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Sent: 03 June 2024 19:53
To: Consultations
Cc: Mortimer, Elizabeth
Subject: Draft Local Plan Plan R7 The Hill Littlebourne and Plan R8 land north of Court Hill, Littlebourne

Categories: Green category

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To Canterbury City Council

I am writing to say that I object strongly to the two proposed developments in the Local plan concerning Littlebourne. There are many reasons why this settlement and the surrounding natural environment would be adversely affected by increased housing and associated traffic. One of the main reasons why the developments ought not to take place is the increase in waste water including sewage. The poor wastewater infrastructure in the village already leads to regular, disruptive emergency measures to remove the wastewater. This involves the closure of key roads, while tankers pump out the waste water. It also involves the pumping of sewage into the Little Stour River, which is not an ordinary river but a very rare example of a chalk stream.

The Little Stour and The Great Stour were featured very recently in the May edition 2024 of The National Geographic magazine, as excellent examples of extremely rare chalk streams. The article was written by renowned author and journalist Adam Nicholson, whose family are connected to Sissinghurst Castle. He writes, 'The world has fewer than 300 chalk streams, the majority in England'. He explains that 'chalk streams - clear, alkaline, and rich in minerals and oxygen- have all the building blocks to support a diversity of creatures'. He says 'sewage and agricultural runoff change stream chemistry'. Chalk streams are particularly vulnerable to human interference as they are 'low energy and gentle. Once damaged or modified, they lack the flow needed for self-repair.' I hope Canterbury City Council wants to be known for protecting these internationally rare streams rather than the opposite.

Historically, Littlebourne has been known as a village, even though the local plan would like to redefine it in other terms. The two new developments would in effect potentially double the population and increase the number of cars on the already congested roads. There are already traffic problems down Nargate Street and Jubilee Road due to a complex mix of tight corners, legally parked vehicles and farm lorries becoming trapped and unable to continue their journeys. Often the lorries drive on the pavements

which is a huge safety issue for pedestrians. There is no plan to deal effectively with increased traffic particularly on Plan R8, land north of Court Hill. The nature of the village road layout make it difficult to see how traffic can be eased and safety in the village ensured.

It is not wise to develop either site in Littlebourne as there would be a permanent loss of Grade 1 agricultural land in both areas.

Plan R7 would be development very close to Howletts. 'A Review of the welfare of Zoo Elephants in Europe' by Ros Clubb and Georgia Mason, a report commissioned by the RSPCA states : 'Stress, frustration and depression-like states can be caused by environmental conditions- physical or social- that differ significantly from those that the animal has evolved to cope with in the wild, the extent to which welfare is reduced often depending on the frequency, magnitude, and duration of these discrepancies.' The animals at Howletts, especially the elephants, would be subjected to construction noise and on-going traffic vibrations and pollution. This could potentially cause the elephants stress, frustration and depression-like states as this is not the environment they were evolved to deal with. The RSPCA might well be interested in investigating the wisdom of such a development so close to sensitive wild animals.

Just because parcels of land becomes available for housing developments does not mean that they are at all appropriate. I have given some of the reasons here why I am totally against the development on these two sites.

Elizabeth Mortimer

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