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**Sent:** 21 October 2025 07:39  
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**Subject:** Canterbury District Local Plan - Rattington Street Feedback

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To Whom It May Concern,

Formal Objection to Proposed Development N32 – Rattington Street, Chartham

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development of 170 houses on site N32 in Chartham. This proposal raises serious concerns across multiple areas, transport infrastructure, public health, environmental sustainability, and heritage preservation—that make it unsuitable for our village.

#### 1. Inadequate Infrastructure and Traffic Hazards

Rattington Street is a narrow, rural lane with no pavements, cycle paths, or street lighting. It connects to Station Road via a series of tight bends and single-lane bridges, making it ill-equipped to handle any increase in traffic. The proposed development would introduce an estimated 470 additional vehicles, placing unsustainable pressure on already overstretched roads.

Shalmsford Street, which borders the site, is already a traffic bottleneck, especially during school drop-off and pick-up times. Speed Watch data confirms frequent speeding, with vehicles recorded at up to 58mph in a 30mph zone. The village school is located on this road, and Kent County Council has previously deemed it too dangerous for a Walking Bus scheme. Adding more traffic would only heighten the risk to pedestrians, particularly children.

There is already a significant pinch point directly outside my home at 13 The Crescent, where two vehicles cannot pass simultaneously. This regularly results in near misses, with cars mounting the curb to squeeze through—sometimes narrowly missing pedestrians, including schoolchildren. The situation is hazardous and unsustainable. More houses mean more cars, and more cars mean more danger.

Public transport options are limited and impractical. Chartham station lacks parking, forcing residents to drive to Chilham or attracting commuters from Ashford to park in the

village. The bus service is infrequent and underused, offering no viable alternative to car travel.

## 2. Environmental and Public Health Risks

The increase in vehicle emissions from the development would worsen air quality, particularly around the school and residential areas. While Canterbury City Council focuses on reducing pollution in the city centre, rural communities like Chartham are being overlooked. The absence of a ring road means traffic is funneled through villages, exacerbating pollution and noise levels.

## 3. Harm to Landscape and Village Identity

The proposed site occupies a prominent position on the rising slopes of the River Stour Valley. Development here would permanently alter the rural character of the area and erode the visual separation between Chartham and St Augustine's. This directly contradicts the Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment and the Neighbourhood Plan, both of which aim to preserve village identity and green space.

The site is visible from numerous public viewpoints, including Bakers Lane, The Crescent, and Beech Avenue. Its development would scar the landscape and diminish the natural beauty of the area, including views from the nearby Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## 4. Threats to Conservation and Flood Risk

The site borders the Chartham Conservation Area, which is defined by its close relationship with the surrounding countryside. Development would compromise this setting and fail to meet the statutory duty to preserve or enhance conservation areas, as outlined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The land lies near the Nailbourne and Stour rivers, both prone to seasonal flooding. Increased hard surfaces would worsen runoff and drainage, yet no updated flood risk assessment appears to have been conducted. Furthermore, the development could contribute to nutrient pollution in the Stodmarsh International Nature Reserve, which has previously led to restrictions on housing in the catchment area.

## 5. Loss of Prime Agricultural Land

The site has been productive arable land for over three decades and is classified as best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. The National Planning Policy Framework urges local authorities to protect such land and prioritize development on poorer-quality or brownfield sites. With UK cereal production already in decline and global food supply chains under strain, preserving domestic agricultural capacity is more important than ever.

## 6. Biodiversity and Ancient Woodland

At the heart of the site lies ancient woodland, home to protected species including bats, tawny owls, badgers, and foxes. Even if the woodland is retained, surrounding development would fragment habitats, disrupt migration and breeding patterns, and threaten biodiversity. This concern has been raised with the Woodland Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust.

## 7. Sewage Infrastructure and Capacity Concerns

It is also evident that the local sewage infrastructure is already under significant strain. Shalmsford Street, in particular, has been subject to frequent sewage works in recent years, indicating ongoing issues with capacity and maintenance. The addition of 170 new homes would place further pressure on an already fragile system, increasing the likelihood of overflows, blockages, and environmental contamination. Without substantial upgrades to the existing sewage network, this development risks exacerbating public health hazards and environmental degradation.

## Conclusion

This proposal is inconsistent with national planning policy, environmental goals, and local development frameworks. As Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer recently stated, “Brownfield first... nobody’s talking about building on the countryside. That has to be preserved.” This development does the opposite.

I urge the planning authority to reject this application and protect the character, safety, and sustainability of Chartham.

Yours faithfully,  
Michael Garlick



