

2024

I strongly object to policies W3 and W4 (Brooklands Farm) of the draft Local Plan to 2040 for the following reasons:

1. **Loss of an Area of High Landscape Value** with wonderful rural views of the distant Blean. CCC's Landscape Character Assessment 2020 recommended that CCC should reinforce the open rural setting south of Whitstable and resist development in the A299 New Thanet Way corridor.
2. **This is not a sustainable place to build a large development**, from which (if its like the rest of south Chestfield) more people would be commuting to Canterbury than any other destination, almost all of them by car. It will also contribute to traffic congestion in the north Canterbury area.
3. **Increased flood risk** downstream on the Swalecliffe Brook. At present heavy rain sits on the farmland before is slowly evaporates or trickles into the Brook. Vast areas of storage would be required to accommodate rainwater run-off from any urban development, but this could not be located close to the Brook because that area already floods when the river level rises over the riverbanks as happened in February.
4. **Lack of health facilities**. Local residents now find they can't secure an appointment with a local GP, and if they need hospital treatment their three-day stay in Margate's hospital is in the hospital corridor due to lack of beds.
5. The local **sewage works cannot cope** with the increasing demand, and regularly releases untreated sewage into the sea, causing instances of serious illness for people on local beaches. The new outfall under construction will not solve this problem.
6. Due to the increased effects of climate change, the **fresh water supply** to this region is compromised virtually every summer due to the shortage of water and hosepipe bans are imposed annually
7. The proposed new junction linking the A299 to Chestfield Rd and South Street would create **huge increases in traffic, and therefore road safety problems, pollution and noise** in residential areas.
8. **Bad for our wildlife**. Seriously negative impact on Biodiversity. There is a lot of insect life associated with the cattle of Brooklands Farm, and consequently there are swallows, house martins, wagtails, numerous bats and no doubt much more that is less easy to see. There is also wildlife on the arable fields, e.g. skylarks
9. **Loss of "Best and most versatile"** agricultural land.

**CCC needs to recognise that housing developments affect the coastal towns much more severely than Canterbury**. Canterbury can expand to north, east, south and west. Whitstable can only expand southwards, as it is constrained by marshland to the west, and by Herne Bay to the east. What little farmland that remains within easy walking distance of Whitstable is needed for residents' recreation and well-being as well as to preserve the last vestiges of the natural setting of this tourist destination town. Therefore, the farmland between the Blean woodland and the existing urban edge of Whitstable should be given statutory protection.

10. For the reasons listed above, the proposals would be unsustainable and would contravene paragraphs 135c, 168, 173, 180a, 180b, 180d and 191b of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework.

I strongly urge the Council to reconsider this application and drop this development from the 2040 local plan.

Yours sincerely,

Peter & Stephanie Robins