

# ACCESS TO “THANINGTON PARK” The Decisions See-Saw

Report by the Wincheap Society

## Summary

### Introduction: why we wrote this Report

This section demonstrates the Wincheap Society’s concern that governmental players involved in the “Thanington Park” development - Kent County Council, Canterbury City Council and Highways England - have placed KCC and CCC over a barrel with regard to the current developer. They have sacrificed their power of leverage, and done so with the very terms of CCC’s Decision Notice and the s.106 Agreement they have required the developer to sign up to.

KCC Highways and Transport now has access to £4.4 million for the 4th slip road construction, and will be looking to developers to match this sum. As the value of sterling continues to plunge, we suspect that KCC will wish work on the 4th slip road to commence as soon as possible. They need developers’ contributions for this.

We suspect that if Highways England does not approve the current developer’s plans for alterations to the northbound A2 off-slip road - because some alterations are not physically possible and others will not provide road safety standards required by law - then in their anxiety to acquire the 4th slip road KCC and CCC may permit the developer’s construction traffic access to the development site via other routes. These routes would then become permanent.



### Background: Thanington south of the A28

Contains diagrammatic maps of the proposed development, the topographic area and proposed routes and access points. Also a brief outline of the area’s recent history and its isolation from Canterbury City Centre. People accessing the city centre from west of the A2 by any means must cross the bridge on the A28 over the A2, pedestrians must now negotiate several sets of traffic and pedestrian lights at the entrances and exits from the A2, Homersham, the A28, and the Park and Ride and retail park.

We consider that middle class commuters and retired people will not be attracted to buy a home with poor access, up a steep hill, next door to an already disaffected housing estate, with a lousy bus service (that only goes to the bus station), and three kilometres from Canterbury West rail station. The developer is committed only to a maximum

number of “affordable housing” - no minimum - and the prices of such housing notoriously are beyond the purse of people struggling to get onto the property ladder.

### Proposed access points to Thanington Park:



#### 1. A2 westbound slip road vehicle access, and the revised junction at the A2 westbound slip road and A28

The developer proposes vehicle-only access from the north westbound A2 off slip road, via an exit and entrance to the development inserted about two-thirds of the way up the slip road, and an additional lane to the east of the existing two lanes for traffic that will turn into the slip road from the A28 and travel south to the new access point, i.e. contra to traffic exiting the A2 via the slip road.

This section contains comments on diagrams of these junctions from the developer’s Application. We provide photographs of the area. We note Highways England’s concerns and the conditions it imposes on the developer. We conclude that the developer’s proposals are not physically feasible, and doubt that Highways England’s conditions can be met. We raise several specific queries as to the structure and safety of the proposed junctions.



#### 2. Cockering Road “all modes” access from Strangers Lane and St Nicholas Road

This section comprises consideration of proposed amendments to junctions of St Nicholas Road and Strangers Lane with Cockering Road to enable entry roads into the new development from those points, and the location of a bus entry route near the eastern end of Cockering Road. Residents fear that St Nicholas Road will be used for construction traffic accessing the development site, and additional residential, business

and ambulance traffic as implementation proceeds. Their fears have been strengthened by a proposal to site traffic lights at the junction with the A28. Diagrams and photographs are provided. It is not clear if the proposed bus route within the development will divert buses from the current route along Cockering Road.

KCC has undertaken “to procure the operation of a bus service to service the development either by extension of an existing service or by the provision of a new service to achieve a 20 (twenty) minutes frequency prior to Occupation of the 200th dwelling to be occupied”. The feasibility of this is considered in the context of Stagecoach as operator.



### 3. Pedestrian and cycle only access.

The Wincheap Society supports enhanced pedestrian and cycling access in Wincheap and Thanington. The two proposed access points to the development site adjacent to the A2 currently exist and improvements to them will benefit the local community. However, we have concerns about the impact on both of proposed alterations to the A2 northbound off-slip road. Diagrams and photographs are provided.

Additionally, the developer’s contractors have been enabled to use the farmers’ underpass for vehicle access during the first half of 2017, thereby breaching conditions imposed on the developer by CCC and Highways England. We do not know who enabled this access, which involves taking down barriers and crossing a third party’s land without their knowledge. It appears that neither CCC nor the developer has ascertained who owns that land.

