



CCC Consultations &lt;consultations@canterbury.gov.uk&gt;

---

**resident feedback to draft local plan**

1 message

cath jones [REDACTED]

16 January 2023 at 13:13

To: "consultations@canterbury.gov.uk" &lt;consultations@canterbury.gov.uk&gt;

**Response to draft local plan**

from:

Catherine Jones



I have studied the draft local plan and have some comments and objections, relating in particular to Whitstable and the proposed development of Brooklands Farm, where I am a local resident. I would like my response to be taken into account before the final plan is drawn up.

**NO TO LARGE NUMBERS OF POORLY BUILT NEW HOUSES**

I am shocked and appalled by the proposals to build thousands of new homes.

Whitstable is a seaside and beach holiday tourist destination and also many locals swim in the sea daily, throughout the year. The **current sewage system is inadequate to serve the existing number of houses**. How can any council contemplate adding new houses to the area? **This will completely overwhelm the sewage system and lead to constant pollution of the sea**. This will impact not only on local swimmers, but visiting tourists and the local seafood industry.

I am baffled as to why the council feel there is a need for so many new houses. The proposed numbers are far higher than the predicted local population growth. Also, it appears that the predicted population growth is being revised down each year anyway. If these houses are in fact being built to house incomers, this will make the current problem of lack of affordable housing for local residents even worse.

Developments that are currently being built are not selling to locals. I understand that 100 houses have been purchased by a London council for their residents. This does suggest that current developments should not have happened as there is not a local need for this type of development. So we don't need more!

The definition of affordable housing is not making home ownership a realistic option to lower income local residents.

Why is proposed new housing not 'GREEN'. This is a missed opportunity. Any proposed house building should be passive and of good quality.

I understand that central government has withdrawn housing targets. So Canterbury does **NOT** have to build **ANY** houses at all because of central government. When there were targets, the proposed number of new houses was significantly above the target. **WHY?**

Is Canterbury using money from agreements with housing developers to pay for new roads?

Building new roads will only increase the level of cars on the road and thus air pollution. Also, new houses will bring more cars.

There appears to be a complete lack of joined up thinking in this draft local plan.

Surely local government should be planning with climate change in mind? How is this draft local plan helping to reduce carbon emissions? How is the building of new roads and the subsequent increase in car miles compatible with green targets? There needs to be a much greater effort to get people out of cars. The proposed cycle routes are welcome but not sufficient in number. Anxious cyclists need to be encouraged out of cars by segregated cycle ways. How is a cyclist supposed to navigate Canterbury? This needs to be planned for in the local plan.

### **Park and Ride**

Where are the public transport links for new housing? A new Park and Ride on the Old Thanet Way will not work. The previous Park and Ride was financially unviable and used only on a few busy tourist days each year. How is the new Park and Ride different? Why will it work when the previous one did not? It will destroy the green buffer opposite Whitstable Heights Housing Development. Lighting will cause light pollution and think of the loss of yet more green space. We need to protect the green belt.

### **Brooklands Farm**

This stands out in the draft local plan as an utterly ill conceived proposal. Just because a local land owner/farmer puts forward their land for development does not mean the council should consider it.

It is accepted on a national level that the UK needs food security. Building houses on a local farm which includes wheat fields is going to worsen UK food security. This farm includes prime agricultural land. It needs to be kept as a food resource, not built on.

Putting an enormous development on the outskirts of Whitstable contributes to urban sprawl. It will transform rural environment to urban wilderness. Local areas will merge. There should be a green buffer between distinct local areas to prevent loss of local area identity. We need to prevent the merging of neighbourhoods and loss of local community identity.

The lockdowns of the recent pandemic showed the public need for green spaces.

Green spaces are vital for human mental health. This is a proven fact.

Brooklands Farm is home to a significant number of wildlife species, including some which are under threat. The environment and wildlife need to be considered. How can this destruction of habitat be justified in any way?

We need hedgerows not houses. Bees are vital for the future of food security and the human race but building on green space will only reduce bee habitat. Where is the joined up thinking and long term environmental planning?

When the New Thanet Way was built it was supposed to prevent traffic on the old thanet way. Building houses on the outskirts of Whitstable will INCREASE the number of cars and subsequent traffic on the Old Thanet Way.

## **WATER**

Climate change means it is likely that our climate is going to continue warming. We already had hosepipe bans imposed in 2022. There was insufficient water for the existing number of houses. If more houses are built, how will the increase in water consumption be provided for?

The existing infrastructure will not be able to cope with thousands or even hundreds of new house.

**I would like it to be noted that I feel local government could have made a much greater effort to liaise with local residents on the draft local plan.** As far as I am aware, residents were NOT written to, to alert them to the consultation period for the draft local plan. Surely a leaflet could have been included when council tax bills were sent out? **The majority of the population is still unaware that that there is a local plan or indeed what this is.**

The consultation event for Whitstable was on a weeknight in the lead up to Christmas. One evening was not enough. Why was there no long term display in the local library or the local arts centre or a community centre or over 60s centres etc? The draft local plan and maps did arrive in the library EVENTUALLY but it was simply left on a table in the reference area. It was not displayed. When I initially asked to see a copy of the draft local plan, the staff member knew nothing about it and could not locate it for me. I later discovered it had not yet arrived.

Social media is not used by everyone. Many older residents do not use any social media and so if that is the method the council use to inform people of things, they have excluded a huge proportion of the local residents.

A local resident distributed 1000 leaflets alerting residents in the area surrounding Brooklands Farm to the proposed Brooklands Farm development. This is why there was a huge turnout to the one consultation evening in Whitstable. Staff were completely unprepared for the numbers that turned up. Herne bay and Canterbury had a handful of people attending. Why such a poor turnout? Surely, because residents were unaware of the meeting and or the existence of a draft local plan?

It was very difficult to see the display boards at Whitstable because of the large number of people who turned up. A significant number were there because they had learned of the draft local plan from the leaflet. They had not found out because of anything the council had done. There was a palpable feeling of anger at the meeting. The meeting was then hijacked by non local, political extremists, which meant that locals did not get the opportunity to have a say. Local press coverage of the event focussed on the presence of the celebrity political activist. It did not inform locals of the draft Local Plan.

**The meeting should have been held again.**

I feel very strongly that local government has cynically 'gone through the motions' of consulting with the public on this draft local plan. It is not democracy in action when the majority of local residents are kept in the dark of their opportunity to influence how their area will develop in the coming decades.

