

Remove the R1 New Town proposal in its entirety from the Canterbury City Council local plan.

On a personal level, my husband and I made a choice to move to Adisham, a small, historic, rural village with our young family to improve our mental health. We deliberately chose to be somewhere where we could be part of a small, quiet community with easy access to local, tranquil, country walks. The fact that the village currently has no facilities such as a shop or pub shows that such conveniences, which come with being part of a larger community, are not features which current residents consider to be as important to their lives and wellbeing as the open countryside, wildlife, quiet roads, tranquillity, dark skies and the historic character of where we live. Choosing to live in a rural environment should be a choice that is not compromised or threatened by this huge proposed development which will adversely affect all of these qualities, which local residents love about the village; the place they have chosen to live their lives.

The proposed development will dramatically affect the character of Adisham and the mental health of the people who live here. The damage will be immeasurable and irreversible. I am totally against the planned policy R1. Aside from my own personal views and feelings, I am opposed for the following key practical reasons:

Destruction of the character and history of the area

The proposed new development (policy R1) would effectively join Aylesham and Adisham which neither community want! It would destroy Adisham's long history as a separate rural community, standing on this site for at least 1400 years.

It is vitally important to protect the character and community of this ancient village by keeping it as that, a village. From the perspective of a 10 year old, my son is very upset by the thought of the change to his beloved community and the effect that the proposed plans would have on his environment, the local wildlife, his school and the wider world. The plans are already affecting his mental health with these worries.

To build 3,200 houses within the current village limits would change the character of this close community immeasurably. Residents live in this community because they want a rural space, they want a village with character, history and peace. To have a town thrust upon them by those who have no understanding of this community and the character of our village is to wipe away what it is to live here and to change the community forever.

In Michael Gove's letter of 5th December 2022 he says that 'Local authorities will not be expected to build developments at densities that would be wholly out of character with existing areas or which would lead to a significant change of character'. This statement goes against everything that is proposed in the R1 policy.

Loss of valuable prime farmland

To go ahead with policy R1 would irrevocably destroy and remove prime farm land from production. Farmland which we need to be protecting and promoting and land which has been used successfully for the purpose of farming for centuries.

The tenants of Great Bossington Farm, who own a swathe of the proposed site for development, have lifetime tenancy for both themselves and their son. They were not consulted on this plan. The tenants have publically stated that they will not relinquish their land under any circumstances, for development, making the plan unviable and poorly

researched. They wish to continue to farm the ever diminishing farm land, to feed our country.

Loss of Prime Down land

The chalk soil rolling landscape of the South of England is found in no other areas of the UK and is rapidly disappearing. If plans such as R1 are allowed to go ahead, we risk facing the loss of this unique landscape forever. This landscape provides a unique habitat for wildlife and is part of our farming heritage which we have a responsibility to look after for future generations.

Wildlife on the farms around the village have a great deal of protection, not afforded them in built-up areas, which Adisham would become if R1 goes ahead. The stewardship of the local farms would be lost and we would not see the types and populations of flora and fauna that we have now. This is not progress!!

In 2020 Canterbury City Council commissioned a 'Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal', in which Section i1 - 'Adisham Arable Downlands' is quoted below:

1. Seek to enhance the arable landscape through management along margins for biodiversity and conserve remaining areas of pasture.
2. Conserve the traditional linear settlement form of Adisham in the chalk valley with a single line of dwellings along the road and views out between buildings to the rising slopes beyond.
3. Seek to ensure new development at Aylesham and along the Adisham road in Dover district respects the Rural character and quality of this area.
4. Conserve the visual links with the AONB ensuring that this area continues to provide a rural dip slope setting to the Kent downs.
5. Avoid any development including large scale farm buildings in prominent locations such as higher ground.

This local development plan R1 would go against everything that has been said in Canterbury City Council's own report!

The recent Biodiversity COP15, which took place in Montreal in December, ighlights the importance being placed on protecting biodiversity in national and international agendas. Biodiversity policies are being drawn up and implemented by businesses and governments alike, recognising the role biodiversity and nature based solutions will play in tackling challenges faced by climate change at international, national and local scales. At a local level, the proposed R1 policy will clearly contradict the 'Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal', commissioned by Canterbury City Council.

Failure of Canterbury City Council to adequately consult DDC on its plans

Dover District Council have not been consulted on this major new development plan directly on their boundary. This is underhanded, and possibly illegal.

