

Alexander Gunyon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 June 2024 16:50
To: Consultations
Subject: Objection to Policy C12 - Blean Objection to Policy

Categories: Green category

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Dear Sirs,

I should like to submit my very strong and heartfelt objection to the building of approximately 2,000 houses on the land to the north of the University of Kent (Policy C12 Blean) The University stands proudly on land that was originally a gift to Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, from King Ethelbert of Kent. The philanthropic heritage at its heart and in its very foundations continued, as the university was built with the aid of gifts from local people, businesses and charities. I believe this land was also subject to various covenants to ensure the protection of the land for educational and / or agricultural purposes. The University of Kent's financial position is NOT a legitimate consideration for this huge development. There are many and varied alternative uses for this land that could create a sustainable revenue stream for the University without destroying wildlife, farmland and three local communities or putting great pressure on roads and local services. House-building is not a good business model for an educational institution and I urge the University to work with local partners to explore all other avenues for using this land in line with their educational and civic objectives.

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The University's Biodiversity Strategy 2021- 2025 contains more than a few environmentally focussed commitments and lofty aspirations, including "Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and its foundations of natural cycles, biodiversity and abundance are crucial to supporting a sustainable future. The scale of diversity loss as shown in the IPBES Global Assessment to the Living Planet indeed tells us that we must act urgently if we are to avoid the risks associated with continued degradation of the natural environment"

The Blean is composed of many acres of ancient woodland and it is proposed that this ancient woodland that is destroyed would be replaced with hedgerow planting rather than planting new woodland - because it says it would not be possible to replace the trees and it is unlikely to substitute for the richness and diversity of the lost ancient woodland resource. The 'token' hedgerow planting response is nothing but derisory I'm afraid, I strongly object on the grounds of the loss of woodland and particularly ancient woodland that will disappear because of this appalling development.

With reference to the wildlife around, and in particular birds many of which are gravely endangered, this very morning there were sightings of nightingales, yellow hammers, skylarks,

linnets, buzzards, green woodpeckers, whitethroats, swallows, song thrushes and blackbirds. I therefore also strongly object on the grounds of the loss of wildlife and the harm to the environment. There are many and numerous rare and endangered species living in the fields, ponds, hedgerows and Sarre Penn Valley.

The increased traffic that will be created as a result of this appalling development will, I believe, completely overwhelm the road system and it will be unable to cope. Rough Common will be blighted, and the development is completely out of scale for the area.

This development is called a "rural settlement" but in actual fact it is a new town of 2,000 houses attached to the northern edge of Canterbury in what is at present the rural gap between the city and the villages of Blean and Tyler Hill.

I am also very worried about the impact of this proposed development on Blean School, on its pupils and staff .

I am afraid that I have no faith at all that the developers will keep to CCC's greensafeguards and this will result in the loss of beautiful countryside - the Crab and Winkle Way will be running through a huge housing estate.

The C12 proposals are incompatible with the 2021 Land Character Assessment to which the Local Plan is required to conform.

The proposal would have impacts on many 'heritage assets', including the Church of St. Cosmus and St. Damien as well as its setting, the remains of a Roman Ville and some Mediaeval Tile Kilns (both scheduled monuments), multiple listed buildings and multiple Conservation Area. The Council's Environmental Strategy set out in the Local Plan says "the district's heritage assets are highly sensitive to change and the council is committed to protecting and where possible, enhancing the historic environment for the future".

All things considered then, I object in the strongest terms to this development and I thank you for reading this. I really could go on but this is making me cry.

Yours,

Lesley Robertson

[Redacted signature block]