

From: Sally Cazaly [REDACTED] >
Sent: 20 October 2025 11:36
To: Consultations
Subject: Formal Objection to Draft Canterbury District Local Plan — Policy N32
(Rattington Street, Chartham)

--Email From External Account--

Dear Planning Team,

As a resident of Chartham who lives just a short walk from Rattington Street, I am writing to formally object to the proposed allocation of site N32 in the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan. The proposed development of approximately 170 dwellings on Greenfield land at Rattington Street poses serious concerns for our village and wider environment, which I feel cannot be ignored.

The land lies outside the current settlement boundary and is active agricultural land. Beyond the obvious conflict with national planning principles (such as brownfield-first development), I believe this allocation would result in demonstrable and lasting harm in the areas of:

- **Flood risk and drainage,**
- **Public services and infrastructure,**
- **Highway safety,**
- **Local heritage and landscape,**
- **Biodiversity and nutrient pollution,** and
- **Loss of productive farmland.**

Each of these concerns is supported by relevant planning policy and local evidence, which I've summarised below.

1. Flood Risk and Drainage

I walk past the Rattington Street site regularly and have seen the standing water that forms at the base of the slope after heavy rainfall — particularly near the Artichoke pub. This part of the village already experiences surface water issues, and residents on lower Shalmsford Street know how quickly the Nailbourne can rise.

- The area falls within an Environment Agency-designated **Flood Warning Area** for the Great Stour and Nailbourne.

- More development and hard surfacing here will increase run-off and worsen flood risk downstream, unless exceptional SUDS (sustainable drainage systems) are included and shown to work.
- There has been no public evidence of how nutrient loading from increased drainage will be managed — which is vital for the protected Stodmarsh habitats downstream.

The **NPPF (paras 159–169)** is clear that development should be steered away from flood-prone areas unless risks are fully addressed — and in this case, they are not.

2. Inadequate Infrastructure — Schools, Health & Transport

Chartham already struggles with limited services, and adding 170 homes without meaningful infrastructure improvements will worsen the situation for everyone.

- **Chartham Primary** is already at over 90% capacity. I know local families who've had difficulty getting siblings into the same school, and the idea of adding 50–100 more school-age children seems unmanageable.
- **GP surgeries** in the area are under pressure. My own GP in Canterbury regularly has two-week waits for non-urgent appointments — and that's without hundreds more residents.
- **Public transport** is patchy. Buses to and from Chartham are infrequent (especially in the evenings and Sundays), and the **train station has no parking** — so more homes will almost certainly mean more cars.

Based on DfT data, 170 new homes could easily bring **450+ extra vehicles**, clogging up already narrow village roads.

3. Highway Safety and Unsuitable Access

Anyone who drives, walks, or cycles along Rattington Street knows how **narrow and unsafe** it is — with no pavements, poor lighting, and several tight bends and single-track bridges.

- A development of this scale will increase daily car movements by several hundred, which is completely inappropriate for this kind of rural lane.
- **KCC has already ruled out a safe walking route** from this site to Chartham Primary, and recent SpeedWatch data (136 speeding vehicles in 20 sessions) reflects the growing danger.
- Even now, I regularly see cars mounting pavements or reversing dangerously near the A28 junction during school drop-off times.

This development would make things significantly worse.

4. Heritage, Landscape, and Village Character

The proposed site sits on a **visually exposed hillside** overlooking the Stour Valley and is clearly visible from Bakers Lane, Beech Avenue, and the Crescent. It's part of the rural setting that makes Chartham feel like a village rather than an extension of Canterbury.

- Development here would effectively **merge Chartham with St Augustine's**, erasing the green gap that separates the two.
- It lies adjacent to the **Chartham Conservation Area**, which the law requires the Council to protect — including its wider setting and views.

This allocation directly contradicts the aims of both the **Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment** and the **Chartham Neighbourhood Plan** to preserve our historic rural identity.

5. Biodiversity and Nutrient Pollution

I've lived in Chartham most of my life and have seen badgers, owls, and bats in the area around the proposed site. It borders **ancient woodland and mature hedgerows**, which are critical for local biodiversity.

- Development here would fragment habitat and increase **light pollution**, harming protected species.
- It would also worsen **nutrient levels** in the River Stour and **Stodmarsh SAC/Ramsar sites** unless a nutrient neutrality strategy is clearly evidenced and secured.
- So far, no such strategy has been provided in a way that shows how this particular site (N32) would comply.

Given the national legal duty to protect biodiversity and avoid harm to designated nature sites, I don't believe this site is currently deliverable.

6. Loss of Productive Farmland

The site is Grade 2–3a land that has been farmed for decades. At a time when **UK food security is under increasing strain**, it makes no sense to build on good-quality agricultural land when other, brownfield options exist.

DEFRA's own figures show a 22% drop in cereal production recently. Replacing fields with concrete goes directly against the **NPPF's direction to protect Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land**.

Conclusion: Policy N32 Is Not Sound or Sustainable

In summary, I urge the Council to **remove Site N32 from the Draft Local Plan**, based on the following planning grounds:

1. High flood risk with no proven mitigation.
2. Inadequate infrastructure — schools, GP capacity, transport.
3. Unsafe road access and traffic risk.
4. Loss of rural and historic character.
5. Harm to biodiversity and lack of nutrient neutrality solution.
6. Loss of high-quality farmland.

Instead of urbanising Greenfield land with known environmental and infrastructure constraints, I ask the Council to focus new development on **more appropriate, sustainable locations** — such as the **Paper Mill site (N31)**, which is closer to services, on brownfield land, and less harmful to local ecosystems and heritage.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my objection.

Yours sincerely,
Sally Brightwell
Chartham, Canterbury