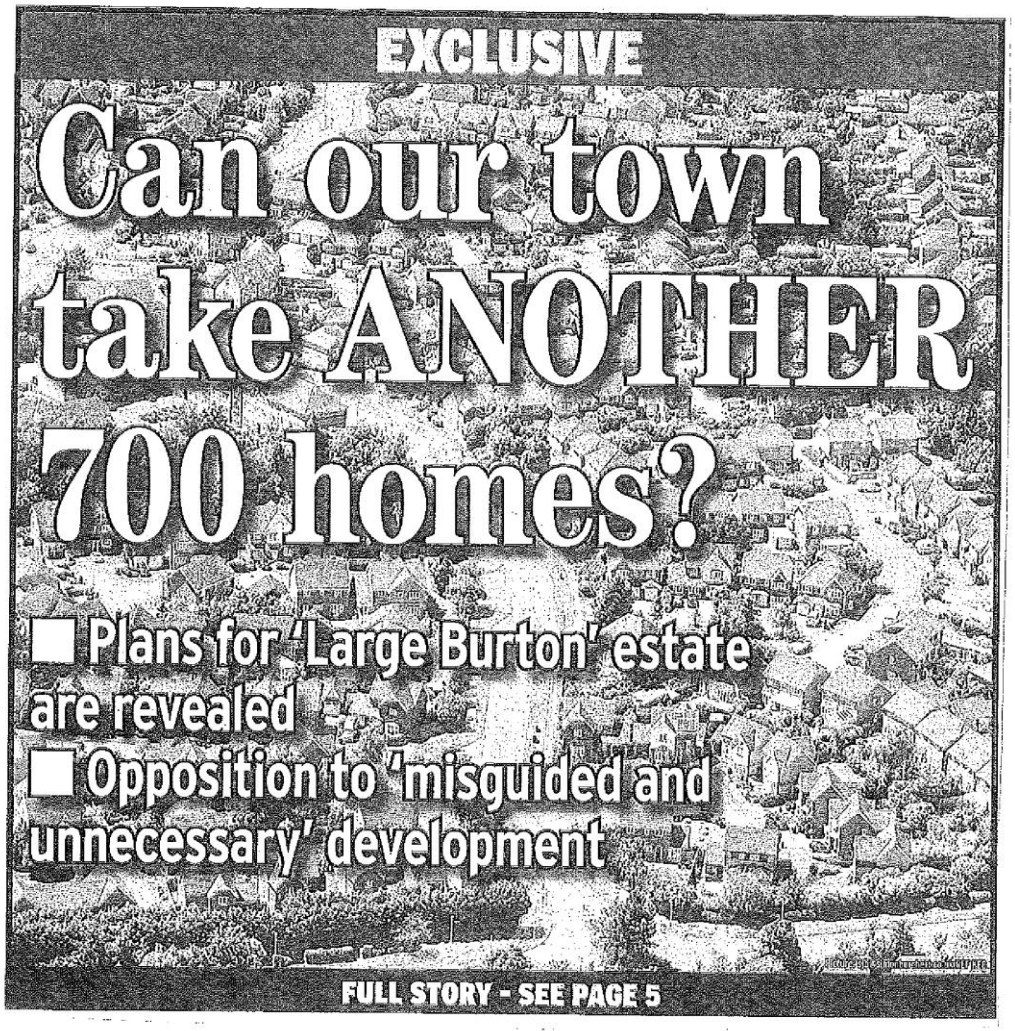
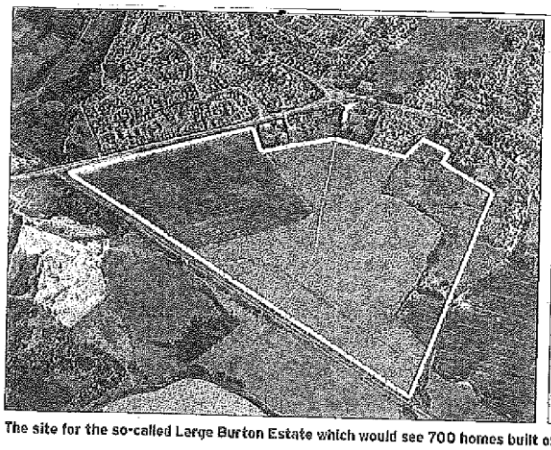
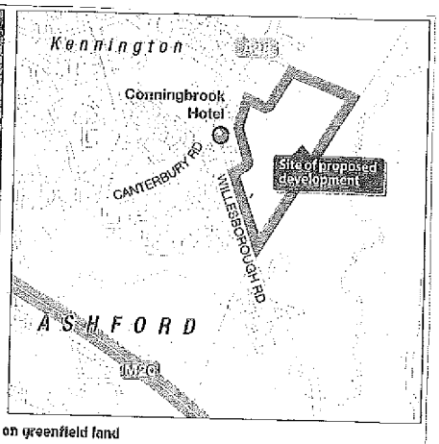
Kentish Express 2016 coverage

