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From: Andrew Stapleton [REDACTED]
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Subject: Local Plan: Objection to proposed housing development at Brooklands Farm, Whitstable.

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OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON BROOKLANDS FARM LAND.

I object to the development of Brooklands Farm, Whitstable, which proposes the creation of approximately one thousand four hundred (1400) new homes on the surrounding farmland.

This development will destroy large areas of prime agricultural land. The National Planning Policy framework stipulates that planning authorities should prioritise the use of poorer quality land when considering where to approve residential development.

This farmland sits outside the existing settlement boundary of Whitstable and its development for housing is not necessary for local needs. Rather than local need, this proposal is profiteering by greedy developers to cash-in on the popularity of Whitstable. This will add to the stock of houses for holiday rental and second homes, rather than adding to the community.

The farm and surrounding area is primarily a rural one and supports a healthy ecological balance by providing a place of natural beauty, clean air and much needed open spaces. It is a natural habitat and sanctuary for wildlife and it's a very real concern that development for housing will drive out Nightingales, Skylarks, Bats and Newts.

Swalecliffe Brook runs through Brooklands Farm, and is classified as salmonid freshwater capable of supporting salmon, trout and whitefish.

In addition to the loss of ancient woodland, freshwater and wildlife habitats, the proposed housing development will have a negative impact on air pollution, light pollution, noise, traffic, litter and crime. This is in direct conflict with the Council's own climate change policies. There is no justification for the proposed development on such a large scale, particularly at a time when other new developments are already in progress.

The local infrastructure is already under extreme stress. Sudden and significant increases in population create additional traffic that the road system is unable to support. There will be increased demand on schools, hospitals, doctors and dentists to name just a few.

The area around Brooklands is a known flooding hotspot, despite the farmland providing natural drainage by absorbing and channelling excess rainwater. Local roads already become flooded and impassable to cars at times of heavy rainfall.

Additionally, the area already suffers from an inadequate sewage infrastructure. An additional 1400 houses might well lead to sewage overflows, pollution of water sources and a decline in water quality. Raw sewage is already pumped into the sea at Whitstable as the current system is already unable to cope. The negative environmental impact is already in clear evidence and it would be indefensible to knowingly make this worse.

Along with many others, I wrote in strong opposition to this planned development at Brooklands Farm through the last consultation process. There is a large upsurge of local opposition, and for a whole raft of very good reasons. Please stop all plans for the Brooklands Farm development without further delay.

Andrew Stapleton



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