
Consultation on the draft local plan

From Caroline Millar [REDACTED]
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To Consultations <Consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

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To the Planning Inspector,

As a local resident I do not believe that the local plan for the Canterbury area is a sound plan nor consistent with national planning policy and I strenuously object for the reasons below:

The landscape of Brooklands Farm is unique and irreplaceable. It combines ancient woodland, traditional hedgerows, cattle-pasture, open wheatfields and a characterful brook, almost all of which can be enjoyed from the two public footpaths that crisscross the farm.

Quite the opposite of complying with Policies 135 and 187, the Local Plan's proposals would severely reduce the overall quality of the area, would be at best visually mediocre, and would obliterate the unique local character of the landscape

The draft Local Plan does not comply with NPPF paragraph 161 which states that the planning system should take full account of all climate impacts including, water scarcity.... storm and flood risks and coastal change.

The draft Local Plan fails to look at the issue of how tidal blocking of the exit of the Swalecliffe Brook may be affected by rising sea levels and increases in rainfall due to climate change. There is likely to be increased flooding in Swalecliffe, so the Plan should examine what should be done to prevent such problems occurring. The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (January 2026) is worryingly inaccurate. The source of the Swalecliffe Brook is near Dunkirk, so the Assessment is incorrect to say that it rises close to the A290 Blean-Whitstable road. Also, the description of the mouth of the Swalecliffe Brook is ten years out-of-date, because ongoing coastal erosion has caused considerable changes.

Policy W4 Brooklands Farm would be incompatible with NPPF paragraph 193 a. which seeks to minimise significant harm to biodiversity resulting from development. The proposed development would destroy extensive habitat required by open-landscape species such as skylark and brown hare. There is no practical possibility of recreating this type of landscape elsewhere.

Policy W4 Brooklands Farm would be incompatible with NPPF paragraph 193 b. which states that development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The proposed development would be about 300m from the West Blean and Thornden Wood SSSI at Woodside Wood, and easily accessible by way of underpasses under the A299 dual carriageway. The SSSI is likely to be damaged by substantially increased recreational use by residents, and wildlife is likely to be adversely affected by predation from dogs and cats.

Policy W4 Brooklands Farm would be totally incompatible with NPPF paragraph 193 c which states

that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland ...) should be refused.

The proposed development would create a large number of flats and houses close to the ancient woodlands of Longtye Wood and Convicts Wood, which are both Local Wildlife Sites. At present they are wildlife-friendly, being almost totally inaccessible to the public, but in future they would be exposed to extensive recreational pressure from residents. Wildlife would be severely impacted by the proximity of so many people, and by predation from dogs and cats, also by the introduction of new and alien species through discarded refuse and garden waste. Nocturnal species such as bats and owls would also be adversely affected by widespread street lighting and noise.

We live one of the most nature depleted countries on earth and we have a human responsibility to improve not destroy the environment. Current and future generations need green spaces more than ever for mental and physical wellbeing. I implore you and those responsible not to allow this development to pass.

Sincerely,

Dr Caroline Millar