4th February - Front page & full page article on page 5
11th February – Front page teaser & full page article on page 4
18th February – Letters page
25th February – Letters page
17th March – Full page article
23rd March – Letters page

Large Burton Kentish Express 4th February 16







The site for the so-called Large Burton Estate which would see 700 homes built on greenfield land

Site earmarked for building sparks concern about extra traffic

Anger over 700 homes plan

Exclusive
by Vicky Castle
vcastle@thekmgroup.co.uk
@vickycastleKM

Plans to build 700 new homes on a greenfield site in Kennington known as the Large Burton Estate have been revealed.

The controversial development is already facing opposition from Kennington residents and ward member Cllr Philip Sims has branded the proposals unnecessary.

If approved, the huge estate would stretch from the Conningbrook Hotel up to Orchard Lane, across agricultural land.

Cllr Sims said: "It is a long way ahead yet but I'm not unhappy that this has come out early because it gives residents some time to understand what's involved and make their comments.

"The idea is misguided, to say the least, because something would need to be done to deal with all the traffic that it would create.

"Seven hundred homes would typically own 1,400 vehicles and so the number of vehicle movements would be many thousands per day, but there are no plans to enhance the main roads.

"I do not think it's necessary and I do not think the residents would be supportive of a development of this scale.

"Worried residents have come to me saying 'what's going on, we do not want this'."

Cllr Sims said the plans will form part of Ashford Borough Council's Local Plan 2030, which looks at potential developments across Ashford over the next 25 years.

The so-called Large Burton Estate – opposite the existing Little Burton Estate – is one part of the whole development plan for the borough, which is due to be made public in early April.

If the plans get the thumbs up from residents, developers would be likely to submit applications around 2020.

Cllr Sims added: "It is a long way ahead yet but I would like residents to share their views early."

The proposed site runs alongside the Downsview Guesthouse, which has recently been sold by Hobbs Parker to a mystery couple for nearly £1 million.

However Cllr Sims insisted that the Large Burton Estate plans were "entirely separate" from the guesthouse's recent sale.

He also added that the designated land is grade one agricultural land and has been ruled by the National Planning Policy Framework as "only to be considered under exceptional circumstances."

He said: "There are no such exceptional circumstances causing this site to be chosen.

"I have always maintained that I will oppose any significant development in Kennington, unless the road infrastructure is improved to cope with extra traffic movements.

"I have not found anybody who is in support of such proposals."

Residents wishing to share their views on the proposals should write to Ashford Borough Council planning officer Simon Cole at simon.cole@ashford.gov.uk or Cllr Sims at philip.sims@ashford.gov.uk.



Cllr Philip Sims - 'It's misguided'

'IT'S SPECULATION AT THIS STAGE'

Ashford Borough Council, like all local authorities, is required to produce a local plan every 25-30 years, detailing potential sites for development to meet the constant need for extra housing.

Landowners come forward with suggestions of development sites, which then undergo a string of environmental tests and other examinations to determine their suitability.

Publication of the draft Local Plan 2030 is expected in early April, which is expected to include the Large Burton Estate development.

But a council spokesman said at this stage, the details remain speculation.

He said: "It's a very long process and at this stage we do not know what is going where.

"If a development site gets into the local plan it has already been through a stringent set of tests."

For more information about the ABC local plan visit www.ashford.gov.uk/local-plan-to-2030

What do you think of this proposal? Write to Kentish Express, 34-36 North Street, Ashford, TN24 8JR or email us at kentishexpress@thekmgroup.co.uk

BIG BURTON BACKLASH

Councillor condemns 'stupid' and 'suspicious' greenfield homes plan

by Vicky Castle
vcastle@theimgroup.co.uk
@vickycastleKM

"This is just the tip of the iceberg and could be the next Chilmington Green."

A worried councillor has spoken of his concern over plans to build more than 700 houses in Kennington, branding the proposals 'stupid' and 'suspicious'.

Cllr Winston Michael (Houghton Aluph and Eastwell) said he believed the proposed development on the agriculturally rich land stretching from the Conningbrook Hotel to Orchard Lane would open the door to thousands more homes on the site.

He said: "The likelihood is we could see thousands more homes within the development at the expense of our precious land.

"I am deeply suspicious of this, and I do not understand why Ashford Borough Council (ABC) is wading back into a sensitive area of development.

"If this site gets put forward for the Local Plan, it would open the floodgates for other developments on other greenbelt sites because the protection of them would vanish.

