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To whom it may concern:

I am writing today to express my downright opposition to the proposed development of 2,000 homes on the land north of the University of Kent as expressed in Chapter 2, Policy C12 of the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2040. This development not only contradicts the Vision and strategic objectives for this district, but would have lasting detrimental effects on the environment, district transport, and finally would destroy the villages of Blean, Rough Common and Tyler Hill.

Policy SS1 – Environmental strategy for the district (Pg. 12 Draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as ‘the Local Plan’)) states that, ‘Development across the district will need to incorporate measures to deliver a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain in line with Policy SS1 point 5, having regard to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and/or Nature Recovery Networks.’ However, it is impossible to reconcile this noble aspiration with 2,000 homes being built on virgin arable greenbelt land and the irreversible damage that will be done as a result to the environment, wildlife and local biodiversity. The proposed development sites between the Blean Woods National Nature Reserve and West Blean and Thornden Woods, both important ancient woodlands rich in biodiversity, and acts as an important green link between the two. Policy C12 will parentally sever this link and the waste water treatment works to be built in the northern portion this development will pollute local waterways flowing into the Sarre Penn valley.

The Sarre Penn valley and its woodlands, fields, ancient pathways and historical sites (eg St Cosmus and St Damian Church, Blean) around it would become absorbed into a vast new estate, pressing against the Blean ancient woodlands and creating a concrete urban sprawl stretching from Canterbury almost to Whitstable. This area provides a home to several birds on the RSPB most endangered (red) list, two endangered species of bat and the very rare Great Crested Newt, as well as over 60 species of other birds and animals. In fact, The Kent Nature Partnership identifies the Blean area as a ‘Biodiversity Opportunity Area’, which surely means Canterbury City Council (CCC) should that this opportunity to work hard alongside Kent Nature Partnership with to preserve, protect and meet its environmental goals (Policy SS1) in the Local Plan. Allowing the development of site C12 would run in direct contradiction to CCC’s goals in Policy SS1 and its ‘Vision for the district to 2040’ where it states ‘Our important habitats and landscapes will be restored and enhanced, supporting the recovery of nature, improving environmental resilience and providing significant increases in biodiversity’ (pg 8).

Additionally, pg.53 calls for a waste water treatment plant to be built to the north of the development, between Blean and Tyler Hill, where the ‘treated’ water will be pumped into

the local rivers flowing into the Sarre Penn Valley. Further to which, site C12 sites mostly on a slope, but no mention is made of how run off water from 2,000 homes and streets will be prevented from directly entering the River Tyler untreated. Both of these have huge potential to negatively affect the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve.

The land north of the University of Kent, including site C12 is graded 2-3 agricultural land and its loss would be detrimental to our nation's food security. Rather than building on farmland and then having to import food from abroad, increasing CO2 emissions and damaging the environment, CCC should take the lead to champion sustainable locally produced food. Instead of trying to take the lead with its 20% biodiversity gains, CCC should take the lead in protecting farmland and promoting local food distribution.

Choosing site C12 as a development appears at odds with CCC's plan to encourage people to use public transport more and private car less. The settlement will undoubtedly be of a car dependant nature and at a conservative guess it will result in 2,000 additional cars be placed on the roads daily, not to mention deliveries and visitors. All the roads surrounding it are either single carriage roads of narrow winding country roads, such as Tyler Hill Road, and with the developments in Chestfield, Greenhill etc. it will push these roads to breaking point. Its Strategic objectives for the district (pg.9) states creating a transport network that ensures 'excellent access to city and town centres on foot, cycle and by public transport.' However, just how this can be done on the already existing pavements and single carriage local roads seems impossible and site C12 can only negatively affect the already existing Crab and Winkle Way.

