I object strongly to the proposal to build on land adjacent to The Hill in Littlebourne. This proposal was rejected when it was first proposed and I can see no changes that would alter that decision.

Why is there no designated Green Gap between Canterbury and Littlebourne?

1 This is **Grade 1 agricultural land,** currently used for the growing of our food, and we cannot afford to lose any food producing land at a time when we are trying to become self-sufficient. With the impacts of the loss of agricultural land and rising prices of food imports from Europe and then the war in Ukraine, we need to safeguard local food production. If this land is built on it will never again be suitable for crops.

Brown field sites must be considered first and prioritised.

2 If this permission is granted the entire agricultural site between the Hill, Bekesbourne Lane and Howletts Zoo will be lost. Not only would this change the nature of the village, depriving it of an open and green area on entering, it would add a further 300 houses (in addition to the 100 already built since 2018) to the village of Littlebourne, increasing the size of the village by 45% and raising the population to around 3000. Such an increase would **change the nature of the village** at a stroke and make assimilation very difficult. (It is also the case, from our experience, that the number of houses actually built usually exceeds the number on the original plan.)

There is also the need of human beings for **open spaces and clean air** for their physical and mental health to be considered. Increased building and population endanger these.

3 The suggestion of a **‘centre’ in the new development** with shops and ‘facilities’ risks dividing the village in two with two centres. This would not be good for assimilation. If new, commercial facilities put the original ones in the village out of business - which they are likely to try and do - and then fail, what provision will be made to ensure that the village can continue to provide these essential amenities in a way that is accessible to all villagers?

When we moved into Littlebourne, about 30 years ago, there were 4 or 5 shops and 3 pubs. There is now 1 shop (a *community enterprise* not a commercial one) and one pub. What will any new shops have to recommend them to local people over shops in Canterbury?

Access to these new shops will have to be by car from any of the surrounding villages because of cuts to the bus services. Given the amount of traffic on the roads, particularly the A257 which will have to be crossed to get to the site, it is unlikely that many inhabitants of Littlebourne would try to walk there. So this too will (unnecessarily) increase traffic in our congested roads.

4 **The current water and sewerage system** **is no longer fit for purpose.** The village is considerably bigger than it was when this system was designed and built (60 years ago?) and it certainly won’t cope with more development. Each household uses far more water every day than households did 60 years ago, so it is no wonder that the system cannot cope.

We were promised upgrading to the sewage and water systems when the Laurels/List site was proposed but this has not happened. Instead **tankers regularly visit the** village to take away the sewage. These tankers cause the roads to be closed while they are operating creating traffic queues and delays. I have been late for several meetings, appointments, classes and church services because of these sudden road closures.

There are frequent problems with **water shortages** in the area (being a water stressed area) and more houses will exacerbate this.

This development would certainly **increase the flooding** in the village. Water collects in the woods at the top of the hill and cannot be absorbed due to the structure of the soil layers, so it runs down the hill; at the moment most of this water is absorbed in the open fields, including the one beside the Hill. Already the field called The List has been lost to development and drainage problems have become evident there.

**The Hill becomes a stream** in heavy rain now and this will become worse with climate change and more frequent, heavy rains. Drains in the road on the Hill often overflow, the water running downhill into the village centre, flooding cellars. Concreting over the fields will cause more rain to run down the Hill into the village. There must be safe disposal of storm-water to protect the village rather than increasing these risks.

**There are often occasions when foul water is discharged into the Little Stour at Littlebourne,** endangering wildlife and restricting the use of the stream by residents and their pets. This is one of Kent’s rare chalk streams, essential to the health of wildlife and the community and it flows to Stodmarsh, an area under great risk of pollution damage. Any threat to the health of the stream is unacceptable and puts the health and welfare of villagers, as well as wildlife, at risk. David Attenborough recently explained the importance of chalk streams to the health of the environment and we should take heed of such warnings. This development would put at risk the Little Stour and tributaries.

At the moment the **centre of the village floods** in very wet weather as the water levels rise, never mind heavy rainfall. More run off from further development is very likely to exacerbate to this problem as the ancient and inadequate drains fail to cope, meaning more misery and expense for those living in the centre of the village. This too is hazardous to health.