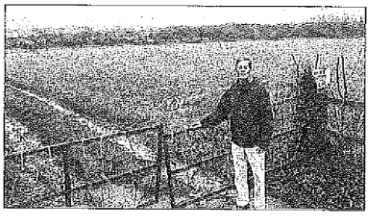
"Secondly, is this part of a bigger scheme waiting in the background?

"We might not see this happen in the next five years but it will be hidden away in the Local Plan and then be brought up again in six years – which is what happened with Chilmington Green.

"It crept into the Local Plan, and so stopping the development was like closing the stable door after the horse had bolted.

"Council leaders should be left in no doubt residents want these sites dropped now and are prepared to take direct action.

"As a matter of decency, integrity, and self-respect the council should drop them now."





Cllr Winston Michael at the site of the proposed development near Conningbrook Hotel and Orchard Lane Kennington, and our coverage of the story last week Picture: Paul Amos FM4201254

> 'We could see thousands more homes at the expense of our precious land'

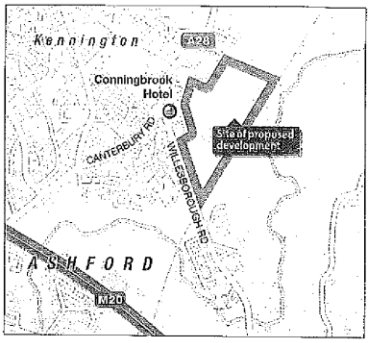
The Kennington site is reported to have been put forward for ABC's Local Plan, earmarking it as a potential area for development.

Publication of the draft Local Plan 2030 is expected in early April and the site – dubbed Big Burton – is likely to feature.

A council spokesman insisted sites in the local plan were still at the speculation stage

He said: "It's a very long process, and at this stage we do not know what is going where.

"If a development site gets into the Local Plan it has already been through stringent tests."



What do you think? Write to Kentish Express, 34-36 North Street, Ashford, TN24 8JR or email kentishexpress@theimgroup.co.uk



Estate plans are 'tip of the iceberg'

PAGE 4 AND LETTERS

Readers' views: You said it on Facebook and Kent Online

Karen Brasington: "The council demonstrated plans for the Conningbrook Lakes development in County Square a couple of years back and I expressed my concerns at the increased traffic and not enough roads, facilities to support such growth in that area. The council even called me again afterwards to ask my views.

"The expansion in our town is too rapid. Thank you Cllr Sims."

Kate Agrell-Doldan: "We need more schools, surgeries, dentists, a bigger hospital, a clean-up of the town centre before any more houses should be built."

Mike Shepherd: "Well done Cllr Sims. You will get my vote.

"Shame that there are not more of you to have the balls to say no more houses."

Kim Allen: "Stop ruining our countryside. How can we possibly need more houses in Ashford?

"Chilmington Green is criminal enough."

Callum Tilbee: "Build in 2020? B******s. They have surveyors out already, and the entrance to the new jungle will be the Conningbrook Hotel's current entrance.

"Yes, that's right. Greedy people want to jeopardise a fantastic growing business for a few extra quid and are not on these plans."

Steve North: "It's easy to say no more houses when you all have a house already. It's near impossible to get a house at my age. I welcome it."

Disgruntledvoter: "Well that's me done. Lived here 51 years and I'm done. I've had enough of Ashford and its rapidly expanding urban sprawl, it's now a lousy town and there's a lack of forethought by our council.

"Such a shame from what was a lovely town and countryside where villages surrounded Ashford instead of being engulfed by them. A crying shame!"

Barb Dwyer: "Successive Ashford councils have largely ignored the public's appeals for the last 40 odd years, and look what a terrific job they've done turning a quaint market town into an absolute ********.

"Yes, there is a demand for housing but it's affordable housing people need not more executive homes and buy-to-lets to make the well off even richer."

PeteMK: "By that logic, Chilmington will generate around an extra 12,000 cars, with innumerable new vehicle movements, and the only road improvements tabled to help cope is the widening of a half-mile section of Chart Road.

"It doesn't make any difference how much sense you make, Cllr Sims. They're gonna bloody build the houses anyway."

kentman2222: "Just pure greed on the part of the council and developers. Just stop it before the whole of Kent is concreted over."

Juststatistic: "This has been going on since I was a child, when I wrote to the local MP asking them not to build a massive estate at the end of my garden. They did, of course. It would be happening regardless. It's all about money.

"That area is beautiful and I walk there often. I have waste ground all around the area where I am that sits gathering litter. Use that. I'd prefer it on my doorstep and having somewhere nice round the corner to escape to. Just leave some views for us, some nice walks."

