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From: Chenice Sparkes [REDACTED]
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Good evening,

I wish to provide a comment on the draft Local Plan consultation.

The main section of the draft Plan I feel most strongly about is the proposed lengthening of the platforms at Sturry Railway Station.

As members will be aware, Sturry is often gridlocked during peak hours, with the pinch point being the level crossing. The level crossing at Sturry is closed for 17 minutes in every hour, and traffic congestion frequently backs up for over a mile from the crossing. The level crossing 'down time' is made worse as the Sturry station platforms are too short, causing any train of more than four carriages to experience "train overhang", so the barriers cannot be raised. The arrangement of the platforms is such that trains travelling in both directions overlap the crossing.

This issue is only going to get worse because of the current, emerging and planned housing developments for more than 2,500 homes at Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden, and further afield at Herne and Greenhill.

Lengthening the platforms at Sturry will give immediate and long-lasting benefit to a great deal of residents and road users, not just in the local area but from the wider towns around. It would be better for the environment, climate change and air quality.

During the recent train strikes, traffic was able to move freely through Sturry level crossing and congestion was significantly reduced as a result. This clearly demonstrated that the level crossing causes the bottleneck and the most congestion. By reducing the length of time the barriers will be down, although traffic will have to stop for longer trains, the significant reduction in the length of time the barriers will be down every hour will help to keep traffic flowing.

I therefore fully support platform widening of Sturry Train Station to avoid overhanging the level crossing and therefore reduce barrier downtime: relevant references are:

- Page 14 of the Transport Strategy
- Para 9.32 in the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (February 2024) and Schedule B Page 36 in the same document showing a 'medium term' timeframe for delivery.
- I also support a renewed emphasis on monitoring, compliance and enforcement of the Plan. The Enforcement team at CCC has been overstretched and understaff for too long, resulting in a number of developers, businesses and home owners 'getting away' with unsuitable development because it is 'already there now', or there is not the time to fully investigate potential breaches. A

harder stance needs to be taken to ensure that the only development and alternations to existing properties/land are suitable, not pushed through by those 'trying their luck'.

I can confirm I am a resident of the Canterbury District.

Thank you for considering my comments.

- Kind regards
- Chenice Howard-Sparkes