

# Draft Canterbury District Local Plan to 2040 Focused Consultation

## **Herne & Broomfield Parish Council response**

The parish council is deeply dismayed to discover that two sites have been identified for development within the parish.

Canterbury City Council had previously made assurances that no further significant development would be proposed for Herne & Broomfield, following the two major developments of Herne Bay Golf Course and Strode Farm. The size of the parish has already increased considerably and another potential 250 dwellings will only compound the impact that these developments are making. It will also do nothing to improve community cohesion and only exacerbate the continuing erosion of the parish's village identity.

### **The urban boundary and surrounding areas**

Both sites are outside the urban boundary, implying a presumption against development. A proposal to extend the urban boundary is not apparent, however, the parish council would strongly resist any proposal to do this.

In addition, both sites fall within the Blean Farmlands area in the Local Character Appraisal (LCA) 2020, and adjacent to the Herne Conservation Area.

The small Herne Common LCA forms part of the London Clay Blean ridge, in the northeast of the district. This is a largely pastoral landscape, with areas of woodland connected to the Blean complex to the south. It encompasses the settlement of Herne Common and the hamlet of Bullockstone, with Herne adjacent to the eastern boundary.

The following are stated under the LCA Landscape Guidelines & Key Habitat Opportunities:

- protect and conserve ancient woodland and existing woodland priority habitat, including ancient woodland and deciduous woodland within the West Blean and Thornden Woods SSSI and East Blean Woods SIII. This should include strengthening habitat connectivity by restoring hedgerows and woodland corridors.
- conserve and improve traditional landscape pattern and structure, through the establishment and maintenance of hedgerows along roads and field boundaries, including augmenting fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, and replacing horse tape and post and wire fencing where possible.
- avoid visually intrusive development on the ridgeline in order to conserve the distinctive character of undeveloped skylines.

- retain the rural character of the minor roads and sparsely settled character outside Herne Common and Bullockstone Road. Avoid further intensification of linear development along minor roads.
- protect the valued recreational use of the landscape. Seek opportunities to maintain, further enhance and create new PROW and opportunities for access and enjoyment, concentrating on connections to the Blean and into adjacent existing and new urban areas.

Development at Home Farm would destroy the rural aspect and create disturbance to Bullockstone Hill Wood, a remnant of Blean Woods. This is an important feature, especially as Hares Wood has been destroyed with the widening of Bullockstone Road for the construction of the Herne Relief Road. There is also the possibility that construction at the toe of the hill could cause instability of the slope given the notoriously unstable nature of the London Clay subsoil. Extreme caution is required not to exacerbate such issues.

### **Infrastructure and amenity provision**

Paragraph 3.41 states that both sites will benefit from the infrastructure upgrades to support the Strode Farm development. What infrastructure is being referred to?

Herne Relief Road is not wide enough to meet National standards, despite its proposal to be an inter urban connecting route. Therefore, would it have the capacity to manage the additional traffic constructing another 250 dwellings would generate.

There is yet to be confirmation that any buses will be routed through the Strode Farm development. The anticipated bus service for the Herne Bay Golf Course development has not materialised.

To date, it is unclear what amenity facilities are planned for the Strode Farm Development, other than that they will be situated at the Canterbury Road end of the development. The planned amenity facilities for the Herne Bay Golf Course development, as had originally been advertised, have not been provided. There are no educational, community or medical facilities planned that would be available to serve these new proposals.

The continued lack of sustainability increases the necessity for car usage and disenfranchises those residents without access to a vehicle, increasing social isolation.

Can the utility companies provide sufficient capacity to serve the needs of any additional development. The parish is already experiencing issues with water supplies, sewage treatment capacity, and electricity outages.

The current plans to construct over 3500 additional dwellings within the areas surrounding the parish will significantly increase the current strain to the existing infrastructure and further negatively impact the quality of life for residents.

**Policy N29 – Land at Home Farm, Strode Park**

The concept masterplan gives no indication of where any vehicular accesses to the site are to be situated. It is imperative that no vehicular accesses are permitted on to Lower Herne Road.

**Policy N30 – Land to the west of Bullockstone Road**

This site is in an area of High Landscape Value (LB2), again implying an assumption against development. Inclusion of this site would also be contrary to paragraph 2.39 which states that no residential development will be allocated in the countryside.

In addition, the land to the west of Bullockstone Road has a history of flooding due to its low-lying nature and proximity to several streams serving the Plenty Brook catchment area.

The vehicular access shown for the site would link with that for the crematorium. This is totally inappropriate. The number of vehicular movements that 50 dwellings could potentially generate would have an enormous detrimental impact on the use of the crematorium, let alone the disruption caused by construction vehicles.

**Conclusion**

Any further significant development within Herne & Broomfield would be totally unacceptable and every effort would be taken by Herne & Broomfield Parish Council to oppose it.

Given the reactions posted on social media by residents, the parish council would very much be supported in this.