Mojel: "It is a terrible tragedy witnessing Kent being concreted over at a rapid rate, never witnessed before. No one that I know, except presumably our spineless, vote-grubbing politicians, wants a bigger population. What we need is a smaller population, but while endless benefits and housing is guaranteed to any female in the country who gets herself pregnant the population will continue to rise."

For more readers' views on this development see Letters, page 11

Points of View Kentish Express 18th February 2016

No council plans for Kennington...

I was pleased to read that Ian Wolverson is still taking an interest in the development of Ashford, even in an area on the opposite side of the town to what will be Chilmington Green (KE, February 11).

However, I was disappointed that he stated the Kennington land is "clearly destined for development" in clear contradiction to the facts as given in the Greater Ashford Development Plan.

The plan was reviewed by an inspector in 2008 and the land in Kennington (now called KE2 to KE4) was comprehensively rejected as appropriate for development.

This was as a result of the council requesting it be removed from the agenda (due to the overwhelming objection of residents) and by Bovis removing its development application.

I hope Mr Wolverson and others will refer to the relevant document reporting the inspector's decision – Ashford Urban Sites and Infrastructure DPD Inspector's Report, pages 16 to 17 – which is still available on the ABC website.

I stood for election to the council to ensure all residents were involved in determining the future of the area they live in.

I was present at the council meeting when then leader the late Cllr Peter Wood stated that the residents of Kennington would determine what development was undertaken in their ward.

I am confident that the principle that residents determine what happens in their area is still the status quo.

If you disagree, or even agree, with the housing development, then please say so.

Cllr Philip Sims
Kennington ward, Ashford Borough Council

...But building doubts remain

Once again Ashford Borough Council is looking at building in Kennington on Grade 1 agricultural land the planning inspector previously dismissed as being unsuitable.

The council supposedly supports the National Planning Policy Framework, which states: "Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

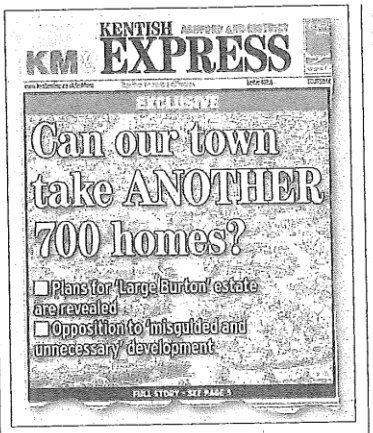
"Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.'

Why waste taxpayers money by including this site in the new Local Plan and then having to defend the decision to the planning inspector once again?

It doesn't make sense, unless the council wants to set a precedent that all high-grade agricultural land is fair game for development?

Or is there some other hidden agenda?

Martin Hopkins
Clarke Crescent, Little Burton Farm


KENTISH EXPRESS

Can our town take ANOTHER 700 homes?

- Plans for 'Large Burton' estate are revealed
- Opposition to 'misguided and unnecessary' development

FULL STORY - SEE PAGE 5

The Express's coverage of housebuilding proposals

'Scurrilous' deal claim rejected

Cllr Winston Michael in his letter about proposed housing in Kennington ('Prime land must be saved from homes', KE, February 11) criticises Kennington Community Forum (KCF). saying they "should be at the forefront of this so why is their voice nowhere to be heard?"

He goes on to state: "Residents wonder whether a deal was struck with council leaders in order to obtain 'parishing'."

Cllr Michael will surely recall that KCF hosted two public planning workshops in 2014 which gave all residents an opportunity to comment on the sites submitted for consideration in the Local Plan to 2030.

Our evidence-based report to ABC reflected the strong opposition of residents to the three sites east of the Canterbury Road, and our report forms part of ABC's assessment.

It is difficult for the forum to make any meaningful comment based solely on reports of a draft proposal leaked by Cllr Philip Sims, and it would have been helpful if Cllr Michael had shared with the forum the findings from his discussions with ABC, in the same way he has shared them with Boughton Aluph & Eastwell Parish Council. If these sites are included we shall oppose them as vigorously as possible.

Accusing the forum of doing a deal to obtain parishing is scurrilous. To imply that the forum and the borough council conspired to achieve the successful outcome of a community council for Kennington does little credit to his position as a councillor.

Chris Morley
Kennington Community Forum chair

Opposition to new homes is weird

We need many more new homes in Ashford, as is evident from the numbers of local homeless folk (squatting on our pavements too), and town planners too.

Ashford is in expansionist mode. The strong terms in which opposition to house-building is being expressed seems weird. There appears to be only one reason for it, which sadly is the selfish one: the property value one.

