

Alexander Gunyon

From: Lucy Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 June 2024 10:36
To: Consultations
Subject: Local Plan Consultation Response: Policy W4: Land at Brooklands Farm

Categories: Blue category

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Dear Sirs

RE: Local Plan Consultation Response: Policy W4: Land at Brooklands Farm

I ran out of space in your questionnaire and so I would like to redact what I wrote and for you to use this as my official response:

I am writing to object to the development at Brooklands Farm. I have lived in Chestfield and Whitstable for [REDACTED] years and in that time have witnessed the continuous building of housing estates and destruction of this beautiful district. Hallam Land Management admit that their plans will have 'significant effects' on the local area. I strongly OBJECT to the Brooklands Farm development for the following reasons:

- The risk of significantly increased flooding at Brooklands and downstream in Chestfield and Swalecliffe. Chestfield was promised that when the new A299 (that cut Chestfield in half) was built, that the drainage issues would be sorted, instead it has been made worse. Flooding issues already exist with surface water on parts of south street and Chestfield. The proposed development on Brookland Farm raises the risk of increased flooding in the surrounding areas. The farm's green fields currently act as natural drainage, absorbing excess rainwater during heavy rainfall and reducing the likelihood of flooding. The replacement of these fields with impermeable surfaces such as buildings and roads would disrupt the natural drainage system and potentially exacerbate flooding issues, placing both existing and future residents at risk.
- The risk to diminution of any receiving watercourse and flow to the sea hasn't been considered. The proposed development fails to adequately address the potential sewage issues that may arise. Brookland Farm is situated in an area that already faces challenges with sewage infrastructure. The increased strain on the existing system due to the additional housing units could lead to overflows, pollution of water sources, and a decline in water quality. Our current system is already beyond capacity, discharging more into the rivers and sea at every available opportunity which is totally wrong and unacceptable. This risk has an environmental and economic impact on the town.
- Higher demand on local health services doctors, dentists and hospitals which already have issues coping with the current population. Whilst our local medical services have expanded it currently takes around two weeks to get a telephone appointment to speak to a doctor, hospital waiting lists

are very long, Kent and Canterbury has been downgraded so QEQM in Margate is our local hospital. Given the amount of new housing in Thanet this is ridiculous. Building new houses is just going to put a further strain on a health service that is on its knees as it is. The same with dentists and other healthcare services, we do not have the capacity for more people. Without an A&E service at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, journey times for emergency ambulances and waiting times in A&E are only going to get worse.

- Increase in demand for water supply – every year we seem to have a hosepipe ban. Hose-pipe bans are a common occurrence in Kent - in fact, we are a "water stressed" area where abstraction is normally more than 20% of effective rainfall.
- Significantly increased traffic on local roads – what should be a 20-minute journey from Whitstable to Canterbury, 30 minutes at rush hour, can now take up to an hour just with the housing developments built currently. What is going to happen when you add in thousands of more houses to the district? There is no P&R serving the Northwest of Canterbury and no slip road at Wincheap. Canterbury City Council has already declared a climate emergency, the answer according to this local plan is; build more houses and allow more cars on the road to sit in static traffic for hours reducing air quality and contributing to pollution.
- The development of land at Brooklands Farm will result in the loss of some of the best and most versatile agricultural land in the whole district/SE. Parts of the land are currently farmed for cereal crops and is therefore likely that these are Grade 3a rather than 3b. Grade 3a is best and most versatile agricultural land and its development for housing would be contrary to policy EMP 12 of the current local plan and policy DS12 of the draft local plan. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality, and if agricultural land is to be proposed for development the economic and other benefits of that land should be considered. The housing evidence base which supports the draft local plan does not address this requirement.
- Development outside urban area: The land at Brooklands Farm is outside the settlement boundary of Whitstable and it has not been adequately demonstrated that its development is necessary to meet local needs.
- Landscape Impact Brooklands Farm lies in an area of High Landscape Value. This is shown on the map page 10 of the 2017 Canterbury Local Plan. The landscape has not changed since then.
- Brookland Farm is a precious green field site, offering a vital sanctuary for wildlife and contributing to the overall ecological balance of our community. The destruction of this green space would result in the loss of biodiversity and disrupt the delicate ecosystem that currently thrives in the area. Preserving such natural habitats is essential for maintaining a sustainable environment and ensuring the well-being of future generations. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that there would not be a deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodlands as such there is a critical concern that there would be a significant impact on the local wildlife and their natural

habitats – such as populations of nesting Skylarks, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks, Swallows, House Martins, Wagtails and Great Crested Newts. Negative impact on biodiversity and nature conservation and butting up to SSIs and ancient woodlands. The City Council declared a Biodiversity Emergency in October 2023, surely this development contravenes this?

- Permanent destruction of the rural nature of the valley of the Swalecliffe Brook, which provides the unofficial Green Belt between urban Whitstable and The Blean. Why has the council not provided this with protected status?
- The development would not be "sustainable". Whitstable is not the right place to build houses for Canterbury commuters! There are not enough local jobs to sustain the current population of Canterbury District let alone those buying new houses here.
- The thoughtless destruction of a beautiful 14th Century village. By doubling its size with a concrete jungle and allowing a slip road off the motorway to divide the village in half and destroying the community.
- The social housing is not for local people, its for London Boroughs and has no direct benefit to the local community. The majority of new housing is not affordable for young people, who were born here, continue to live and work here, and shared ownership schemes disadvantage them and narrow their options. We cannot keep building more and more on greenfield sites to meet government targets, and proposing schemes which give the local population no benefit whatsoever only adverse impacts to deal with.
- The scale of development in this area is unsustainable and overbearing– the cumulative development along the whole of the Thanet Way around Herne Bay Whitstable and surrounding villages is massive and needs better and improved additional infrastructure before any further development takes place in any shape or form at whatever stage it is at now.

Yours faithfully

Lucy Stevenson

