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From: Patsy [REDACTED]
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To: Consultations
Subject: Objection to Policy W4 Land at Brooklands Farm development in Whitstable

Categories: Blue category

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P Desir
[REDACTED]

1 June 2024

Objection to Policy W4 Land at Brooklands Farm.

Dear Sir / Madam

I wish to express my strong objection to the proposed housing development on Brooklands Farm.

Brooklands Farm is a precious green field site, in a rural area with irreplaceable good quality agricultural land offering a vital sanctuary for wildlife and contributing to the overall ecological balance of our community.

The scale of development ie the erection of 1400 residences of in this area is will place extreme and unsustainable pressure on the current infrastructure of the town.

Brooklands Farm lies outside of the town boundary on good quality agricultural land and will result in the unacceptable loss of open green space. It is Rural, not Urban, and should remain as such.

Building 1400 homes on Brooklands Farm will result in the deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient hedgerows and the Swalecliffe Brook.

The significant impact the development would have on the local wildlife and their natural habitats is of grave concern. Birds of prey, sparrow hawks & buzzards etc, use the hedgerows for hunting. Bats are seen regularly across the fields, as is the albino squirrel. An abundance of birds use the hedgerows for nesting. We have regular sightings of woodpeckers, greenfinches, wagtails, goldfinches, and all the usual wild birds. There are many slow worms on the site and hazel dormice.

The destruction of this green space would result in the loss of biodiversity and disrupt the delicate ecosystem that currently thrives in the area. Preserving such natural habitats is essential for maintaining a sustainable environment and ensuring the well-being of future generations.

In addition to the environment described above, Brooklands Farm acts as a protective factor against flooding in the immediate area.

Brooklands Farm's green fields currently act as natural drainage, absorbing excess rainwater during heavy rainfall and reducing the likelihood of severe flooding.

The replacement of these fields with impermeable surfaces such as buildings and roads would disrupt the natural drainage system and potentially exacerbate flooding issues, placing both existing and future residents at risk.

The fields are London clay which is highly susceptible to volumetric changes depending upon its moisture content. During exceptionally dry periods or where the moisture is extracted by tree root activity, the clay can become desiccated and shrink in volume, and conversely swell again when the moisture content is restored. This can lead to many problems near the ground surface, including structural movement and fracturing of buildings, fractured sewers and service pipes/ducts and uneven and damaged road surfaces and pavings. Such damage is recognised to be covered by the interpretation of subsidence in buildings insurance policies, and the periods of dry weather in 1976/77 and 1988/92, in particular, led to a host of insurance claims. As a result, many insurance companies have now increased the cost of premiums for buildings located in the most susceptible areas where damage occurred, where the clay is close to the surface.

At present there are concerns about the local sewage company releasing excess sewage into the sea which has meant residents health has been put at risk of infection.

Brooklands Farm is situated in an area that already faces challenges with flooding & sewage. The increased strain on the existing system due to the additional housing could lead to overflows, pollution of water sources (the Swalecliffe Brook also), and a decline in water quality.

Southern Water is unable to cope with the present demands of the local population and is unlikely to be able to provide for the needs of an additional 1400 houses -

1400 more houses with one or two toilets will add to Southern Water's already overstretched capacity.

The Swalecliffe Brook flows through the Thanet Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) before joining the north Kent coast to the east of Whitstable, a section of the coast which forms part of the Saxon Shore Way. It runs through Brooklands Farm.

It could have been classed as a Salmonid River (trout stream) due to having brown trout and eel, both of which are of conservation significance. There is also the possibility that three-spined sticklebacks will still be present, despite the 2013 sewage dump that polluted the brook at Long rock.

The roads in this are narrow and are unsuitable for the demands which will be placed on them by the extra traffic that will be created by potentially 3000 plus extra cars, not to mention the pollution and noise.

The planned new junctions for the A299 would be dispensing traffic onto roads that are ill equipped to deal with it. The additional traffic then going through to Chestfield, South Street and Canterbury will create a significant impact on not only the roads and residents in the area, but going to Canterbury, the road goes through ancient woodland, and pollution and noise etc will have a detrimental impact on wildlife. Additionally, the air quality will affect the health of local residents and lead to an increase in asthma in children and residents with lung related health issues.

It is essential to thoroughly evaluate and address these concerns to avoid any negative consequences for both residents and the environment.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed housing development on Brooklands Farm. The preservation of this green field site, the mitigation of sewage issues, the protection of wildlife and their habitats, and the prevention of flooding should be of utmost importance. It is crucial to explore alternative options that prioritise sustainable development and do not compromise the well-being of our community and environment.

Thank you for considering these concerns and taking the appropriate action.

Signed
P Desir
Whitstable Resident

Sent from my iPhone