The Crab and Winkle Way is an existing footpath and cycle way that runs mostly car free from Whitstable to opposite Kent College, a conservation area, passing directly past community assets such as Blean Primary School, Kent Community Oasis Garden, Oaks Nursery, Blean church and Beverley Farm (the latter two are listed buildings). To gain access to the site, Policy C12 proposes demolishing the Blean Primary school to create one entrance with another entrance opposite Kent college and running up the existing Crab and Winkle Way, through several conservations areas. Point 1.26 (pg.11 Chapter 1) states, '*The districts heritage assets are highly sensitive to change and the council is committed to protecting and, where possible, enhancing the historic environment...*' 2,000 homes, water treatment plant and two new access roads will cause irreputable harm to the aforementioned historical and community assets, providing no tangible benefits to the historic landscape or economy; quite the opposite in fact.

On to more practical matter relating to transport, given that there are three routes north to south into the city (Whitstable, Hackington and Herne Bay Road) all with new developments either planned or extant, site C12 can only cause chaos to the local roads. All three of these routes are single carriage roads and it would be impossible to add capacity to them, nor more cycle or bus lanes. To make the site C12 accessible major highway improvements to Rough Common Road and the construction of additional slip roads the A2 (pg. 55 of the Local Plan) will turn the quiet settlement of Rough Common into a noisy and polluted major arterial route in the City. The construction of these "improvements" is at odds with the council's goals to decrease car usage as it ignores the well accepted phenonium of 'induced demand', whereby need roads only encourage more to use them.

The council lauds its plans for new bus services, routes, such as Park n Ride, to reduce car traffic and get more people to use public transport, but they have yet to materialise nor been proven to work. Stagecoach, who runs a virtual monopoly in the district, operations are run on a commercial basis which don't coincide with CCCs goals for improved bus services, as for example from 5th May 2024 Stagecoach has reduced its services through Tyler Hill from twice hourly to one an hour. Also, most of Stagecoach's services have limited evening and holiday services. What leverage does CCC have to encourage Stagecoach to improve and increase its services? The answer is of course little to none. Also, CCC has yet to give details of where the extra funding for improved services and upgrades to bus stops etc. will come from. Of course, much of this funding will be from KCC, outside of CCCs control. Proposing a 2,000 homes development with no clear and in placed improved bus services is nothing but irresponsible and will only push more cars onto the road.

Site C12 also appears to contradict CCC's vision for the district when on pg.8 of the Local Plan it states, *'A range of new homes will meet the needs of the district, ensuring the right type of homes are delivered in the right places...and support our communities.'* However, the Local Plan fails to mention any new building of GP or dental surgeries to support the health of the well over 2,000 people who will living in these new homes. Nor is mentioned made of any new nurseries, libraries, playgrounds, sport fields, youth centres etc. being built to support young families and make the settlement a *'...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...'* In fact, residents will still have to travel for much of these services, as they already do, and the existing infrastructure will be stretched to breaking point. Nor is site C12 the right location to build such infrastructure for the reasons mentioned above and below.

Instead of building on green fields sites CCC should stick to its preference of brown field developments by building more houses in Wincheap and doing more to repurpose now defunct retail and commercial spaces around the city centre. Developments such as at the former Nasons department store point towards a more sustainable future, proving homes within or close to the city centre, easily walk or bike-able to most services and also repurpose existing redundant buildings. They provide opportunities to build small affordable homes and flats in locations that many, especially younger first-time buyers, prefer to live in. They prevent the development of urban sprawl, protecting our countryside and the environment.

Finally, allow me to mention how the character of the area will be changed from of three quiet rural villages to one of a single continuous urban settlement. Currently the area surrounding site C12 is made up of three distinct villages, each with its own character and sense of identity and history, separated by virgin fields and woods. Policy C12 will create one continuous concrete settlement linking all three old villages and destroying the sense of identity and belonging to a unique village. This settlement will push into the Blean complex on all sides negatively affecting the environments, wildlife and biodiversity. The vague green gaps and opportunities for green corridors are pointless in the context of a development of 2,000 homes. These corridors already exist as farmland, woods and permissive or public footpaths and as such these promises of green spaces as mentioned in Policy C12 only

services to give back what we already have. How CCC believes it can tackle climate change and improve the local environment with concrete is a fool's errand.

Once again, I must express my utter opposition to site C12 and believe its development will irreversibly destroy the local nature, environment and character of the area. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my views with you further.

Yours faithfully

Nicholas Stone