

## Alexander Gunyon

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**From:** JAMES HANNA [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 May 2024 18:28  
**To:** Consultations  
**Cc:** James Hanna  
**Subject:** Response to the draft local plan 2040 - policy C12

**Categories:** Blue category

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To: City County councillors

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the policy C12 Land north of the University of Kent on a number of issues but one in particular given part of my professional duties of my day job.

Of primary concern, on a professional level, is the demolition of Blean primary school to make way for an access road to allow construction traffic into the proposed development. As you can see from my signature I am the NEU (National Education Union) East Kent District Health and Safety advisor, so Blean primary school comes under my umbrella of schools and therefore I am responsible for the working conditions of all NEU staff that work in Blean primary school regarding health and safety matters. Given the unprecedented action of demolishing an outstanding school, there is currently no official documentation on how this process is to be implemented - gives me cause for legal concerns regarding the proposal. At the council/ public meetings, both at Westgate Hall and at the Guildhall, which I attended, no mention was made of how any plan, whether it be generic or detailed was outlined as to how this process was to be executed, this was despite talking to a number of councillors outside of The Guildhall for a considerable length of time (no room inside and people turned away). **Given the radical nature of the proposal I have already contacted the NEU health and safety national lead on this matter and am now in discussions with the NEU legal department on how I take my concerns further.** I would like to know please the exact location of the two schools and the distance the access road would be from the two new builds? In addition are the schools, one or both, to be built prior to the start of this truly appalling development? Are NEU teaching staff to be housed in portacabin style accommodation for part of the construction process? Noise and clean air legal limits will need to be observed along with all health and safety legal requirements being met. Blean primary school will of course have to produce a risk assessment to cover all aspects of the transition between the old and new school buildings. I also have concerns regarding large commercial vehicles in such close proximity of these schools during the working school day. Given that the initial proposal to build on prime agricultural land also goes against both the university Masterplan 2019 and council stated policies I find it inconceivable that policy C12 can be passed in its current format. This proposal was rejected in 2022 on many different factors, however the most important

one was access points. Apart from demolishing an outstanding school to make way for an access road to the building site, other considerations remain the same.

**ON THESE GROUNDS POLICY C12 SHOULD BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY - at least until there is a detailed plan to say how an access road this close to a new school is going to be implemented and the time scale for this project to be completed.**

In addition, I am a lead volunteer for the RSPB and over the last four years we have set about re-wetting the Blean woodlands which has had a marked effect on improving the water basin within the largest ancient woodland in southern England. Given the proposed development this would go against both the University of Kent and Canterbury City Councils stated policies on the biodiversity in this area. Also the size of the development is larger than the footprint inside the walled city of Canterbury and will destroy the environment and community nature of both Blean and Tyler Hill villages. Given the flood basin characteristics of the Sarre Penn valley and the proximity of a sewage plant that close to the river I find it impossible to believe that the Sarre Penn and the surrounding woodland would not be polluted and destroyed forever.

As a former under and post graduate of the University of Kent it appalls me that the university is planning to develop this land purely because of financial mismanagement. Regardless of how the University or council try to deflect the fact that this proposal is not driven solely by the financial mismanagement of the University of Kent, to the point that they have had to bring in financial consultants to try and restructure the university regardless of the implications to local residents and to the absolute horror of everyone in the community - I have yet to meet a single person in favour of this ill conceived and inexcusable piece of planning. Know one disagrees with the fact that new houses need to be built but the proposed area is of huge environmental importance - The Blean is one of five Biodiversity Areas (BOA's -as specified by the *Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal 2020*) and this proposed development would destroy any chance of the Wilder Blean Complex initiative implementing the connectivity of the woodland. Along with everyone else in the community affected by plans the residents of Tyler Hill, Blean and Rough Common wish to work with the university on finding alternative solutions to the University's dire financial predicament, however, destroying the identity of surrounding villages, demolishing an outstanding school and damaging biodiversity is not the way to do it.

Yours sincerely

**James Hanna (he/him)**

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