

## Alexander Gunyon

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**From:** Robert Benfield [REDACTED]  
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**Subject:** Draft Canterbury District Local Plan to 2040 - Comment on Policy C12

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### Policy C12 - Land north of the University of Kent

I wish to object to the proposed zoning of a large area of land to the north of the University of Kent for housing, to be the site for development including 2000 new homes (Policy C12).

This land, a rural site, was considered for housing in the SHLAA of a previous Local Plan, and rejected as unsuitable on several criteria, notably the adverse effect on the countryside and historic environment. Nothing has occurred since then to justify changing that decision. The current financial difficulties of the landowner (the University of Kent), caused by their own mismanagement, are not a valid reason for now permitting this land to be developed for housing.

The site is good-quality agricultural land, and should not be lost to food production at a time of increasing importance for food affordability and security of supply. It forms a valuable 'green gap' between the settlements of Blean / Rough Common and Tyler Hill. It is an important area of open landscape, representing a 'green lung' to the north of Canterbury. The proposed housing development would therefore contravene the Local Plan Policy DS19 (Habitats, landscapes and sites of local importance) and Policy DS22 (Landscape character). It would also contravene the University's own Campus Framework Masterplan of 2019, which described the site as 'a considerable landscape asset in providing a green setting to the north of the University'. Local Plan Policy DS9 requires that proposals for the University estate should reflect principles set out within this Masterplan.

Road access to the site is completely inadequate for housing development, even with the construction of new access routes as proposed. The road between Blean and Tyler Hill, central to the site, is a narrow, country lane which follows a winding route. Tile Kiln Hill / Whitstable Road is a very busy main road which is currently congested at peak periods. The local road network simply could not cope with the additional traffic generated by 2000 new houses on this site, however 'cycle friendly' the development might be claimed.

Local services, notable sewage disposal, are also at their limit of capacity. As well as the widely publicised problems of sewage discharges at sea, and water pollution affecting the Stour river, Blean village itself has suffered problems with overflowing sewage. Local services could not possibly cope with a new development of 2000 houses without unaffordable investment by the local water / sewage company.

For these reasons I urge the rejection of the proposal to zone this area for housing.

Dr R E Benfield  
[REDACTED]