

I object strongly to CCC's latest draft plan proposals to increase future residential and related developments for the Whitstable area, particularly for the Brooklands Farm (site W4) and Bodkin Farm (site W6), which I consider to be demonstrably unsustainable.

As a committee member of the Whitstable Society (WS), I concur entirely with its recent Supplementary Comments which, for brevity, I am not duplicating herewith. However, as a lifelong local resident I want to stress several unsustainable infrastructure aspects of the Whitstable-related proposals:

Highways - the demonstrable under-capacity of Old Thanet Way A2990 to serve the proposed sites, together with the impact of proposals for the New Thanet Way A299 bypass. The A2990 has already reached and, in some cases, far exceeds the 1980's/1990's traffic density that led to the New Thanet Way construction.

It should be noted that two important pledges were made during the consultation phase for the new road: a) that there would be no significant development allowed between the two roads, and b) that there would be no junctions with local roads along the bypass, e.g. at Chestfield or Greenhill. The former has been ignored, leading to an exponential rise in construction of residential and commercial properties, solar farms, etc. therein – and the corresponding large increase in A2990 traffic. The latter is threatened by the proposed A299 slip roads to support the Brookland Farm development which, in turn, would encourage even more development proposals alongside the two roads.

The causes of increased congestion along the Old Thanet Way are detailed in the referenced WS document. I'd like to highlight several troublesome examples:

- The serious tailbacks of traffic at the A299 eastbound exit slip to Whitstable during evening rush-hours and summer weekends. This is caused by the known bottleneck at the Prospect Retail Park/Long Reach junctions. The queues of stationary traffic often extend for hundreds of metres on this busy road west of the exit slip without any signs warning of queues ahead. It is terrifying waiting in a small vehicle knowing that one could be rear-ended by an unsuspecting 40-ton truck travelling at 60mph or more, with potentially lethal consequences!
- The already acute congestion at the Chestfield roundabouts with frequent long tailbacks in all directions and, notably, as far back as the Plough public house.
- The A2990 traffic flow capacity has been compromised significantly by the installation of multiple new roundabouts, and traffic signals.
- On the several occasions that the New Thanet Way has been closed by accidents or road maintenance, both Whitstable and Herne Bay have quickly become completely gridlocked.

The current relentless residential etc. development locally and in adjacent districts is already increasing the local traffic levels and congestion to unsustainable levels, let alone the serious escalation if the new draft local plan proposals are approved. Whitstable town centre traffic is regularly at a standstill at peak times, and with wholly inadequate car parking provision.

The WS document highlights the poor traffic modelling to date which grossly underestimates the current and projected traffic levels on these and surrounding roads. This is supported by the KCC Highways comments to site W4 which indicate that the associated traffic impact modelling is incorrect

Further afield, I have no confidence that the collective impact of the enormous East Kent building developments' extra traffic will have on the now already very busy M2 and its Brenley Corner junction have been ascertained, let alone with any mitigation plans.

Public Utilities It is evident that neither Mid Kent Water nor Southern Water have the capacity to provide reliable water supply and wastewater processing for Whitstable residents now, let alone with the Draft Local Plan proposals for enormous developments in the area which, clearly, would be unsustainable until these capacity issues are corrected. We have no idea if or when these may be achieved.

Local medical and dental facilities are already at capacity, with long waiting lists for many services. The Proposed Draft Plan seems not to quantify these or include any plans to mitigate them.

Environmental Most of the Brooklands Farm site (W4) is high quality agricultural land in current use, which I strongly oppose to being lost to residential development, and likewise for Bodkin Farm (W6) which would also compromise the green gap between Whitstable and Herne Bay. Plus, large areas of Brooklands Farm adjacent to Rayham Road are prone to lengthy periods of flooding during winter months and so are unsuitable for new housing. Added to this will be the huge demand for surface water run-off management on site and for processing by the already over-stretched Southern Water facility nearby. The associated Swalecliffe Brook runs through the Brooklands Farm site, and the consequent impact on its surge flows is addressed adequately. The associated flood risks are unclear.

Finally, I object to the Policy N21 site south of the A2990 and adjacent to Golden Hill. Its inclusion demonstrates that CCC proposes to abandon its long-held policy to maintain alternating open spaces either side of the A2990. Developing this site would eliminate the last remaining open space along this prominent elevated southern side of this long stretch of highway.

I urge CCC officers and elected Councillors not to inflict such enormous harm on the delightful town in which I, and many previous generations, have grown up and enjoyed.

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