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From: Catherine Bargent [REDACTED]
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To: Consultations
Subject: Chapter2,policy C12 Uni of Kent development

Categories: Blue category

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Dear CCC

My response to Chapter 2 policy C12 Uni of Kent Development.

I have been a resident of Canterbury for [REDACTED] years and have lived in Blean for [REDACTED] years.

I object to the proposal of a new "rural settlement" of 2,000 houses for the following reasons;

LOCAL IMPACT:

I agree that more affordable housing is needed in Canterbury but I do not believe that this location is the appropriate place. Public services such as Blean Primary school, secondary schools and GP services are already overwhelmed.

Blean frequently experiences power outages and drainage is a problem where parts of the road becomes flooded in very wet weather. These problems will only get worse with additional demand.

TRAFFIC:

Having lived along the main A290 road for the last 30 years, I have observed that not only has the amount of traffic increased but also the speed of traffic has increased despite speed limits in place. Heavy traffic such as Lorries and Coaches frequently thunder past our property. I live on Blean Hill, close to a bend and where there is no path on my side of the road. Crossing safely is already precarious at busy times (almost all the time) and would be near impossible with increased traffic flow. The A290 is already a dangerous road with a large number of accidents having occurred over the past few years.

I do not believe the main A290 road or the roads between the villages of Blean and Tyler Hill are suitable or big enough to support a large mainly car dependent development. The road going through the University would also note an increase in traffic flow placing students at risk, particularly the majority of those who do not use the crossings in place or feel it necessary to look when they cross the roads.

I cannot see on any plans the provision for traffic calming measures or additional crossings being placed along the A290. This places young families and elderly residents at risk.

ACCESS:

The stated access points would not be workable as they would appear to impact 2 private schools and their parking. Not to mention the destruction of the current primary school and I'm guessing the Nursery behind it. The other

access point would also appear to affect the Crab and Winkle way, current cycle paths and the Kent Community Oasis Garden.

Will the crab and Winkle be lost? What about the Canterbury Outer Ring walk which currently cuts across farmland from behind the church towards Tyler Hill. This seems to be right in the middle of the build.

RURAL LANDSCAPE:

The access to ancient and beautiful woodlands, walks along the Crab and Winkle heritage line and farmland was one of the reasons I chose to live in Blean. The Crab and Winkle route provides a safe cycle path, walking route for dog owners, an opportunity to avoid traffic and parking difficulties for those attending the local primary school where they can also walk safely to the school. It also serves as a route for those who walk for mental health reasons (University students included) those taking part in a weekly Parkrun and those just enjoying the peace of being away from traffic. This would be lost along with the 3 distinct villages of Blean, Tyler Hill and Rough common.

HERITAGE:

The church of St Cosmus and St Damian in the Blean is a small church which is part of Blean Village. A housing development on its back doorstep would ruin its quiet and secluded location. It is already packed with villagers during services. How would it support a further 2,000 homes?

The crab and winkle way attracts walkers and cyclists and is a very popular route for both. The beauty of this walk is that it takes you away from the traffic and allows access between Canterbury and Whitstable through woodland and farmland. Walking through a busy housing estate would not be the same.

WILDLIFE and BIODIVERSITY:

My family have been brought up enjoying and respecting our surroundings in the Blean and understand the need to protect wildlife and their environment. We are proud to live in a part of Kent where many rare and endangered species live. We stop to listen to many bird songs and spot birds in the trees. Walking across fields we are aware that many ground nesting birds will lose their habitat. We see Albino squirrels on our walks through the University along an area earmarked for development. We look out for the Heath Fritillary butterflies in the woods. I am aware that there are so many more insects, birds and small animals which will be lost with the destruction of fields, streams and hedgerows.

How can this be for the good. We need all our pollinators and should be looking at ways to safeguard their habitats, not destroy them.

FOOD and FARMING:

How can the building of houses on quality agricultural land be acceptable? With a growing population and climate change, we should be providing more home grown produce and reducing our need for importing foods and reducing our carbon footprint. . There must be land which is currently not being farmed which could serve better for a housing development.

The Kent COG garden is a multiuse, accessible, safe space that provides opportunities for students, staff and the community to engage with sustainable food, biodiversity, gardening, community action and mental health and wellbeing activities, whilst making new friends, getting some time outdoors, building up skills, confidence and making new links.

According to the plans, this no longer exists.(along with the Observatory and weather stations) Surely to lose this space for access would destroy an important area for teaching, learning, producing and for mental well being.

Having read The University of Kents Sustainability Policy 2022 (accessed online) it seems that they may need reminding of their goals as it seems that a development of 2,000 houses goes against everything within it.

Have University students been asked for their opinions? Kent University has a beautiful campus and I am sure that is a major factor in students choosing to study here. Living within a Building site, with heavy machinery running alongside accommodation is surely going to impact on the well being of students and the University may find they lose more money as students choose to study elsewhere.

[University of Kent, Estates, Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy 2021 – 2025](#) This document makes interesting reading for their campus goals. Surely the following points should follow across all land which is owned by the university. I cannot see a development of 2,000 houses supports this in any way!!

Within the document, it discusses the location of the University and how it sits within Special areas of conservation, Natural Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It discusses the protection of habitats for flora and fauna with many endangered species being found onsite. The plan also talks about protecting and enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity and its importance in supporting a sustainable future. It states it is aware that biodiversity is at risk and how they see the imporatnce of protecting and finding opportunities for it to flourish and increase. It talks about their responsibility in managing land and how this can influence the impact on climate change and how they manage their land to reduce their impact on the planet by utilising space for renewables, tree planting, research supporting low carbon outcomes and food production.

How do they plan to do this by allowing a housing development to be built on its land??

Thank you for taking time to read my thoughts. I hope they go some way in helping you make the right decision for protecting Canterbury's green spaces and its residents both human and wildlife.

Mrs Catherine Bargent and Mr Mark Bargent.

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