

## Alexander Gunyon

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**From:** Nick Claydon [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 June 2024 12:46  
**To:** Consultations  
**Cc:** James Flanagan; Peter Old  
**Subject:** Local Plan - Objection to Policy W3 & W4 Brooklands Farm

**Categories:** Green category

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Dear Sir

I strongly object to policies W3 and W4 (Brooklands Farm) in the Local Plan to 2040 on the following grounds:

#### 1. Loss of Agricultural Land

At a time when the need for security of food supply in the UK has been demonstrated in recent years, impact of Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine for example, the permanent loss of mixed farming land would contribute to the already significant loss of open space in the area and wider county. The proposed loss of "best and most versatile" agricultural land should be avoided when other brownfield sites closer to Canterbury are available.

#### 2. Impact on Wildlife

Loss of the farmland would adversely affect the local biodiversity. Currently, the area has significant insect life as a result of the livestock, bring with it various birds and mammals. Living within 100 yards of the fields we see bats, owls and birds of prey which come from the fields to our garden on a regular basis. We have also recently seen the return of hedgehogs to the area. All of this will be lost if the farm is developed into housing and other mixed use.

#### 3. Flooding

At times of heavy rainfall surface water accumulated on the fields before being carried away by the Swalecliffe Brook or evaporating. This already results in downstream issues, heavy localised surface water in South Street and Chestfield Road, together with frequent closures of the road under the New Thanet Way on the approach to Radfall Rise (the propose site of a new traffic junction). Any new development would require vast water storage facilities, away from the Brook, to cope with the run off from the new roads and buildings being proposed.

#### 4. Sewage

Local sewage systems are, like other utilities, struggling to provide adequate infrastructure for the current level of development across Whitstable, resulting in multiple discharges to the sea with many being outside of the current permit use of this procedure. The current nearby development at Greenhill has involved the laying of stage pipes across farmland to join with those in Maydowns Road. If it is proving necessary for development outside of the Whitstable area to link into the Swalecliffe sewage system, which is currently struggling to cope, it is difficult to see how extensive further developments will have their waste water safety dealt with without the need for increased raw discharge into the sea.

#### 5. Increased Traffic

In addition to the increased traffic created by the proposed housing, school and commercial units, the new junction on the Thanet Way will create an additional entry option for those travelling to Whitstable, particularly in the summer months. Given a recent survey of traffic on Chestfield Road shows that the average speed of vehicles was 30mph by implication a significant number of vehicles were exceeding the speed limit. Increasing the volume of traffic will, therefore, inevitably result in greater risk to residents in what is a residential area with a mix of older people and young families.

The increased traffic flows will also result in higher all round pollution, be it from exhaust fumes, greater depositing of particulates from tyres or just a significant increase to noise levels. All of which will adversely affect the health and well being of the residents.

With the move to more electric vehicles, it is difficult to see that the local electricity infrastructure, which is already experiencing a higher level of outages in areas associated with the new building on Grasmere Meadow, Greenhill and Duncan Downs, will cope with the demands of both the increased housing and the need for vehicle charging.

## **6. Sustainability of the Location**

It is highly likely, regardless of the current move to working from home, that many of the new home owners will be required to commute to work. It is highly likely that 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 and its environmental impact.

## **7. Impact on Local Health Care**

Local healthcare, be it GPs, follow up service or Hospitals, are already stretched with the Local Foundation Trust and Ambulance Services not only falling behind government targets but performing adversely compared to national averages. The continued over development of East Kent, including the proposal for Brooklands Farm will only serve to aggravate the situation further.

## **8. Impact on the Environs**

Given the 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.

Furthermore, local rural areas untouched directly by the development, such as Blean Woods and Convicts Wood, would suffer the indirect detrimental affect from the loss of surrounding fields. It is, based on other examples of developments in the area, likely that the development will result in greater disturbance of these areas from the development itself and the ongoing increased footfall in the rural areas.

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.

## **9. Contravention of National Planning Policy Framework**

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.

Yours faithfully

Nicholas F CLAYDON