Since the environmentalist and valuable farmland arguments opposing new house-building in the Ashford area are flimsy and largely spurious, one wonders at the heat of the opposition to expansion of Ashford's housing stock – certainly here on the Express letters page recently.

One wonders, too, at the reality of the expressed concern or motives of the various council town planning committees and the rationale of the council members responsible.

No one is being dragged to the guillotine scaffold, just new homes being built soon for new neighbours and any of us already here as Ashford progresses and, hopefully, more of us are more prosperous.

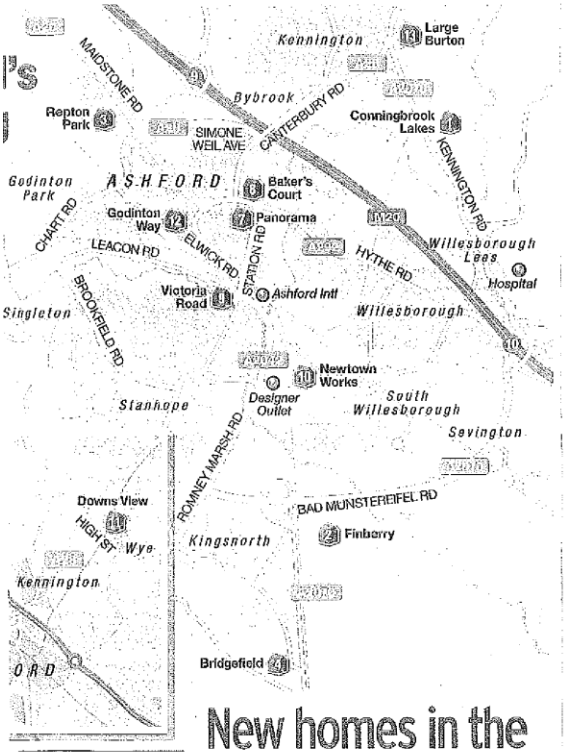
The main question should about the number of homes to be built, with good roads and social/commercial infrastructure and preferably more of the more affordable type and fewer of the executive houses.

David Berrie
Elm Cottages, Wye Road, Boughton Lees, Ashford

AL REPORT

lmed by too much housing?

MENTS IN FOCUS





Status: Work has started
Extra perks: Off-street parking spaces, new access routes and a green area
12 Large Burton, Kennington
Developers: Bovis Homes

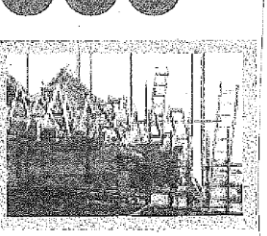
New homes in the pipeline - at least 8,000

Another funding boost for council

Ashford Borough Council (ABC) has just announced it has received another £2.13 million of funding to continue building in the borough.

The money was awarded by the Homes and Communities Agency through their Affordable Housing Programme 2015 to 2018 after officers put in a bid.

Potential sites for the next stage of development have already been earmarked and will appear in the draft Local Plan 2030, which should be published in April.



Points of view

Having your say over housing

Should consider brownfield sites

We, as a family, wish to register our objection to the proposal to build the The Large Burton Estate estate of over 700 homes in Kennington.

Our objections are specifically as follows:

1. We understand the proposed site comprises Grade 1 agricultural land, which the National Planning Policy Framework defines as "only to be considered in exceptional circumstances". As far as we are aware, no exceptional circumstances exist which would permit such development on this site. Why, therefore, is this site being considered for development over other brownfield sites in the area?

2. We understand there are no plans to enhance the main roads which residents of the proposed new estate would use, i.e., Willesborough Road and the A28. We have the following concerns regarding this:-

(a) Willesborough Road is already narrow, particularly at the S-shaped bottleneck near the Blackwall Road junction. The increased vehicle movement caused by the proposed new estate would only serve to worsen the existing congestion problems, and heighten the danger caused by juggernauts travelling to and from the factories. Moreover, as this road is the main access for ambulances travelling to and from William Harvey Hospital, the increased congestion poses a very real threat to those suffering from life-threatening conditions (e.g. strokes) where prompt hospital treatment is vital. As fire engines also frequently use Willesborough Road as a "short-cut", the potential delays and corresponding threat to life is once again heightened.

(b) Willesborough Road is also a connection point between Kennington and junction 10 of the M20. Increased vehicle movement will only serve to worsen traffic congestion on what is already an extremely busy motorway junction.

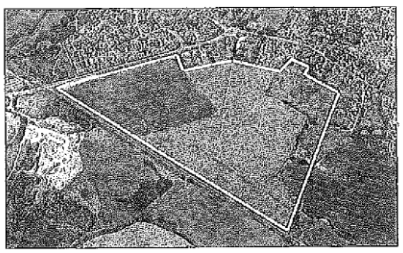
(c) The A28, being a small urban road rather than a motorway, already suffers frequent traffic build-up during rush-hour periods. As a family, we regularly travel from Kennington to Ashford International Station by car, and often find that the journey time can be close to 60 minutes during rush-hour for what is effectively a two-mile distance. Increased vehicle movement will only serve to exacerbate what is already a serious problem, particularly when Operation Stack is in operation.

3. A housing estate of over 700 homes would increase the population of Ashford by at least 1,400 people or more, yet there appear to be no plans to expand existing amenities to serve such an increase. The William Harvey Hospital already suffers from lack of bed-space and long waiting lists, and cancer treatment in particular has been downgraded to a temporary building – hardly suitable for such a population "explosion". Existing doctors' and dentists' surgeries are already full, as are the existing primary and secondary schools, with the Towers Secondary School in particular already having to cut staff to deal with budget difficulties. We presume that the prospective new residents of such an estate have not been counted in Ashford's existing population, so how are the existing amenities supposed to cope with such an influx?

4. Such a large new housing estate would inevitably cause increased pressure on existing utility services such as gas, electricity, water, drainage and sewerage. We are concerned about the corresponding possibility of "overload", and the difficulties this would cause to existing households in the Kennington area.

We therefore call upon ABC to reconsider the proposal to develop "The Large Burton Estate" in Kennington.

Mr B E Collins & Mrs V J Collins
Canterbury Road, Kennington
Mr G S Holman & Mrs H M Holman
The Ridge, Kennington



The proposed site for the Large Burton Estate



Cllr Winston Michael on the proposed development area near Conningbrook Hotel

I am proud to represent ward

In email correspondence to me over the previous week, Chris Morley of the Kennington Community Forum said he understood that I was reporting in good faith concerns raised by residents in my ward over the Kennington development proposal.

He also said he understood that I personally was not seeking to imply anything more.

I was therefore surprised to see his comment to the contrary in last week's letters page ('Scurrilous' deal claim rejected).

Having first raised this matter with the Kennington Community Forum in December and having received no response, residents will now welcome a statement that goes some way to allaying their concerns.

And on a point of clarity, the proposal for 1,150 homes has been in the public domain since January 2014 and that these sites should go forward also known by a key member of the Forum who is a councillor.

My commitment as a councillor to voice the views and concerns of residents – no matter how uncomfortable this may sometimes prove to be – is important to both me and the ward I am proud to represent.

Winston Michael,
Ashford Independent Councillor,
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell ward

Infrastructure cannot take it

I strongly object to the building of loads of new housing in Ashford, and the development in Kennington particularly, totally. The infrastructure can't take it, nor can anything else.

As residents we oppose the Large Burton development in Kennington. This has already been chucked out before. We don't want any large development now or ever.

David Smith,
Kennington

www.kentonline.co.uk

We must plan for borough's future housing needs, says council

700-home 'Large Burton' estate is still a possibility

by Vicky Castle
vcastle@thekmgroup.co.uk
@vickycastleKM

Ashford Borough Council (ABC) has refused to rule out plans for a huge development on a controversial site in Kennington.

The prospect of 700 new homes being built on the so-called Large Burton estate in Kennington has sparked huge opposition from residents who have called for the site to be protected.

Cllr Philip Sims, ward member for Kennington, branded the proposals 'unnecessary and misguided' and vowed to oppose any significant development without improvements to the roads.

But a council spokesman this week refused to deny the site could be developed.

He said: "As we stated previously, we have to plan for the borough's housing needs in the future and that means the council has to consider a range of options as to how best to meet that need.

"The Local Plan process provides the opportunity for people to comment on and propose various alternatives but it is not appropriate to comment on rumours and speculation at this point. A draft plan is anticipated to be published for public consultation in May 2016.

"We would like to assure residents that any proposals in a draft local plan are then put to full public consultation and an independent inspector will consider all responses when the plan is examined.

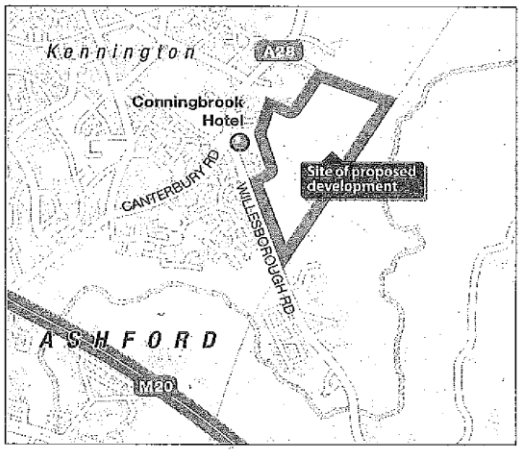
The plans will form part of ABC's Local Plan 2030, which looks at potential developments across Ashford over the next 25 years.

The so-called Large Burton Estate – opposite the existing Little Burton Estate – is one part of the whole development plan for the borough, which is due to be made public in May.

If approved, the huge estate would stretch from the Conningbrook Hotel up to Orchard Lane, across Grade 1 agricultural land.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) defines Grade one agricultural land as 'only to be considered in exceptional circumstances.'

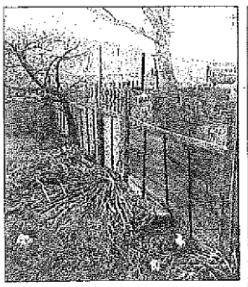
The Kentish Express has been inundated with letters from concerned residents opposed to the Large Burton plan. See letters special on page 16





Ashford borough councillor Cllr Philip Sims

Large Burton plans 'not ruled out'



Lorries parked outside homes in Wotton Road, South Ashford

Lorry drivers are avoiding charges

I have just read with amusement the comments by Ashford Borough Council's parking manager, Jo Fox, claiming that drivers don't choose to park in the roads overnight rather than the truck stop (Trial Scheme Success Sees Bid To Stop Nuisance HGVs Extended, KE, March 17).

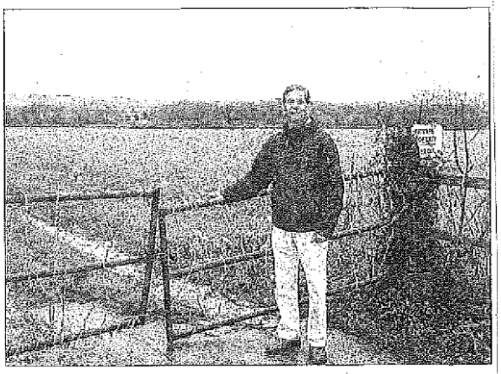
I think she needs to see what me and my neighbours have been putting up with every weekend for the past two years.

I told a lorry driver to go to the truck stop and not park outside my house to which he replied "but you have to pay to park there" – that was just last weekend.

This picture is the usual view from my front room at weekends.

Sharen Watson
Wotton Road, South Ashford

Dualling road will achieve very little



Cllr Winston Michael at the site of the proposed Large Burton development

Picture: Paul Amos FM4211258

More countryside at risk

By pressing ahead with the Kennington Large Burton development, is public reaction to be tested on developing high-grade agricultural land?

The question is asked because an assessment of the Kennington sites should have seen them dropped to a lower suitability score than the other 200 submitted sites.

Why the need to test this? With developments already delivered and another circa 15,000 new homes in the pipeline, the urban area may well run out of development land, with a need for urban boundaries to be extended in preparation for the 2022 Local Plan review. Kennington sites offer the precedent. While parish councils, forums and residents understandably look to protect their own for now, they should recognise that unless Kennington sites are opposed, the review in 2022 may well swallow them as developers gladly exploit.

For those that cry for more housing, isn't 15,000 enough? And what consideration do they give to our hard-working nurses, doctors and teachers.

Is "park and ride inevitable" a signal on future housing numbers? There are many great things happening for our town and quality of life must play a big part.

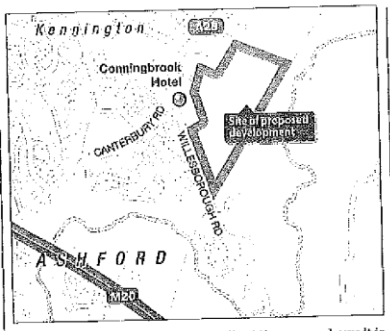
Winston Michael
Ashford Independent councillor



KCC Highways Department are now about to bring the town centre shops to their knees with 18 weeks of road

Even more traffic will make life unbearable

The prospect of 700 new homes being built on the so-called Large Burton estate in Kennington continues to see letters from readers and residents flood in to us. Here's another selection of your views on the issue



With reference to the proposed recommendation to build the new Large Burton Estate in Kennington, I am strongly opposed to any form of additional housing in this area. At peak times the traffic is ridiculous at best and with no plans to enhance the current road layouts I think this would be unbearable for the residents already living in the area.

Already when the main Canterbury Road is busy the Little Burton Estate, where I live, is used as a cut through, causing traffic to be backed up in the estate. With most households now having at least two cars, and with families usually more, this will mean a further 1,400 plus cars going through this area every day. It is ridiculous to even contemplate the local area being able to handle this amount of traffic with the current road layouts. There will not only be the immediate impact of delays on these roads but also the added pollution.

Furthermore I believe the land in which this development is proposed is Primary Grade I Agricultural Land and should therefore only be considered for development in exceptional circumstances. Surely throughout the Ashford area there are other sites that are not of this Grade and other sites that will not make such significant issue/impact in regards to traffic and the lives of the people already living in the surrounding area?

If you take a look at Crest Nicholson's Finberry development in Ashford this is a good example of a new housing estate being built in a logical place with good road infrastructure. Maybe the people who came up with the idea of the Large Burton Estate in Kennington should take a look at the Crest Nicholson development and realise that a new development in the proposed site in Kennington is completely impractical.

Clair Wilkinson
Little Burton, Kennington

■ We strongly object to the proposed development on The Large Burton Estate.

The land is primarily Grade I Agricultural Land and therefore should only be considered for development in 'exceptional circumstances'. There are NO exceptional circumstances.

The field in question is liable to flooding. Public footpaths cross this area and it is a popular route for walking groups.

Planning permission for 300 plus homes at Conningbrook lakes has already been granted, and if this development goes ahead there would be a greatly increased flow of traffic along the existing Kennington/Willesborough Road – a road which is a short cut between the A28 and junction 10 of the M20 and an access route to The William Harvey Hospital. This road is already full to capacity at certain times of the day, and is a diversion route for any problems which may occur on the M20 and A20, particularly when Operation Stack takes place. The emergency services need good access to this road, and at the moment the road is not suitable for the heavy amount of traffic is already has.

If the proposed 700 houses were to be given planning permission – in addition to the 300 Conningbrook Lakes homes – what would happen to the 2,000 additional cars which would need to use this road for journeys?

With all the other development going on in and around Ashford how is the existing William Harvey Hospital going to cope, bearing in mind the area covered by the hospital extends out to Chilham, Charing, Romney Marsh and the Folkestone/Dover areas as well as the huge population Ashford now has. There is a national shortage of consultants, doctors, nurses etc and the same applies to GP surgeries, and dentists in the locality. They are all full to capacity. Any further development will necessitate more and more people having need of medical and dental services.

Will a second hospital be built to cover this eventuality? The same applies to education – there will be a need for further schools to be built and again there is currently a shortage of teachers.

Another important factor to be considered is the local sewerage works. The smell it emits at times now shows it is obviously almost up to its full capacity. Will a new sewerage plant be built?

Finally, there are plenty of brownfield sites within the Ashford area which are available for development.

There is beautiful countryside around Ashford – why spoil it for everyone by building over it.

We have lived in Ashford all of our lives and have seen the destruction of what was a beautiful market town, and the subsequent sprawl of development. We appreciate housing needs to be built, but please not on greenfield sites.

Bryan and Christine Strange, John
Newington Close, Kennington

■ I strongly object to the 700 houses they want to build on agricultural land. To build on agricultural land should be only in exceptional circumstances and there are no exceptional circumstances in this case.

The other very important point which ABC's planning department should take into consideration is the traffic congestion.

This scheme will add to the already congested roads from the Conningbrook roundabout, especially the Canterbury Road traffic which builds up at peak times from the Old Mill pub, crossing the Willesborough Road down to the George William Way crossroads. George William Way is already used as a cut through to avoid Canterbury Road, this would increase tenfold if the proposed houses were built, so by present day calculations this would add 1,400 plus vehicles.

George William Way runs through the Little Burton estate and was never built for heavy traffic, just local residents. If the build was allowed George William Way would be an accident waiting to happen. No thought has been put into the congestion or road planning.

Joy Pooley
Wye

■ Regarding the Large Burton development, people keep raising the issue of 700 new homes off the A2070 in Kennington and they express concern about the impact they would have on the local infrastructure, but the figure isn't just 700, it is more like 1,000 because the green light has already been given for about another 300 houses to be built just the other side of the railway line, next to the Julie Rose stadium.

That site is still in Kennington and they will feed into the same Willesborough Road, thereby exacerbating the problems that already exist.

Ted Prangnell
Kennington

■ Why oh why do they feel the need to build over 700 homes in Kennington?

I realise it is much easier to build on virgin farmland than on a brownfield site, but this land should be producing food for us all in the future. As I understand it there is no provision for road improvements, and what about water, sewage, doctors, schools etc?

Most important of all – where are the jobs for the occupants of these 700 houses? Why cannot infill housing be built on brownfield sites scattered around the town and bring some well needed life into the town? It would also smarten up some areas.

R Waldron
Kennington

■ Constructing 700 new homes in Kennington would require a substantial investment and adjustment to the supporting infrastructure and the town as a whole so I would like to see that this is also being reviewed and what changes are to be proposed.

I strongly object to 700 new homes being built in this area without the correct supporting steps being taken.

David Biden
Kennington