding