

From: Becky Reisinger [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 October 2025 22:07
To: [REDACTED]
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Subject: Objection to Proposed Development of 300+ Homes in Chartham

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Dear Council Planning Team,

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development of over 300 houses in Chartham. While I appreciate the need for housing, this scale of expansion is incompatible with our village's infrastructure and poses serious risks to public health, safety, and the environment.

Our village roads are already narrow, poorly maintained, and heavily congested due to school traffic, agricultural vehicles, and daily commuters. According to AECOM's 2025 infrastructure report, rural roads that are not designed for high traffic volumes quickly become unsafe and inefficient when overburdened. The proposed development, potentially adding over 600 vehicles (assuming two per household), would significantly worsen congestion and increase the risk of accidents. Roads around Chartham are already in disrepair, riddled with potholes, and unable to withstand further strain. Increased traffic will accelerate deterioration, leading to more vehicle damage and higher maintenance costs for residents. Moreover, the influx of construction vehicles would cause further disruption — especially when combined with the ongoing congestion from large-scale building works in nearby Canterbury.

Residents in Chartham already face persistent issues with low water pressure, frequent leaks, and sewage problems. A recent *Building Magazine* investigation highlighted that inadequate wastewater infrastructure is delaying thousands of housing developments across the UK — a clear warning sign. Locally, there have been serious environmental incidents, including oil leaking into the River Stour, reportedly from the Paper Mill, and sewage backing up into residents' gardens. These events reflect existing failures by both water suppliers and the council to maintain essential services. Introducing over 300 new homes without substantial infrastructure upgrades would only increase the strain, heightening the risk of pollution, environmental damage, and public health hazards.

As someone with asthma and two young children, I am deeply concerned about the health risks posed by prolonged construction in and around our village. Dust and debris from large-scale building works release particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), which are known to aggravate respiratory conditions and can negatively affect even healthy individuals. The

Institution of Civil Engineers has warned that air quality during development phases is often overlooked, despite its disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions.

This issue is particularly pressing given the scale of ongoing construction across Canterbury, Chartham, and surrounding areas. The cumulative effect of multiple developments is contributing to a noticeable rise in local pollution levels. Moreover, many of these projects are replacing farmland, woodland, and green spaces—natural buffers that would otherwise help absorb pollutants and improve air quality. The council must take these environmental and health implications seriously, especially in a village with such a diverse population and range of needs.

Our local school is already nearing capacity, and NHS England data confirms that rural GP practices face long wait times and ongoing staffing shortages. Many residents can attest to the difficulty of securing timely appointments at our local surgeries. Adding hundreds of new residents will place even greater pressure on these overstretched services, leaving both existing and incoming families underserved.

Dental care is also a concern. There are limited NHS dental services across Canterbury and none in Chartham itself, forcing many residents to travel out of area for routine and emergency dental treatment (myself, and my family included). Increasing the population without expanding healthcare provision will only deepen these access issues, not just in Canterbury but in surrounding communities as well.

In addition, Chartham currently offers very limited activities and services for children and young people. If the council proceeds with building over 300 new homes, it must also invest in youth-focused infrastructure. Posts on the Chartham Village Noticeboard (Facebook) frequently raise concerns about young people's behaviour in public spaces—often a reflection of the lack of safe, structured environments for them to gather, play, and socialise. Without dedicated spaces, it is inevitable that more young people will be left to roam the streets unsupervised.

Loneliness is another pressing issue, particularly in villages like ours where public transport is limited/does not always turn up and there are few communal spaces. The council should be actively addressing this by creating places where people can connect—whether that's a café, a year-round indoor play area, or a community hub. These amenities would not only support mental health and social wellbeing but also stimulate the local economy and create jobs.

If this development is to go ahead, it must be accompanied by meaningful investment in the services and spaces that make a community thrive. Without that, the proposal risks overwhelming our infrastructure and eroding the quality of life for everyone who lives here.

In light of these concerns, I urge the council to reconsider or significantly scale down the proposal until robust infrastructure upgrades and service expansions are in place. Responsible planning must prioritize the wellbeing of current and future residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,

Rebecca Cole

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[REDACTED]