To add to these problems by building more houses is dangerous and totally unnecessary.

5 The plan will **increase the traffic** on the A257 and the full effect of the Laurels/List development has yet to be felt. This new development proposed on The Hill will mean three and a half times more traffic because of the increase in population and a greater problem for traffic emerging on to the A257 from the various access roads. The route through the new estate is likely to become a ‘rat run’ because of the traffic queues on existing roads at peak times. The new estate access to the A257 will be close to the Laurels/List access, the junction with Hillcrest Road, the Evenhill pub and probably the bus stop, creating more danger to pedestrians and traffic. All these are close to a sharp bend in the road at the entrance to the village where traffic usually speeds despite the speed limit.

The suggestion that the estate could be accessed via **Bekesbourne Lane** is ridiculous. Bekesbourne Lane is a narrow, winding road already being seriously damaged by heavy traffic which often drives over the verges to pass oncoming traffic. There is no pavement and any cyclist(s) cause long tailbacks as it is very difficult to overtake on this narrow, winding lane. If access to Bekesbourne station by bicycle or on foot is to be provided, it will need major changes to the road and the surrounding fields, losing more farmland.

There is little work in the village so people would need to travel for employment thus further increasing the traffic on the roads.

There are many **heavy lorries** travelling through Littlebourne, causing disruption, especially at the junction with Nargate Street and Bekesbourne Lane. More junctions will increase these problems. Large vehicles cause vibration and block the road regularly. I have seen a lorry dislodge (and remove) and downpipe from a gutter as it tried to negotiate the turn into Nargate Street, despite the sign saying that the road was closed to lorries. These incidents will only increase with further building.

Already there have been numerous developments along the A257 and so traffic continues to increase. The cumulative effects of all these developments needs to be taken into account. Currently most traffic uses the A257 to get to Canterbury, the rail stations and schools as well as other central facilities. **The bus services** to the villages have recently been cut, so more traffic must be expected and more cars parked in the villages which do have buses. These cars will be parked on the sides of the roads causing more congestion.

I don’t know when any traffic surveys have been done in Littlebourne, but it cannot have been at peak times.

6 Any further development near the new surgery will significantly increase traffic in **Jubilee Road**. This already has significant problems because of the need to park cars on the side of the road (most of the houses do not have garages or driveways), meaning that it has become a ‘narrow road with passing places’ and it is almost impossible for delivery vehicles to get though. Anyone trying to drive along Jubilee Road in the day time will have experience of waiting for oncoming traffic to pass and the anxiety of large lorries trying to get past without scraping other vehicles. If lorries have difficulties what hope would a fire engine have?

The only alternative route is via Nargate Street, another narrow road with parked cars.

**7 When the Laurels/List development was being considered, Littlebourne was offered various inducements** to agree to it, such as the provision of facilities and upgrading of drains and sewage disposal. **None of these have ever been completed**. In the future will planners be able to ensure that such promises are kept? Is there any guarantee that the developers of another site would behave any differently?

The original developers of the Laurels/List site, sold the site on once they had outline permission and none of the undertakings they had given applied to the new developer. What is to prevent this happening again?

8 Such an increase in population will require more **school places, more medical services, an assurance that police, fire and ambulance servic**es will be able to cope. The school is already oversubscribed and the surgery usually offers appointments at Bridge or Ethelbert Road surgeries as they cannot do so in Littlebourne. The roads are frequently blocked by traffic jams or large vehicles so it will be increasingly likely that emergency vehicles will not be able to get through.

With the state of these services at the moment it seems foolhardy to increase the population by such a high percentage without adequate essential services.

**In conclusion**, this proposal shows a complete lack of understanding of local conditions or needs. I have met most of the new residents in the Laurels and so far only one is from Littlebourne and very few are from the immediate locality, most are from further afield, so **any claim that such developments meet local housing is are unfounded and misleading**. The cost of new houses is usually out of reach of most local people, who need realistic pricing/rents.