



November 7th 2020

Representation in support of the Otham Neighbourhood Plan

My family and I moved to Otham in 2018 because we fell in love with the village and its rural surroundings which included the walks, views and historic buildings. At the time of buying our new home we were aware and happy about the new development being built opposite our cottage as it all appeared in keeping with this picturesque village. Over the last couple of years we have taken a keen interest in what goes on in the village and the surrounding area which of course includes the farmland, ancient woodlands and local footpaths. And although we except the need for new housing we have come to the conclusion that any further major development in Otham would risk destroying its rural nature.

I have read the ONP and would like to give my support to the policies below.

HC1 and HC2: My sister and I love walking and there really are some lovely walks round Otham including the heritage trails and if we enjoy them we are sure that many other people do too, therefore continued support is absolutely vital. As for the views of both the North Downs and surrounding countryside I believe that it is essential that they are preserved not only for their beauty but for the well being of the Otham community due to the wide open spaces and breathtaking scenery.

GS1-6: Which allows for the maintenance of green spaces, providing protection for wild life and for the enjoyment of both residents and non-residents alike. The protection of ancient woodland against development is also mentioned which once again is good for the wild life and for the health and well being of those who choose to walk through them.

Policy AC1: Which ensures that Otham will remain separated from the main Maidstone area, which is also supported by MBC own plan.

ST1-ST5: The development of well structured foot ways across Otham and the surrounding areas can only encourage people to put aside their cars in favour of the healthier options of walking or cycling reducing the traffic that continues to build up through and around Otham not only from the new housing developments but the flow of traffic using Otham lanes as a short cut from Sutton Rd to Willington St and vice versa.

BE1: I support this policy because in the short time I have lived here I have grown to love Otham and its Englishness and by that I mean its unspoiled countryside, historic buildings, dark lanes and yes, the smell of manure. And although I understand the need for new homes I truly believe Otham has reached its quota, however I have nothing against houses being built on previously developed sites as long as this does not impact on the village in any way shape or form. I am also very much for the preservation of the roadside hedgerows, agricultural land and its farming community.

BE2 & BE3: Climate Change is a very big issue today so it makes sense that any new housing planned incorporate good planet saving designs.

CL1: The current village hall represents village life before the new housing developments but sadly it doesn't really serve the community of today. A new village hall with the added benefits of updated facilities and parking will add to and create a new sense of community in the village.

Yours Faithfully,

Jeanette Craske

