

Alexander Gunyon

From: cath jones [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 June 2024 10:40
To: Consultations
Cc: cath jones
Subject: Objection to chapter 2 (canterbury) policy c12

Categories: Blue category

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Dear sir/ madam,

I have already emailed regarding the proposed development at Brooklands Farm. I have just attempted to complete the online questionnaire regarding the proposed 'rural settlement' in the Blean area. I found the form very confusing and difficult to complete and when I lost everything I had already typed, I gave up.

I trust that you will accept a second email from me, relating to different parts of the revised draft local plan.

I am, catherine jones, [REDACTED] I am a full time resident of more than [REDACTED] years.

This is my objection to chapter 2 (canterbury) policy c12. I strongly object!!

I was shocked to learn about the proposed development in the Blean area. I live in Whitstable and do have to travel to Canterbury by car at least once a week. Other times, I take the bus or cycle. I already sit in traffic jams. The ring road in Canterbury cannot cope with current levels of car usage because of many new houses in the area. I have seen congestion get worse and worse over the last 20 years. Given this, the idea of adding 2000 new houses in Blean seems absurd. It is impossible to improve the capacity of a bus service to the extent that thousands of new residents could avoid getting into their cars. You would need hundreds of buses each hour to provide sufficient capacity for the residents of 2000 new houses. Has the impact on roads been calculated with traffic surveys? All of the surrounding roads to Canterbury are narrow, winding/hilly roads with records of speeding and accidents. The proposed development will be on both sides of Tyler Hill Road. This will be a traffic disaster!

This development is called a "rural settlement" but actually, it will be a new town of 2,000 houses attached to the northern edge of Canterbury. It will destroy the current rural gap between the city and the villages of Blean and Tyler Hill.

I object to the new settlement on the grounds of insufficient infrastructure and catastrophic damage to an invaluable biodiversity habitat.

There is insufficient capacity within GP and medical services within the area. The addition of 2000 households will add a crippling burden to already overstretched medical services.

The Council's 2021 Landscape Character Assessment describes the "strong rural character" of Blean and its surrounding areas with its mix of woodlands, orchards and farmland. It mentions the need to conserve this landscape.

The southern part of the site is located in Canterbury's Area of High Landscape Value, and it is between two Sites of Special Scientific Interest – RSPB Blean and West Blean Reserve. The C12 proposals are incompatible with the 2021 Land Character Assessment, to which the Local Plan is required to conform.

This proposed development, a new town, will dramatically change the area of countryside between Canterbury and Whitstable, and the three distinct villages of Tyler Hill, Blean and Rough Common. Would this fit with the Council's own Land Character policies? No!!

I mentioned that I object to the Blean development proposal on the grounds of damage to biodiversity. The development site is right in the middle of the Blean Woods area, surrounded by various parts of the National Nature Reserve. There are numerous rare and endangered species living in the fields, ponds, hedgerows and Sarre Penn valley. The Council's other policies (eg SS1.10) say that it will continue to work with partners to extend and improve connectivity of the Blean Woodland Complex, but this development would making connectivity impossible.

I regularly cycle to Canterbury from Whitstable. It is a joy to pause at Blean church and sit and take in the views. It really helps mental health issues to be able to sit and listen to the sounds of nature: bird song, insects, the wind in grass and trees. Absorbing the greenness around me is 'healing'. The building of this 2000 houses development would destroy this experience for the thousands of cyclists and walkers who use the crab and winckle way.

The proposed development would mean the loss of large areas of "best and most versatile" Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land (scored out of 5). The Local Plan includes a policy to protect the best quality agricultural land outside of urban and settlement boundaries. Oops, a conflict in your plans.

I am a retired primary school teacher and I was speechless and then outraged when I heard that Blean Primary School will be demolished to allow the creation of an access road for the development. This is the only Outstanding primary school in this part of Kent!! How can you even think about knocking it down? Think about the devastating, disruptive impact this will have on both pupils and staff.

I am aware that the University of Kent is experiencing financial challenges and need to raise money, and this proposed development would plug the current hole in their finances. But that does not justify this startlingly, destructive building proposal.

I have not met a single local resident who approves of this development. Please reject this proposal. Please remove it from the revised draft local plan. Please do not ruin a wonderful place.

Yours

Catherine Jones