

Student housing problem will get worse

KENT University asserts that providing 800 beds for students will take the pressure off the community

because there will be less demand for developers buying up family homes.

This is very misguided and in fact misleading as we all know students do not like living in university accommodation that is too expensive and tightly regulated unlike the houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the residential communities which are cheaper and hardly regulated at all.

This proposed development will only increase the universities' student population thereby putting an even greater demand on the residential communities as the first-year students search for the cheaper unregulated HMOs for their second and subsequent years at university.

The impact on what is left of family housing in our communities will be too high a price to pay if this development is allowed to proceed.

Kent University has bought large swathes of land near Blean and if any new development is to be built it should be built there.

Canterbury has one of the highest ratios of private rented sector housing.

This alone creates particular problems for those wishing to find secure permanent accommodation so their families can



depend on living in the same locality while children are at school and parents are in employment.

It also has the highest number of students per head of residential population of any EU town or city.

Noise is a recognised pollutant under EU Law that we are governed by and accountable to.

If Kent University was a factory, one could consider taking legal action against it for noise pollution from its vast by-product of anti-social students as opposed to its genuine product of accomplished socially-integrated young people who are a joy to see and enhance the local area.

No other organisation would be allowed to develop from a first phase of 1,000 students to what is now well over 17,000 students with all the negative impact on local communities.

When Kent University was built, residents were given an undertaking that the large areas of green belt land would be retained as a natural buffer separating university and local communities.

The university says it is one of the leading contributors to the Canterbury economy through services and employment.

But I suggest the price we have paid as residents is too high and enough is enough!

I therefore support a no vote on the application when it comes before the Canterbury City Council's planning committee.

Cllr Jo Calvert-Mindell, Liberal Democrat for St Stephen's ward, Long Meadow Way, Canterbury