

Alexander Gunyon

From: Andrew Allcock [REDACTED]
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To: Consultations
Subject: Brooklands Farm Development plan - observations and comments from a resident of Whitstable

Categories: Blue category

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Dear Sirs, I have read the Draft Infrastructure Development Plan (February 2024), Chapter 3 Policy W4.

I object to the development as described on the following grounds:

1. Mention is made of an Eastbound-only (coastbound) on/off ramp from the New Thanet Way to the new housing development at Brooklands Farm. This, it is stated, will reduce traffic at both Borstal Hill and Chestfield roundabouts. But it will do nothing to reduce congestion at these roundabouts as regards traffic wishing to travel westbound on the main roads, nor will it reduce traffic crossing the Old Thanet Way to access local services in Whitstable, Tankerton and Swalecliffe. And in the future, it will do nothing to reduce traffic congestion at Chestfield for the Bodkin Farm development.
2. Increased congestion will occur naturally at the Chestfield roundabout, due to increased foot fall at the improved rail station and the new school at Bodkin Farm. This means that the pedestrian crossing at Swalecliffe (and those serving Sainsbury etc), which already cause traffic back-ups at both peak and non-peak times, will cause even more of the same. This pedestrian-traffic mix must be addressed and changed to a pedestrian footbridge system at the Chestfield interchange that completely replaces the crossing systems currently deployed, including the one serving Sainsbury - tunnel access may be required instead/as well as for accessibility purposes.
3. The McDonald's et al access issue will further be exacerbated, causing traffic back-ups, too. It is already the case that there are queues of traffic into/out of the eatery estate by the Chestfield roundabout system. This can only get worse, as there is bound to be increased traffic from the new housing development to these eateries. I cannot see a way around this with the current road/estate layout.
4. A new car park/town bus service out of town is great, but you cannot enforce use of this car park. People will naturally jump in their cars and drive across the Old Thanet Way. This will mean further traffic at the Chestfield junction (see 2/3) and probably other Old Thanet Way crossing points, meaning increased traffic loads on all roads north of the Old Thanet Way. I live off Ham Shades Lane, which is already more traffic intense than in previous times. Volumes will increase further and there is poor pedestrian paving (one side only), while the road is narrow. But all roads, including Herne Bay Road, Tankerton Road, Millstrood Road, Church Street, Borstal Hill, plus all roads leading from them to Whitstable - Summerfield Avenue, Teynham Road/Station Road and Old Bridge Approach - will suffer more traffic. I do not see this issue being addressed in the plan. All talk is of major projects but the knock-on effects are not addressed adequately.

5. A specific point about Old Bridge Approach serving the London-bound side of the train station in Whitstable is that the on-street parking bay has been moved along the road in an effort to provide a cycle lane from The Crab & Winkle path to the station. I don't know who is responsible for such a stupid and dangerous road layout, but what has been created is a traffic pinch-point on a blind bend, meaning cars in either direction only have a single lane to pass parked cars, and cannot see each other arriving at this pinch point. You should spend some time there and see what happens. Plenty of near-misses and plenty of angry exchanges. The cycle lane is highly underutilised, while this has improved cycling safety only marginally. It is a triumph of marketing (a cycle lane to the station) over sensible road layout for the majority user, cars. It should be altered immediately.
6. The bus route serving the new housing development at Brooklands Farm must be regular and safe from cuts. There have been continual reductions in bus services in this area, which drives more traffic/pollution, so where is the safeguard here?
7. The notes on sewage treatment improvements in this document are very thin. There is no quantification of the improvements, nor timescale. As you will know, this is already a major issue for Whitstable. There must be a definite plan that deals with this issue and which is explained properly to the local population. And the currently being constructed longer outfall pipe at Swalecliffe to dump the same amount of stuff further out in the hope it will disperse better is not really that inspiring.
8. Green spaces. Schedule F, Open Spaces, Recreation and Green Infrastructure, seems to be all about Canterbury. I can see nothing that speaks directly to the protection/improvement/increase of facilities in Whitstable in the same way/volume.

In conclusion, I am not against housing developments, because people must be housed somewhere, but it cannot be to the detriment of the 30,000 residents already living with degraded infrastructure. It is not good enough to state you are taking offsetting measures for new development; there is no confidence in this because we have already seen what is happening with the current house building schemes - not enough. That's why you are receiving such emails as mine. You have not done enough in the past to protect Whitstable and surrounding areas, so nobody has any confidence that you will in the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr & Mrs Andrew Allcock

