



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Local plan

1 message

julianstanbury [REDACTED]
To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

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I strongly object to the Policy R1, Land at Cooting Farm for the following reasons:

The proposed development sacrifices a swath of mixed farmland (arable and grazing) for the purposes of making an overly burdensome contribution to arbitrary housing targets.

This farmland is known to be both productive, and easy to farm, and forms part of a larger network of farmland which spans the length of the B2046, as well as the area to the North of Adisham. The area earmarked for development would separate the run of farmland along the B2046.

This farmland should be maintained and protected for its contribution to the UK's domestic needs.

Besides being inherently valuable for its contribution to agriculture, this farmland provides a natural habitat for a variety of creatures. We have seen an increase in birds of prey (noticeably Buzzards and Red Kites) and this habitat used by a variety of other birds, some of which are in decline (Marsh Harriers, Kestrel, Lapwing, Skylark, Yellow Hammer, Corn Buntings, Meadow Pipits, Linnets). Also owls (Tawny, Barn, Little, Scops) use this habitat, which is invaluable due to its borders with local ancient woods, islands of trees and hedgerows. The numerous mammals which are prey to some of these birds rely on this environment for their home, as do moles, foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, weasels and stoats. We have also seen the local woodland become home to deer.

All in all, the loss of habitat, or just the interruption of such a significant corridor of land, or the introduction of such a significant development would impact the wildlife not just in the immediate area, but beyond.

This would be caused by the loss and interference with natural light (our dark skies are already stained by the glow from Thanet Earth, the Thanet Way and industry at Highland Court Farm, an increase in human activity (noise, traffic (vehicular through to pedestrian), litter, and the act of development itself).

Replacing an ancient, valuable and comprehensive habitat with a limited range of options whose main purpose is to serve the planning application and the potential residents is an unsatisfactory replacement.

From a human perspective, the development will artificially and immediately link the two neighbouring but different communities of Adisham (including Cooting and Blooden) and Aylesham (including Ratling and Snowdon). These communities are fundamentally different, Adisham being a farming community and Aylesham being a mining community. Aylesham has already seen a staggering increase in its community, not caused by a gradual growth in its resident population, but to meet the needs of overall housing targets. This new population is yet to gel with the preexisting population, and now another massive addition is suggested. I fail to see how this respects the human rights of the preexisting communities, their integration to these new developments does present opportunities for them, but is incredibly jarring. Overall I don't think the Cooting proposal respects the changes Aylesham has gone through and will ultimately cause the loss of identity for two communities, consumed into the tagline of Garden Community.

The infrastructure, by way of roads, seems far from suitable for such a development. The B2046 links Wingham to the A2. Wingham already suffers hugely from the traffic passing through the village, as the village High Street is narrow and serves pedestrians. The junctions, specifically for Staple, and outside the old Red Lion (a listed building) cannot tolerate any more traffic.

The B2046 itself is far too fast, and would benefit from traffic calming. The access roads to Adisham are T junctions from it, with difficult visibility. I do note that the recent addition of a roundabout on the Barham

side of the A2 has improved traffic flow at that point, but the road is barely sufficient to the needs of the current community, let alone the proposed development.

Besides the B2046 the existing community of Adisham is served by Adisham Downs Road, which is narrow, not even supporting white line to separate the two lanes of traffic and Woodlands Road, a single track road with passing areas often encroaching on private property. Neither of these roads is suitable to accommodate much more traffic than they currently experience. Woodlands Road may link to the A2, but is narrow with unsighted bends, and Adisham Downs Road links only to the village of Bekesbourne. The existing communities will also see an unfair loss and change to their environment, people have chosen to remain or move to Adisham, Cooting and Blooden based on what they offered: a quiet rural community.

This proposal will take that from us. Population will increase, causing additional noise, light, traffic, litter. The proposal also includes changes to Public Rights of Way, these are badged as "improvements" but that is an arbitrary term applied to try and sell the change.

The loss of natural land, replaced with concrete, brick and tarmac, besides affecting wildlife will also affect drainage with farmland no longer able to absorb the rainfall. Instead, Adisham, Cooting and Blooden (all of which are on the lower part of sloping land) are likely to see additional runoff from the proposed development above them.

I also strongly object to proposal R22.

Regardless of proposal R1, the suggestion of additional houses per R22 is wholly inappropriate. The suggested development would further worsen the situation for traffic along Station Road. Station Road already supports a number of houses on one side, and this results in the length of Station Road, along one side, being used for car parking. These cars often mount the pavement to try and leave more road available as Station Road is the main access to the village. Parked cars are already making their way into the triangle of Pond Green (where Station Road joins The Street) and affecting the ability of buses to use the designated stop. The additional houses would only increase this issue.

The additional houses would also make the junction with Cooting/Blooden far more dangerous.

Such a number of houses could be accommodated by Adisham, but a better site would be to infill the junction from Station Road along Bossington Road, and set the houses back to allow parking, per house, for a minimum of 2 cars each.

I also strongly object to proposal R20.

Womenswold is a tiny rural village, and many of the objections to R1 also apply in principle to this suggestion.

Rather than rehashing them, in summary this proposal will instantly, unfairly and disproportionately change the identity of the village, the burdens on the inhabitants and infrastructure along with having a negative effect on the natural environment, wildlife and neighbouring communities.

Overall, including the existing and further developments at Aylesham, the small communities of Adisham, Cooting, Blooden, Womenswold, Ratling and Snowden, along with the natural environment and all the wildlife it supports are being sacrificed to meet arbitrary housing targets. There is no attempt to protect the rural environment of the lives of everything this decreasing resource supports.

Julian Stanbury

