

Objection Letter Draft Canterbury District Local Plan – Focused consultation 2025 Regulation 18 “The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012”

I am writing my objections/comments to the above Draft Canterbury District Local Plan. Specifically objecting to the Draft Local Plan Policies in the Whitstable Area Policy N21 and N24.

The Housing and Gypsy Traveller Site is in close proximity to existing residential properties and will have an overbearing outlook for my neighbours and I. There is a likelihood of noise disturbance as the noise from the 2 current properties on this land carries significantly over neighbouring properties.

The GTAA (2024) recommended that existing gypsy and traveller sites are considered as a starting point to meet the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches. Can we ask if other land holdings were considered as part of this assessment as we can find no reference to either in the GTAA and if not, can they be considered.

Access and Ownership

There is no reference to how N24 will be accessed within the N24 Policy. Primary vehicular access to N21 will be via site W5 with cycling and walking access via Golden Hill. Yet the GTSA assessment states for Site N24:

“Access would preferably be from the Thanet Way and through the land to the west of the site. This access is secured through the granted planning application CA/24/01296 for site 'Land North of Thanet Way Whitstable'. If temporary arrangements need to be made prior to the possible delivery of the adjacent site, appropriate vehicle tracking will be required to demonstrate the suitability of the access off Golden Hill. Pedestrian safeguarding will also be required by way of a footway on the access road.”

The access off Golden Hill is totally unsuitable for construction or other vehicular access. A pitch will require a mobile home and possibly 2 caravans and transportation of a mobile home via Golden Hill would not be feasible. In a recent Planning appeal decision: Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/W/24/3350215 Land to the west of Golden Hill, and south of the Old Thanet Way, Whitstable. The Government Planning Inspector stated:

The access point is close to the location where Golden Hill changes to a single width carriageway. This creates the potential for there to be conflict between vehicles travelling in opposite directions so it is necessary to ensure that there would be sufficient visibility for vehicles leaving the appeal site.

The inspector previously concluded that he/she cannot be certain that safe and suitable access to the site could be provided, contrary to the advice in paragraph 115 of the NPP Framework.

I would suggest the LPA has its own surety regrading ownership. Ownership of the first 50 metres of the track at Golden Hill has always been contentious. The LPA would not want to be in

breach of its targets if it came to fruition that the land was not actually available, especially as N21 is proposed to provide for nearly 50% of the Gypsy Traveller pitch need for the LPA.

While public accessibility may not be possible for the entire site, the parcel of Land at Golden Hill provides an important function as green infrastructure in the built urban area, alongside the new A2290 Thanet Way as discussed above.

The site's location provides the opportunity to improve ecological connections between Whitstable urban area, Site 7: Land North of Thanet Way (which is under construction) carried forward from the 2017 Local Plan, the development proposed in draft allocation W7: Land South of Thanet Way, and to the countryside (including the Blean Woodland Complex). Therefore, it is recommended that the site be designated as a Green Infrastructure Space to protect the site from development and provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancements over the period of the Local Plan.”

The proposed policy N21 and N24 assessment does not recognise that they are part of the highest point in Whitstable hence Golden Hill, that provides views over the open sea in one direction, and a panoramic view over a broad rural valley in the other direction with the wooded hills of the Blean in the distance. The development sites at N21 and N24 will be viewed from most of Whitstable. As a tourist town, we do not believe these two sites are suitable sites for this mixed development and are much more suited to green infrastructure.

The Old Thanet Way is already congested, with traffic queuing at points between the Tesco roundabout and Borstal Hill roundabout. This is without the planned 220 houses at Benacre View and the Park and Ride. Additional vehicles moving into and out of N21 and N24 via Benacre View onto the Thanet Way will exacerbate this situation. Trying to get out of Golden Hill onto the Thanet Way in any direction has become dangerous with elongated waiting to exit onto the Thanet Way. I have personally witnessed a number of accidents at this junction.

The Old Thanet Way is constantly in a poor state of repair due to the volume of current traffic. Benacre View has not been built yet nor has the park and ride and the new development at Whitstable Heights although almost completed, several properties remain empty. A further 70 houses with 21 Gypsy Traveller pitches will again exacerbate the already struggling traffic system.

If the Brooklands Farm development proposal is agreed, then the construction traffic along with N21 and N24 construction traffic would grind the traffic system to a halt. The Transport Assessment for Benacre view identified that at certain times capacity of the surrounding road system would be at capacity. Mitigation has been agreed to improve transport capacity from the development but there is only so much mitigation that can take place. A further 70 houses and 21 Gypsy Traveller pitches would again exacerbate the problem.

The Old Thanet Way is an important diversion route when the New Thanet Way is closed for repair or due to spontaneous incidents.

The proposed cycle lane and pedestrian access onto Golden Hill has no current or room for a pavement or cycle path and is 15 metres away from a single lane national speed limit on a dangerous bend.

As previously stated, Golden Hill due to its construction and sunken single lane design is not suitable for any vehicular access as this would become a rat run and danger to the safety of residents.

The activities that take place on the proposed sites N21 and N24 are also likely to give rise to noise, these include but are not limited to, on-site traffic, nearby road traffic, activities within and external to buildings, mobile homes and caravans and possibly operating machinery if Gypsy Travellers are working from home. This can be particularly problematic when a site has mixed activities, such as described, and the impact to residents on the site and existing

If N21 and N24 were to go ahead then the existing open landscape will be lost for ever.

For the above reason, I respectfully request that the proposed development Policy Sites N21 and N24 are refused and removed from the Draft Local Plan

Yours Faithfully

Kevin Dyer