

2.06.2024

To 'The Planning Department' at Canterbury City Council

The following are my comments in response to CCC draft local plan to 2040

### CHAPTER 3 POLICY W4 LAND AT BROOKLANDS FARM

- I OBJECT to the CCC ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE. Many residents are unable to access this and those that have, including myself have found it extremely complicated which is why I'm writing my objection by hand.
- I OBJECT to CCC not sending every resident in Whitstable, Chestfield and surrounding areas a letter informing them of CCC's development proposals in their Draft Local Plan to 2040. These proposals affect every resident and they should have been given a summary of the main proposals for comment. Had it not been for social media (not related to CCC) or campaign groups, few residents would be aware of CCC's Draft Local Plan to 2040 or its content. It is still the case that thousands of residents will be unfamiliar with this plan therefore unable to comment.
- I OBJECT to the LOSS OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL FARMLAND.  
The land on Brooklands Farm is used for the grazing of cattle and to produce essential food items such as cereal crops. Both the recent war in the Ukraine and the COVID pandemic illustrate how vital it is to this country that we MUST be able to grow our own food and not rely on imports from abroad. To build 1,400 houses on Brooklands Farmland would be a disaster for our future food security.
- I OBJECT to the HUGE INCREASE IN FLOODING that will occur if the land at Brooklands Farm is covered with cement, tarmac and building materials. The land sits on London Clay which shrinks in the summer and floods in the winter. Surrounding roads, houses and gardens already suffer from flooding following periods of rainfall. Major flooding already occurs on South Street and Chestfield Road resulting in road closures. The Swale Brook cannot cope with heavy rainfall, neither can the Swalecliffe Sewage Works. Southern Water will not improve the drainage facilities in South Street because your garden needs to fill with raw sewage three times a year before they will act. If your garden is littered with used toilet paper and sewage only twice a year, Southern Water do not deem it necessary to improve the sewage system. Adding 1,400 more houses will have a major impact on an already failing sewage system.

I OBJECT to the INCREASE IN SEWAGE that will be created by not only proposed 1,400 houses but also the proposed Industrial Units, retail outlets a primary and SEN school. Sewage management in Whitstable should be a fundamental priority for local and national government. You cannot continue building these vast numbers of houses with an already overloaded and failing system. The Swalecliffe sewage works already regularly releases sewage produced following rainfall and by the current population of Whitstable. There are regular warnings for sea swimmers of sewage releases which is not only harmful to humans, it is also extremely harmful to marine life and the health of our aquatic ecosystem. This again, will have a knock-on effect to our food security by killing or poisoning fishing industry including our famous oysters. Who will want to live in Whitstable or visit when the things that draw people here have been poisoned by overdevelopment. They won't be swimming in the sea, eating Whitstable Oysters or bringing much needed income to Whitstable's economy.

I OBJECT to the LOSS OF WILDLIFE HABITAT AND BIODIVERSITY. The huge number of houses being built in and around Whitstable has already destroyed essential habitat areas for wildlife. This year in my small garden there has been an alarming increase in the number of birds building nests in my hedges and trees. This cannot be a coincidence as nearby housing developments have destroyed existing hedgerows and nesting areas. Visits from hedgehogs and slow worms have also increased in numbers. Brooklands farmland also attracts a wide variety of birds including sparrowhawks, skylarks, swallows, house martins and woodpeckers to name a few. Bats also thrive in this area due to the habitat. We are constantly told by Government and Wildlife experts that these species are rare and should be protected, yet CCC seem intent on destroying the vital habitats these species rely on for their survival. SHAME ON YOU CCC for even considering building on Brooklands Farmland.

I OBJECT to the LOSS OF LANDSCAPE. Developers have already destroyed large areas of green space along the Old Thanet Way. Towering dull, ugly houses have destroyed farmland and natural sightlines over hedgerows with views of the sea. Brooklands Farmland creates a beautiful, natural landscape of rolling fields, hedgerows, woodland, the Swale Brook and link to the Blean. It provides breathing space from the ever increasing urban sprawl surrounding Whitstable. Humans need green space and countryside for their mental health and well being. It provides a calm and relaxing environment between settlements. During the recent COVID pandemic, a very big lesson was learnt. Humans craved green open spaces and countryside. Do NOT destroy what precious little we still have surrounding Whitstable!

I OBJECT to the INCREASE IN TRAFFIC to our roads if this development goes ahead. Already many roads in and around Whitstable are in a shocking state. The vastly increased number of cars on local roads reflect the repercussions of housing development in and around Whitstable in the past twenty years. Numerous estates have already been built, not to mention gardens that have been built on. The CCC Draft Local Plan not only proposes the building of 1,400 houses on Brooklands Farmland, it also proposes the building of industrial and retail units as well as a primary and SEN school. The houses alone will add 3,000 + more cars to the roads, let alone traffic created by these other developments. Online delivery vehicles are just some of many other forms of traffic that will frequent this development. The proposed sliproad off the A299 would be a complete disaster for local roads with both visitors and commuters using this as another artery into Whitstable. It would also hugely increase traffic using the narrow Radfall Hill route south into Canterbury. You are never going to persuade thousands of car users to use buses or bicycles. The traffic queues in the Whitstable area and roads connecting to Canterbury will be nightmarish. 'If you build it (the new sliproad) they will come!'

I OBJECT to the proposed 1,400 houses to be built on Brooklands Farmland because of the RESULTING INCREASE IN PRESSURE ON AN ALREADY OVERSTRETCHED HEALTHCARE SERVICE. Healthcare in Whitstable is already struggling to cope with the existing demand for its services. Canterbury hospital does not have an A+E department whilst the minor injuries unit at Estury View in Whitstable is bursting at the seams with patients. It's impossible to get a quick doctors appointment with the local GP and dentists are few and far between. Where are the measures in CCC's draft local plan to take care of its existing residents, let alone those from 1,400 new houses.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE REMOVE POLICY W4 LAND AT BROOKLANDS FARM FROM THE CCC DRAFT LOCAL PLAN TO 2040

I have not met ANY Whitstable residents in favour of this proposal.

PLEASE

STOP BUILDING ON WHITSTABLES COUNTRYSIDE

PROTECT BROOKLANDS FARMLAND FROM FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

GIVE NATURE A CHANCE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS