

## Alexander Gunyon

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**From:** Keith Chittim [REDACTED]  
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### --Email From External Account--

I am writing this email to comment on several parts of the city council's new draft Local Plan. More specifically I intend to comment on the proposal for 2000 new homes to be built on land currently owned by the University of Kent and its impact on such things as access to these proposed properties and the impact on local services. Additionally I intend to comment on the proposal for Canterbury West railway station.

### Proposed Development of 2000 Houses

The proposed development on land owned by the University of Kent is completely inappropriate. The development would mean the loss of a substantial amount agricultural land around the villages of Tyler Hill and Blean. This is contrary to council policy which seeks to preserve such land for the production of food and protection of wildlife and to maintain a rural landscape in this area

Additionally access to and from this proposed development will be located near the Rough Common roundabout and at Blean Primary school which will have to be demolished and relocated. Apart from adding traffic to an already busy road there is the enormous cost and disruption of relocating the school. This latter access point will be at the top of a hill and in the middle of rows of houses so highly undesirable and potentially hazardous. The other access point near the Rough Common Road intersection with Whitstable Road will add to an already busy area possibly close to the access to the college located there, again, undesirable.

There is little or no scope to upgrade Whitstable Road in either direction from the proposed access points in order to cope with the extra traffic generated by the residents of this development. Nor is there scope for Rough Common Road to be developed to take extra traffic. Unless of course the council intends to demolish existing houses which would rather defeat the object of building new ones!

The plan includes the proposal to make the junction on the A2 at Harbledown all-directional. This will require the purchase and destruction of farmland, hop fields and orchards, again contrary to the council's stated policy. Such modifications to this junction will bring extra noise disturbance to the area and increased traffic will make exiting from Upper Harbledown at the bottom of Wingate Hill onto the A2050 even more difficult and hazardous. This section of road between Wingate Hill and Palmars Cross traffic lights is already quite dangerous with numerous fatal accidents in recent years, further traffic would only make matters worse. Extra traffic on Rough Common Road cannot be accommodated without major improvements which would have to be at the expense of existing houses again defeating the object of the new build.

All of this at enormous expense to accommodate 2000 new houses in a location which is totally inappropriate, the destruction of large areas of countryside and the disfigurement of more and all that

goes with such destruction. There are many other locations around Canterbury for these 2000 houses to be built without having such huge expense and unwelcome impact on the environment and existing infrastructure.

### **Canterbury West Railway Station**

It would appear that the present administration has the same fixation about the platform lengths at Canterbury West railway station as the one they replaced last year! Please note that trains stop at railway stations here in the UK, the draft plan incorrectly calls such locations train stations!

The existing platforms can accommodate trains of up to twelve carriages in length although only eight carriages will stop adjacent to the platform. The plan envisages that they should be extended to twelve carriage lengths. Why? The trains presently operated by Southeastern Railway company consist of class 375 and 395 electric multiple units. These both have Selective Door Opening software such that only the doors which are adjacent to platforms can be opened when a train has arrived at a station. This means that when trains of more than eight carriages in length arrive at Canterbury West, or any other station, only the doors which have a platform adjacent to them will open.

Passengers are normally advised to sit in particular carriages for their destination but can travel elsewhere in either train type but move to the appropriate carriages to disembark. The class 375 units have gangway connections between units such that twelve carriage trains can and do stop at Canterbury West without any problems for passengers. With the class 395 (Javelin) units there are gangways within each six carriage unit but, with Canterbury West having platforms long enough for eight carriage trains, passengers can travel in either unit and move to the appropriate carriage to disembark. For most of the day trains serving Canterbury West consist of four, six, seven or eight carriages. Only at peak time might they be longer. So where is the need to extend the platforms?

In order to extend the platforms to twelve carriage lengths numerous track-side buildings and equipment cabinets will have to be relocated as well as track re-arranged. These re-arrangements may well cause operational problems for Southeastern Railway company as some trains are turned back at Canterbury West after arriving from the Ashford direction. In addition special services operate to Canterbury West from time to time bringing tourists from various locations throughout England to the city; whilst they spend time in the city the trains are serviced in the sidings which currently exist, track re-arrangements that would be needed for twelve carriage platforms may make these sidings inaccessible.

### **Conclusion**

In summary it is my opinion that the development of land currently owned by the University of Kent for housing is wholly inappropriate. The extension of the platforms at Canterbury West station is not required.

Keith Chittim

