

Rachael Mitchell



14th January 2023

To Whom it may concern,

RE: OBJECTION BROOKLANDS FARM

I am writing to object to the proposed development planned for Brooklands Farm, Whitstable.

Whilst I accept the need for additional houses across the country, I question the figures provided by ONS and the projections put forward for our area. The recent decision by the government I understand means housing quotas can be revisited and I wonder if this has happened within Canterbury City Council. Has the impact of all these developments on our environment been considered? The damage cannot be undone.

This planned development is vast to put it mildly and with the current developments ongoing along with the proposed further houses / car parks any green spaces will be lost. We are currently amid a global environmental crisis and we all need to do are part, if this means houses need to be re-located to areas that are brown field sites and not grade 1 agricultural land this needs to be taken into account. Whilst the list for housing in our area maybe long, most of the social housing is purchased by London boroughs and our 'local' people will not feel the benefit of these. The planners at meeting in Whitstable acknowledged they could not control who buys them so those from Whitstable will probably miss out.

Southern Water cannot cope with the houses we currently have and even though work is being undertaken I question if a new / revised system could in fact cope with an additional 1300 houses, commercial units, sports facilities and shops. This is along with the additional houses being proposed in the plan and houses currently being built in Herne Bay and Whitstable.

The travel infrastructure is addressed to an extent but the cost of this will be enormous and I cannot imagine the CIL payment will cover this; especially if a large portion of monies paid to the council will be put towards the planned ring round in Canterbury. Who will pick up any additional cost? If it did go ahead, what effect will this have on other areas. Will the infrastructure be put in place given the cost or will there be just more traffic to the small seaside town that on most weekends you have to queue to get into. The planned park and ride I understand is just a car park with a bus stop so of no use to local residents meaning the traffic issue would remain.

I note from the plans there are areas of biodiversity which given the UK is near the top of the list of countries that have lost their own biodiversity is pleasing to see but again makes me question why develop here? We are in a global crisis; grade 1 agricultural land should be protected not sold on for development. We all need to reduce our carbon footprint and become more self-sufficient as a nation. Regarding the plan itself, the main areas highlighted for biodiversity are on a slope and would make for poor housing. The cynic in me finds it rather convenient a developer has highlighted this area for saving; I am not too sure how much use this would be for biodiversity.

Last year we faced a hose pipe ban and even though we have recently had much rain, with the world getting warmer each year water shortages will become more and more of an issue. Why is there a plan to build so many more houses in Whitstable when the north of the country did not have a ban, surely a common-sense approach is needed across government as a whole and some thought put into where these houses are best placed or look at regeneration of buildings. Along with the houses being built / proposed, there are numerous student accommodation blocks being constructed that do not appear to be taken into account, these will also be looking at Southern Water for service. Given all of this, this large proposal does not make sense, how can this be considered? A reservoir is being considered but we have been told the figures used for its construction / size is different again to those used by the council for developments. We will again not have enough water.

Schools are proposed but will need to be built before any build starts; where will the children go to school and who will pay for the schools? Not only the building but fitting out the school and teachers. There was mention of a school in Herne Bay but this changed again to flats which again suits a developer and not the local community.

There is no mention of doctor / medical centres on a system that is already stretched to its limits.

Again, I am not against houses and developments but the whole approach needs to be turned on its head. Just building an additional 1300 homes in an area where sewage is regularly pumped into the sea, suffers hose pipe bans and whose biodiversity is disappearing at an alarming rate does not help our communities in the longer term. We need agricultural land to grow crops and feed animals. We need to be looking at seasonal food produced locally not flown into the county, being more self-sufficient.

I appreciate Whitstable and surrounding towns are popular and therefore expensive; it is this that drives developers to approach landowners to sell their fields with profits for both parties but the long-term cost is to our detriment; this does not help our younger generation. We should be recycling not building without thought on such a large scale which always results in the most amount of houses being squeezed on a given space.

Lastly, I have read many times that our views matter, the Government Planning Team Inspectorate is legally obliged to take objections into consideration yet the developers have

approached those that will be advantaged by this plan (not the current owners) and have said this is going ahead as Canterbury City Council has not reached its planning quota and this development will tick the box. This it seems is quite common knowledge and I am appalled if this is the case, please can you confirm your view on this? I will be looking at what legal avenues are open to me if this has been given the go ahead prior to objections being made and comprehensive plans being made public. I cannot make specific objection as the plans posted are very broad outlines but others have been approached with a more detailed view. In closing, other councils have put their future plans on hold for the time being until the government has come up with clearer guidelines, would it not be prudent for Canterbury City Council to do the same?

I look forward to your reply.

Kind regards

Rachael Mitchell