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Sent: 20 October 2025 23:17
To: Consultations
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Subject: Proposed development sites at Chartham, Kent

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Dear Consultation Team

I am contacting you with regard to my objections and associated comments concerning the proposed developments in Chartham which are detailed in the Canterbury District Local Plan, Focused Consultation (Regulation 18) September 2025.

I have been a resident of Chartham since 2020

With regard to Policy N31 redevelopment of the Chartham Paper Mill) I feel that the central location of this now closed and derelict site offers an ideal opportunity for the village with sympathetically designed mixed housing, small retail and community resources within areas of well planned open space around the riverside area. This is a brownfield site so is ideal as a sustainable development proposal so if high quality and sympathetic plans were to be put forward which would enhance and benefit the village I believe that this would be looked on favourably by the majority of people from the village. Any development would need to be aligned to the character of the village and all existing historic buildings, most of which fall under the protection of Conservation Area status. A sustainable development on this site would align with the Local Plan.

I wish to state my strong objections to the other proposed development in Chartham, namely the Rattington Street site (Policy N32). This greenfield site is directly adjacent to one of the conservation areas in Chartham and in very close proximity to others. The large number of properties for this site (170) would not only overwhelm the village in terms of traffic and have other negative impacts but would also have an extremely destructive impact on the character of this historic village, particularly around the village centre and ancient church which is just a short distance from the proposed site. According to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 it states that "When exercising planning functions within these areas, authorities must give "special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area". This means that proposals for development will be assessed against the need to protect the area's unique character". A development of this size would not preserve or enhance the historic character of Chartham.

Roads in the village are extremely narrow in places, especially in Rattington Street around the terrace of Grade II listed houses and The Artichoke Inn, and then further along by the

church which has a very sharp and narrow turn towards The Green. The road is also very narrow across the railway level crossing at the junction of the road to The Green. This is a particularly difficult area to navigate already as buses turn into this very tight corner, directly alongside historic buildings. When the crossing is closed for trains (for several minutes and at frequent times during each day), traffic backs up in three directions along narrow roads and often up to the A28 leading to congestion on an already very busy road. Any additional traffic would just increase problems with highway safety and inappropriate parking which is already in evidence in this area and is detrimental to a small historic village which was mentioned in the Domesday Book.

The railway station does not have a car park so many commuters and weekend users currently park around The Green or along Station Road which again makes the roads even narrower. With many households now having two cars the number of vehicles on the Rattington Street site if it went ahead could easily exceed 300 or more which would inevitably have huge implications for local people, particularly if the majority of dwellings are targeted at families. Limited public transport at certain times would inevitably lead to excessive vehicle movement from the site along narrow roads through a small village area, part of which runs alongside the recreation ground where children are playing and football games are played.

Depending on where access to the site would be (not showing on the plans) additional traffic would bring problems to either the very narrow Rattington Street hill leading down to the village or up to the Cockering Road junction which is already busy where vehicles are driven fast, a number of accidents have been reported along this road. If access is through The Crescent this would put additional strain on the road leading from The Downs area and St Augustine's, especially during mornings and afternoons as the primary school is on this road, again already busy with pick ups and drops offs which could affect children's safety. This is also on the bus route to St Augustine's. As a resident of Shalmsford Street I can confirm that the road is already busy so would be negatively impacted by further traffic using this route past the school, which is already used as a "rat run" to the hospital and secondary schools closed by.

Traffic through Shalmsford Street is already busy with incidents of speeding observed by myself and the Speedwatch volunteers. The road is narrow for the most part between the old bridge (junction with the A28) and the Bolts Hill crossroads with Bobbin Lodge Lane where there is also a blind corner. A large number of properties along this stretch of road are Victorian or pre Victorian so do not have access to off road parking. My property is in this area and recently my entire front garden wall was demolished when a delivery van tried to turn around which is surely evidence that the road is too narrow for any additional traffic, let alone the large number proposed which would lead to traffic jams and potential accidents, also compromising access for emergency vehicles. As this is a narrow road any additional traffic would inevitably have significant highway safety implications for local people. At the A28 junction it is already very difficult to turn on to this road, particularly

with the additional traffic coming from Ashford due to the considerable growth of the town in recent years.

Shalmsford Street has been closed a number of times due to water mains and other service repairs, the last time was for several days. This means that traffic is diverted through the main village past The Green and the railway station, which has led to even more highway safety issues as traffic has backed up on to the A28.

In addition to the many highway safety and parking issues listed above which would inevitably impact the village in a negative way, the loss of green space and a green corridor between the village and Cocking Street/The Crescent would be a huge loss to the current visual landscape leading down to the village, much of which as mentioned is within a Conservation Area and so should be protected when preparing local plans for development.

I understand that previous development plans for this site have already been refused in 2022/23 due access issues and potential problems with the local highway network, so cannot see any justification for reintroducing the plans as the existing issues at that time have not been addressed.

Any building on this site would cause traffic issues from heavy plant vehicles and construction vehicles around the narrow and busy streets of the village in all directions, in addition to residents of the properties immediately adjacent to the proposed site. I understand that the existing Traffic Management Plan for Canterbury was completed 7 years ago, with a new draft strategy currently being produced. The strategy places heavy emphasis on sustainability so is focused on the cycle, bus and rail networks across the city and beyond to rural service centres, however no specific mention is made regarding Chartham although it does state transport requirements for developers. The issues around bus services after 6pm and on Sundays would need to be addressed in advance of any future development, in addition to this the A28 is not really a suitable road for cycling with many speeding which I have personally witnessed on many occasions, one example of a car speeding past me near the Garden Centre who hadn't realised that there was a traffic island so then drove at speed around the island on the wrong side of the road. This is just to show how busy the A28 is already so extra traffic from Chartham would just make this worse.

I feel that this development would be going against the Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment (2020) which includes guidance for councils to "conserve the undeveloped character and tranquility of the landscape by avoiding the introduction of large scale or incongruous elements". A development of this size in such close proximity to the historic village centre would contradict such guidance around conserving important rural landscapes and villages, with additional advice on the avoidance of widening the narrow rural lanes around the site which would destroy hedgerows. The village lies within a flood plain with evidence of flooding experienced by villagers, so this together with the potential

negative impacts on the village character makes this a threat to the village and its inhabitants. The document states that developments should be carefully managed to ensure conservation of the distinctive character of a settlement, the size of this development would make this impossible. The Canterbury Local Plan states that any development should consider the local environment which would not be the case.

Thank you for consideration of the above.

Maggie Batchelor

Chartham resident.