

## **A Call to Arms. Deadline 1st Sept : CA/23/00379**

Object here by email: [planning@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:planning@canterbury.gov.uk) - see below for website to object

This application is for 220 dwellings, a park and bus and also retail which the TWRA is strongly objecting to. Our opinion is that the developer is trying to propel this forward in a compressed timescale to exploit the fact that the CCC Local Plan is suspended because CCC haven't met their housing delivery targets. The grim consequence of the Local Plan being suspended, is that developers can pretty much build where they want to because all the planning policies that safeguard the bits of green environment that keep this a decent place to live, no longer have any protection. When this happens planning policies default to the National policy (NPPF) that has a presumption in favour of development, so, by fast tracking the application while the plan is suspended they have a high chance of it being accepted.

However the NPPF states that development that falls into this default 'build anywhere' policy must be **sustainable** and we are convinced that it is **not sustainable** for very good reasons on multiple counts, and we ask that you all individually object to this development. Indeed if this gets the go ahead, it will create a precedent to build on all those other bits of green land in our locality we all care about, so it is imperative that we stop it. **So we need your help.**

Below are the TWRA's grounds on which we find that the development is not sustainable.

1. The site in question is not just a piece of adhoc incidental land with no beneficial function. Indeed, this is a significant element of fringe land along the Old Thanet Way which was protected because the new Thanet Way by pass was introduced, so it became all-the-more important for the old road to retain its green environment, semi-rural qualities and the visual amenity that contributes in such a positive way to the quality of this setting on what is a very busy road.
2. The prominent elevated location will dominate the landscape and introduce significant light pollution. This is completely at odds with the policies that established the semi-rural qualities of this location and is so stainable as well as being bad for both wildlife, surrounding residents.
3. Because of the new Thanet Way, policies were established to expressly reject development that will infill between the Old and New Thanet way.
4. As part of the green infrastructure to mitigate the harmful and adverse effects of the increasingly busy Old Thanet Way which is a major highway, it is not sustainable to remove it and not have anything else to replace it when it performs that function.
5. There are multiple sound planning reasons that it will be harmful but specifically this development will be a major negative step change to this setting, which will cause serious environmental harm to the locality. Its side effect will reintroduce the traffic, pollution and noise that was specifically removed by the building of the New Thanet Way A299 and is thus contrary to the approved approach of diverting traffic onto the new road. Building on this site runs counter to the historic protection awarded to this important area of open land that is foundational to the setting of this and the neighbouring coastal towns.

## **Traffic**

6. Firstly because of the new Thanet Way, development was prevented along the fringe of the Old Thanet Way to prevent traffic from building up again! The scheme that brought us the New Thanet Way determined that only 50% of the traffic would come off the Old Thanet Way. Since then however, we have seen piecemeal development, gradually saturating this road, bringing noise and pollution into the neighbourhood. The road is already a nightmare and that is before the 400 Hyde Homes comes to fruition or the traffic from the major Seasalter development
7. The Long Reach Roundabout can be a nightmare for pedestrians and cyclists. East bound traffic queues, already back up to A299 New Thanet Way, even before the slip road on a daily basis. The Tesco roundabout on the old Thanet Way on the affected stretch of road is also extremely busy most of the time. Traffic congestion is likely to increase further and the new large development at Seasalter has not been factored into the applicant's figures!
8. The roundabout installed for Hyde Homes is utterly inadequate for the traffic today. It is so narrow no vehicles go round it whilst staying in their lanes. Accidents have already happened.

## **Not sustainable for pedestrians so a car is a essential**

9. This location is too far away from the main town area to be sustainable in pedestrian movement terms either. Walking routes involve crossing very busy roads.
  - a. The route to the Estuary View Medical Centre requires crossing the junction of Borstal Hill and the Long Reach roundabout. This junction appears to be over capacity and not sustainable as the primary route to get to the Medical Centre.
  - b. the route to the **#4** bus to Canterbury requires crossing the Old Thanet Way at the junction with the Long Reach roundabout. This is particularly dangerous with speeding cars coming off the roundabout. You can only get across if cars stop to let you.
  - c. The route to Tesco is not sustainable because it takes you into the Tesco car park with no designated car pedestrian pathway, or via the stepped bridge, which is totally impracticable for less able residents. The vehicle speeds have increased following the recent widening of the junction into Millstrood Road, affecting this route.
10. Furthermore all the distances quoted are more than the official guidelines for feasible walking distances, that pedestrians are happy to walk before they switch to their vehicles. This indicates the use of cars as the primary means of even the shortest journeys as it will just be much easier to drive, which also blows sustainability claims.
11. The **#5** bus service from Tesco is extremely infrequent running hourly at best. It is not fit for purpose as the sustainable means of public transport for this development.

12. The Park and Bus idea does not appear to have been thought through. On account of the appallingly infrequent #5 bus service and bad pedestrian routes, the Park and Bus scheme cannot justify sustainability either.
13. Furthermore, this Park and Bus idea situated in the proposed location unfortunately forces cars to come into the urban area creating even more unnecessary traffic. This is fundamentally a poor arrangement. An out of town scheme would have been a much more sustainable proposition.

When the Park and Bus is found to be unsustainable, we fear further homes, cars, noise pollution as the site will now be classed as brownfield so development will be easier to obtain!

### **Sewage**

14. Where is the sewage going to go? Southern Water claims that there is capacity in the system. However, we find that hard to believe. As an example, during the extreme drought in spring and early summer in 2022 when we barely had a drop of rain in Whitstable and temperatures almost hitting 40°C, yet the sewage was still pumped into the sea almost every 2 or 3 days. We didn't have any storms, in fact we didn't even have any rain so something is seriously amiss with that. It is not sustainable to proceed with this major development before the sewage capacity issue is resolved.

Finally the new local plan is on hold. There is no compelling reason to be fast tracking development on land that has been the subject of protection for the last 30 years. There is no compelling reason to usurp the existing local plan and even more so with an unsuitable and unsustainable application.

If you are able to support us, please write in to object. The more responses received the louder our voice will be.

### Steps to Object on the website

1. Go to <https://pa.canterbury.gov.uk/online-applications/>
2. Enter CA/23/00379 in search

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## Planning – Application Summary

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CA/23/00379 | Outline planning application (all matters reserved), for the erection of up to 220 dwellings, a 300 space park and bus facility, 400sqm local shopping/ community facility and associated infrastructure including (but not limited to) spine road, internal roads and car/cycle parking, allotments, open space and play facilities, utilities infrastructure, drainage infrastructure and earthworks with access from the Thanet Way (A2990). | Land South Of Old Thanet Way Whitstable Kent

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Reference	CA/23/00379
Application Validated	Wed 01 Mar 2023
Address	Land South Of Old Thanet Way Whitstable Kent
Proposal	Outline planning application (all matters reserved), for the erection of up to 220 dwellings, a 300 space park and bus facility, 400sqm local shopping/ community facility and associated infrastructure