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From: [REDACTED]
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Categories: Blue category

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From: Lesley Howe, [REDACTED]

Re: Consultation for Canterbury District Local Plan to 2040

I strongly object to policies W3 and W4 (Brooklands Farm) of the draft Local Plan to 2040 for the following reasons:

1. Loss of an Area of High Landscape Value. Area of special landscape should be protected for future generations. Much is talked about Whitstable in tourist terms but policies are directed towards over development of housing which will destroy its unique qualities. Once it's gone it's gone. CCC's Landscape Character Assessment 2020 recommended that CCC should reinforce the open rural setting south of Whitstable and resist development in the A299 New Thanet Way corridor.
2. More traffic. This is not a sustainable place to build a large development, from which (if its like the rest of south Chestfield) more people would be commuting to Canterbury than any other destination, almost all of them by car. It will also contribute to traffic congestion in the north Canterbury area.
3. Flooding Increased flood risk downstream on the Swalecliffe Brook. At present heavy rain sits on the farmland before is slowly evaporates or trickles into the Brook. Vast areas of storage would be required to accommodate rainwater run-off from any urban development, but this could not be located close to the Brook because that area already floods when the river level rises over the riverbanks as happened in February.
4. Health . Much is talked about people's mental health and need for open spaces. Overbuilding destroys the open space.
5. The local sewage works cannot cope with the increasing demand, and regularly releases untreated sewage into the sea, causing instances of serious illness for people on local beaches. The new outfall under construction will not solve this problem.
6. The proposed new junction linking the A299 to Chestfield Rd and South Street would create huge increases in traffic, and therefore road safety problems, pollution and noise in residential areas.
7. Bad for our wildlife. Seriously negative impact on Biodiversity. There is a lot of insect life associated with the cattle of Brooklands Farm, and consequently there are swallows, house martins, wagtails, numerous bats and no doubt much more that is less easy to see. There is also wildlife on the arable fields, e.g. skylarks. Limited corridors are not a substitute for what is lost. The smaller these areas, the more likely they are to be encroached on in future.
8. Adverse effect on the Local Wildlife Site at Convicts Wood. Building

1,400 houses nearby would cause it to be severely degraded and used as a children's recreation area and dog-walking route. Residents would use the area for dumping garden waste, as already happens in comparable areas along the Swalecliffe Brook. Residents' cats would kill off the local wildlife.

9. Loss of "Best and most versatile" agricultural land. How does this fit in with national concerns about food supply. Shouldn't local be cultivated particularly as farming sources outside of our area are facing problems following years of over use/chemicals? . Surely national concerns are our concern. How does this support future generations?

10. CCC needs to recognise that housing developments affect the coastal towns much more severely than Canterbury. Canterbury can expand to north, east, south and west. Whitstable can only expand southwards, as it is constrained by valuable marshland to the west, and by Herne Bay to the east. What little farmland that remains within easy walking distance of Whitstable is needed for residents' recreation and well-being as well as to preserve the last vestiges of the natural setting of this tourist destination town. Therefore, the farmland between the Blean woodland and the existing urban edge of Whitstable should be given statutory protection.

11. Recent trends of building large estates is swamping local communities. Not all these are for the local population. How much of brown field sites are being used? The recent increase in traffic from Whitstable Heights, the Herne Bay development of the golf course is already being negatively felt in terms of additional traffic. How does this leave us space for tourism?

For the reasons listed above, the proposals would be unsustainable and would contravene paragraphs 135c, 168, 173, 180a, 180b, 180d and 191b of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework.