

Alexander Gunyon

From: Wendy Stevens [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 June 2024 14:25
To: Consultations
Subject: Draft Local Plan 2040 Objection

Categories: Red category

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I strongly object to policy W4 land at Brooklands Farm

I wish to add my voice to the many I know who are against this development, indeed I haven't spoken to anyone who supports it.

I object for the following reasons:

Environment

Brooklands Farm sits on prime agricultural land which until recently produced grain. 150 years ago it was woodland and part of the Blean. It seems inconceivable that such a huge development is being considered for this site. The loss of prime agricultural land at a time when we are being warned of food shortages is frankly absurd. The inevitable adverse effect on the environment and local wildlife is unacceptable.

Flooding

Brooklands Farm sits on land through which tributaries of Swalecliffe Brook run through. The risk of flooding is high and I believe the land is unsuitable for development.

Infrastructure

Whitstable has seen almost unfettered housing development over the past 15-20 years which has changed the character of the town beyond recognition. Developments completed or underway at Whitstable Heights, Grasmere Gardens and along the Thanet Way towards the Borstal Hill roundabout have added 100s more houses, people and cars to the area and resulted the loss of vast swathes of countryside. The local infrastructure simply cannot cope with more houses. Traffic is already a nightmare and roads in a poor state of repair, hospitals and GP services are at breaking point and schools full. Aside from the increased population Whitstable has become a magnet for tourists, with nearly 500 Airbnb's. At weekends when tourists descend it's virtually impossible to walk down the High Street with its narrow pavements rammed. Traffic frequently back up Borstal Hill to the Thanet Way in summer.

Sewerage

Southern Water cannot cope with the current population, frequently having to dump raw sewerage in the sea with dire environmental consequences and regularly having to repair burst mains. Adding an additional 1400 houses with at least 2800 more people will simply add more pressure to the already dysfunctional water treatment works.

Affordability

These homes will not be for local people. Only 30% are required to be affordable and even then 'affordable' is not affordable for most locals. Our local birthrate is decreasing which begs the question who are these houses for? Whitstable should not be ruined to accommodate London overspill.

Intensity

If Whitstable Heights is anything to go by, this will be a dense housing development with little green space and over 3 times the size. It will blot the landscape and be an environmental nightmare.

Crime

An increased population is likely to lead to increased crime putting more pressure on an already overstretched police service.

I am also concerned that the proposal includes the paragraph 'create a complete, compact and well-connected neighbourhood, where every day needs can be met within a 15 minute walk or short cycle, to support the local economy, to promote health, wellbeing and social interaction and to address climate change by reducing car dependency'. Aside from no consideration being given to the needs of the elderly or disabled, who cannot walk or cycle everywhere, I personally value my freedom and would not wish to live in a dystopian 15 minute city.

Whitstable has been subjected to multiple housing developments, building on almost every available piece of green land, with yet more proposed at land south of the Thanet Way and Bodkin Farm. The quality of life for locals has deteriorated and will deteriorate further if this development is allowed. Having lived in Whitstable for over 15 years it is devastating to see it being ruined in this way. This has to stop – enough is enough!! I urge the policy be scrapped.

Kind regards

Wendy Stevens



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From: Wendy Stevens [REDACTED]
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I strongly object to policy W6 - Bodkin Farm

I object for the following reasons:

Planning permission for this site was previously refused in November 2014 and an appeal dismissed in October 2015 on grounds that 'the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, such that planning permission should not be granted.' Nothing has changed since then!

An application to demolish the Grade II listed building, Bodkin Farmhouse, was submitted in November 2017 following a fire and withdrawn June 2018 due to the listed status having been 'conveniently' removed

This site forms part of what should be protected 'green belt' to preserve a gap between Whitstable and Herne Bay.

Despite this site being included in the 'draft' Local Plan 2040 and still being under consultation, I understand the developers, Parker Strategic Land, have already submitted an outline planning application which seems strange and very much like 'putting the cart before horse'. Furthermore, the local plan proposes 250 dwellings and a 6FE secondary school yet planning permission is being sought for 300 dwellings, a 6FE secondary school and an 80-bed care home and a retail unit with an additional 16 dwellings above. This is in excess of the proposal currently under consultation and not yet agreed.

The adverse impact of this development on the local environment, wildlife, traffic, sewerage and essential services would be detrimental to the quality of life for local residents, not to mention the risk of flooding. The water treatment works at Swalecliffe can't cope with current population levels, frequently having to discharge raw sewerage into the sea and deal with burst water mains. This development would add more pressure to an already creaking system.

Bodkin Farm site provides an important green space between Whitstable and Herne Bay. It should not be developed and the policy should be scrapped.

Kind regards

Wendy Stevens
[REDACTED]

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I strongly object to Policy C12 - Land north of the University of Kent

I object for the following reasons:

Rural Settlement

This is not so much a 'rural settlement' as a new town the size of the original walled city of Canterbury. The proposed site is currently a rural gap between the city of Canterbury and the villages of Blean and Tyler Hill. The loss of such a large area of open fields and green space would be a travesty and would change the character of the area forever.

Traffic

Such a large-scale development will inevitably impact on local traffic both during and after construction and will create further congestion in the area, especially at peak travel times.

Increased population

The local population would increase from around 3700 to 10000 in a rural area. This will put pressure on water and sewerage, roads, infrastructure and local hospital and GP services which are already overstretched and unable to cope with the current population levels.

Impact on Environment

Such a huge development is bound to result in the loss of rare wildlife, hedgerows and ancient woodland. To consider building on farmland at a time when we are threatened with food shortages is both short-sighted and absurd. There would also be an adverse impact on the heritage sites at the Crab and Winkle Way and Roman Salt Road which are important to preserve.

My understanding is the site is owned by the University of Kent who are seeking to develop the land to raise funds due to financial difficulties. The economic woes of the University should not form part of any planning decisions.

There are already multiple large housing developments either being built, approved or considered in the Canterbury district which has rapidly become over-developed. I don't believe this is to meet local housing need but rather to provide housing for those coming from outside the area, particularly London boroughs. I am concerned that the proposal includes the paragraph 'create a complete, compact and well-connected neighbourhood, where everyday needs can be met within a 15 minute walk or short cycle, to support the local economy, to promote health, wellbeing and social interaction and to address climate change by reducing car dependency'. Aside from no consideration being given to the needs of the elderly or disabled, who cannot walk or cycle everywhere, I personally value my freedom and would not wish to live in a dystopian 15 minute city.

Enough is enough! This policy should be scrapped.

Kind regards

Wendy Stevens

