

**From:** Owen Geraghty [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 October 2025 18:30  
**To:** Consultations; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Formal Response to Draft Local Plan – Proposed Developments N31 (Chartham Paper Mill) and N32 (Rattington Street)

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Dear Canterbury City Council,

I am writing as a Chartham resident to express my views on the proposed developments included in the new Draft Local Plan:

- **N31 – Chartham Paper Mill** (approx. 165 dwellings)
- **N32 – Rattington Street** (approx. 170 dwellings)

Development must be considered in relation to local context, infrastructure capacity, environmental impact, and national planning policy. Chartham is a rural village, not a town. Its setting, landscape, and infrastructure cannot sustain poorly planned or disconnected expansion.

**1. N31 – Chartham Paper Mill (Brownfield Site)**

I support the principle of redevelopment on this site. As a brownfield location close to existing transport links, the Paper Mill site offers a genuine opportunity to deliver sustainable growth without encroaching on the surrounding countryside. However, the current proposal requires a thoughtful, integrated and community-focused approach.

**Key opportunities for N31 include:**

- Embracing modern flood and drainage solutions to mitigate the site's proximity to the River Stour, as well impacts on existing properties along the River Stour, not only limited to Chartham. This is my biggest concerns, as a resident of River Court, as I will be directly affected by flooding.
- Creating a balanced mix of homes and amenities, including small shops, cafes, bakeries, hairdressers and other local services to meet daily needs and reduce unnecessary car journeys into Canterbury or Ashford.

- Incorporating green public spaces, landscaping, safe walking and cycling routes, and improved lighting to encourage sustainable movement and build community. The existing footpath from Canterbury to Chartham could be extended up to Shalmsford Street, to provide better access, alleviate traffic safety concerns for school runs. The existing green space surrounding the Mill site is home to much wildlife, including owls, bats, and at least one kingfisher.
- Supporting local economic growth through small businesses, local employment opportunities, and links with existing infrastructure such as the railway station and bus routes.
- Incorporating community facilities such as a Men’s Shed, heritage space, and public square or village green to foster social cohesion.
- The existing junction to Chartham from the A28 has been the cause of numerous accidents, as cars in busy times cannot turn in due to the train tracks being closed. Increasing the traffic into Chartham at busy times will increase the risk of further accidents. This junction needs re-working to be effective as is, and more so with the increase in traffic.

If developed to these standards, N31 has the potential to transform a semi-derelict site into a vibrant, sustainable, and well-integrated village centre—a place that reflects and strengthens Chartham’s identity. Not only could the housing benefit the local community, it has the potential to alleviate existing issues with traffic.

## **2. N32 – Rattington Street (Greenfield Site)**

I strongly oppose this proposal. The site is unsuitable, unsustainable, and fundamentally contradicts national and local planning principles.

Key reasons for opposition:

### a) Planning Policy and Location

- The site is greenfield and ancient woodland, directly contradicting the national “brownfield first” approach.
- It lies outside the existing settlement boundary, extending Chartham into open countryside and fragmenting the village.
- It offers no local services within walking distance and would create a disconnected and car-dependent enclave.

### b) Transport and Highways

- Rattington Street and surrounding lanes are narrow, unlit and unsuitable for high traffic volumes.
- 170 houses would likely generate over 470 additional vehicles, worsening congestion on Bolts Hill, Shalmsford Street and the A28.
- No safe walking or cycling routes exist to local amenities, and public transport is infrequent and unreliable.
- The train station has no car park and the bus service does not provide a realistic alternative to driving.

#### c) Infrastructure Pressure

- Chartham Primary School is already at or near capacity, with unsafe walking routes.
- GP surgeries are fully subscribed, with no plans for expansion.
- Existing sewerage and drainage systems are fragile, with known flooding on the A28 and Shalmsford Street.
- Broadband and utilities are already strained.

#### d) Flooding, Drainage and Environmental Risks

- The site's proximity to the Nailbourne and River Stour, both prone to seasonal flooding, raises significant flood risk concerns.
- Increased hard surfaces would worsen surface water runoff and flood impact on the village.
- Risk of soil contamination, subsidence, and further strain on an already vulnerable drainage system.
- Loss of wetlands, hedgerows, mature trees and biodiversity.
- Increased light and air pollution in a rural, dark-sky area.

#### e) Landscape and Heritage

- The site is visible from AONB viewpoints and lies near listed buildings and conservation areas.
- Development would erode the distinct rural boundary of the village, damaging its landscape setting.

- Contradicts the Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment, which seeks to preserve green corridors and village separation.

#### f) Design and Character

- Risk of “anywhere estate” architecture, inconsistent with the rural village character.
- Lack of flood mitigation, sustainable drainage, or energy-efficient design.
- Inadequate parking would push overflow into surrounding roads, increasing hazards for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Permanent urbanisation of rural countryside, harming residents’ quality of life and mental wellbeing.

### **3. Policy Inconsistencies**

The N32 proposal:

- Contradicts the Canterbury Local Plan, which seeks sustainable and accessible growth.
- Ignores the Neighbourhood Plan, which emphasises maintaining village character and protecting green space.
- Conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework on sustainable development, transport, environmental protection, and flood risk management.
- Delivers no tangible community benefit and represents unsustainable, car-dependent sprawl.

Chartham deserves well-planned, sustainable development that enhances the village—not haphazardly planned constructions which undermine it’s existing infrastructure and community.

- I support the sensitive and well-designed redevelopment of the N31 Paper Mill site as a sustainable brownfield project that can benefit the community, economy, and environment.
- I oppose the proposed N32 Rattington Street development, which is unsustainable, environmentally damaging, and contrary to planning principles at every level.

I strongly urge Canterbury City Council to remove N32 from the Local Plan and focus on delivering N31 in a way that genuinely serves Chartham's needs. Greenfield land should remain protected—not least in an uncertain global context, where food security and environmental resilience are more important than ever.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that the Council will give due weight to the concerns of residents and the principles of sustainable development in its decision-making.

Yours sincerely,

Owen Geraghty,

[REDACTED]

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