Government targets are no longer required

Central government set housing targets are now to be considered as a 'starting point' 'but no more than that', with local authorities able to reduce the number of houses they need to build if they feel this necessary. The 3,200 new homes in Policy R1 is extreme overkill and

can be scrapped and reconsidered in light of this new requirement from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Huge increase in traffic on lanes and the B2046

The B2046 is an incredibly busy key thoroughfare between East Kent and the A2 and is a road which is currently unfit for purpose considering the number and size of some of the vehicles which use it.

The road is becoming an accident hotspot with large accidents including a fatality occurring in recent years. The addition of 3200 houses, each likely to have one or two cars commuting to work twice a day, means potentially 12,800 additional journeys on the B2046 each day! There are no alternative roads for this route and Dover District Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment of 2022 dropped the plans for development on the land north-east of Aylesham (directly opposite the CCC planned site) for this precise reason.

The junctions created on this road as access to the new development would certainly increase the likelihood of accidents as traffic turns onto and off the road and more lives will be put in danger. There will be no alternatives for residents of the new development to access their houses other than to use this road.

The increase in traffic on the small country lanes in the local area would also be sizeable and these old country lanes would not cope with this increase in traffic volume. Potholes and lack of passing places on these roads can already be problematic.

The large increase in pollution and danger to wildlife with the increase in traffic on these road will cause immeasurable and irreversible damage.

Irreversible damage to Illedon and Oxenden Woods (SSSI)

Illedon and Oxenden Woods are located directly next to the proposed R1 plan site and would become urbanised if the plan was to go ahead. The woods are an SSSI meaning that they must be given the protection which this status grants them! This protection would not be there if the R1 plan is allowed to go ahead.

There would be a huge increase in people entering the woods which would have a devastating impact on these sites and the biodiversity within them, with the loss of rare species which are unique to East Kent.

The rare Lady Orchid is almost completely confined to the chalk land of Kent. Illedon and Oxendon woods host one of the country's largest populations of this orchid. The Lady Orchid is on the GB Red List and has been designated as one of three Kent Biodiversity Strategy plants. There are also other nationally rare plants within these two ancient woodlands; the Narrow-Lipped Helliborine, the Lesser Butterfly Orchid, the White Helliborine, to name a few. This critically important site would be damaged forever by an increase in footfall and pollution and as such we could lose yet another site from the dwindling list where these plants can be preserved.

The wildlife within the Site of Special Scientific Interest, which borders the proposed development plan, is at risk if the plan were to be allowed to go ahead. We are lucky to be home to a rich variety of wildlife in this area but the removal of the natural landscape and

ability for wildlife to move between sites would limit breeding opportunities and feeding sites.

The R1 plan is being sold as having 'over 30 hectares of natural and semi-natural green space.' If green space in the plan is to be seen to be a selling point why would you want to get rid of any green space which is already there?? No amount of 'natural' and 'semi-natural' spaces created by the development can be said to give these endangered and nationally important animals and plants the environment that they have now and that needs to be retained in order to continue to enrich the wild places for future generations!!

The Natural England SSSI designation documents list twenty-eight 'operations likely to damage the special interest'. Six of these would be relevant to Policy R1, they are: 9, 10, 14, 21, 26 and 27.

Overstretched infrastructure - Water, drainage and sewage disposal

Water in this part of Kent is scarce in the summer months. Recent years in particular have shown that this is increasingly going to be a problem in the future and yet there are no apparent plans in R1 for the capture, storage and distribution of water for 3,200 additional houses.

Flooding is also of real concern as any settlement above the village and any increase in use of tarmac, brick and concrete will increase the likelihood of flooding in the village of Adisham below.

Damaging increase in light and noise pollution

It cannot be denied that the introduction of 3200 new homes to the local area will dramatically increase light and noise pollution and air quality will deteriorate in the area, therefore robbing the village of Adisham of both the tranquillity and the clear dark skies that are part of the reason for residents choosing to live in this rural area. The noise and light pollution and poor air quality would be another negative impact on the mental health of current residents and another impact of the plan that will be negatively felt by the local wildlife, changing patterns of behaviour and destroying habitat.

These are a few key reasons why the R1 plan will negatively change the area for ever and must not be allowed to go ahead!!!!