**Canterbury District Local Plan to 2040**

**Objection to the Proposed Development in South Whitstable**

I write to **strongly object** to the proposed development at South Whitstable, which is proposed on the site of Brooklands Farm and which I understand will include:

* 1,400 new homes
* at least 4,000m2 of employment floor space
* a shopping centre
* a new primary school
* a new special educational needs school
* a mobility hub, previously referred to as a Park and Bus site with 200 spaces

The proposed development is being badged as a development in South Whitstable but in reality it is an expansion of the village of Chestfield, which will completely remove the village from the map. As a village, the local area does not have the facilities or the infrastructure to support the scale of the proposed development.

On the face of it, it would appear that anyone involved in developing the plan has not visited the proposed development area, and certainly does not live in the area. I would urge you to visit and you will begin to appreciate the significant issues with the proposed development.

I believe the population of Chestfield is approximately 3,200 people. Developing a mega-estate of 1,400 homes will likely bring a further 5,000+ people into the area tripling the strain on the local facilities and infrastructure. I expect that the argument from the Local Plan will be that within the area of the development, there will be provision for the facilities and infrastructure required but there will be no magical increase in the size of the surrounding road network. The proposal to put further exits off of the A299 into this new development will only further increase the strain and I would not be surprised if key roads for getting around such as Chestfield Road and Radfall Road become car parks at peak times.

The proposed development is on the site of Brooklands Farm. In the current environment, continuing to use this land as farmland must be the most sensible and appropriate use for the foreseeable future. With the increasing need for food and the need to keep food as local as possible for multiple reasons, including minimising the impact of global-warming on the environment, there is no sense in turning high-quality farming land into yet another mega-housing estate.

Experience of the local housing market would say that such a development will not service any demand from local people in any event. Rather it will attract people from other built-up conurbations who want to move to the countryside putting significant strain on an already under-resourced infrastructure – both in the immediate vicinity and in the wider area.

As a resident of XXXXXX Drive for the past 14 years, the proposed development will have a significant detrimental effect on the view from my property. I understand that as a planning committee such an argument will be discounted but the impact on myself and all other residents of the road will be significant and should not be ignored. XXXXXX Drive has had the current surroundings and aspect since its original development in the mid-1950s. All houses are unique, as they are in the surrounding area. A mega-estate of 1,400 houses of probably 3 or 4 styles which is what would be expected from such a proposed development is completely contrary to the local area.

I am thankful that the area of the proposed development excludes Radfall Recreation Ground which I believe to be a protected facility. However, when the recreation ground is being used, its own car park is even now insufficient for the number of people using it and cars already spill onto the road parking along Chestfield Road and into Cherry Orchard. This development, regardless of whether recreation facilities are put into it, will bring further people and cars to the Recreation Ground, creating further congestion on the local roads. With the existing levels, Cherry Orchard is difficult to navigate at times and this proposal will only make it worse probably widening these issues to other roads such as Molehill Road.

The canterbury.gov.uk website states that “*without a plan, our planners and councillors on the Planning Committee will find they are unable to resist unacceptable developments – maybe because they are in the wrong locations or come without important infrastructure – or, if they refuse them, that their decisions will be overturned on appeal by a Planning Inspector.*”.

What the Local Plan fails to appreciate is that having completely the wrong plan is probably even more destructive than not having a plan. And this is completely the wrong plan.

**I strongly object** to the proposal and urge the Local Plan to be revisited, reconsidered and redeveloped into a more appropriate plan. If there really is a requirement for an additional 1,400 to serve the existing Canterbury district community, a more appropriate site with the infrastructure to support it needs to be found.