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From: Louise Harvey-Quirke [REDACTED]
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To: Consultations
Subject: Draft Local Plan 2040 response.

Categories: Green category

--Email From External Account--

Good afternoon.

Subject: Response to draft Local Plan 2040

As a local resident and the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Canterbury, I cannot support the proposals made in the Draft Local Plan, and the following is my response to the consultation.

The main objection to the Council's plan, is that the Jacob's transport modelling has not been made available, as outlined in my earlier communication to Peter Davies, Director of Strategy and Improvement. It is impossible for us as residents to form a reasoned opinion on the feasibility of the proposed bus-first strategy, and the impact of this on travel within the district.

In addition to transport matters, I urge the Council to contest the housing numbers and argue for exceptional circumstances under the National Planning Policy Framework. The housing calculations are based on outdated ONS2014 data. More current data should be considered to ensure the Council is building affordable homes that encourages community development, cohesion, and meets local needs. The overdevelopment of the district is leading to large-scale developments with insufficient infrastructure and increased congestion.

As a former Canterbury City Councillor, I acknowledge that the Local Plan is one of the most significant policies that any council can implement. It shapes future housing development and vital infrastructure, reflecting residents' views on their community's development for prosperity. However, I don't agree that the Council has explored all options, particularly in relation to the brownfield site in Wincheap, where the proposal could have been more ambitious, in-turn lowering the proposed housing numbers in areas such as Blean.

I am pleased to see that the current administration has retained many policies from the previous Conservative administration, which focused on housing density, climate change mitigation, biodiversity, and heritage. However, I would have preferred to see more emphasis on the delivery of energy-efficient heating and mandatory solar panel provision on new builds.

Areas of significant concern:

- A transport plan that is based on speculation rather than accurate modelling, which does not reflect how people wish to travel.

- Lack of energy provision – mandatory solar panels and energy efficiency for all new builds, particularly in the rural areas, as this has been overlooked in the plan.
- Significant overdevelopment of rural communities, where the priority needs to be in preserving farmland for future food production.
- No clarity on investment for areas outside of the city – particularly in relation to heritage.
- Lack of protection of open spaces in newer housing developments.
- No focus on the provision of local jobs, suggesting the new developments will be aimed at commuters and not local people.
- Compromised Biodiversity targets by insufficient wildlife corridor planning and an overemphasis on large house building.
- Lack of infrastructure planning for sewerage, electricity, and water. Also, a lack of health provision.
- Too much focus on larger house developments, that have inadequate infrastructure

Given the demographics of the district, the housing targets are excessive. It is my belief that Canterbury City Council should challenge those numbers and advocate for decisions based on the current population and housing demand. I would like to see smaller homes with one and two-bedrooms, and homes for younger families.

Despite the constraints of the National Planning Policy Framework, I believe the Council should argue exceptional circumstances; particularly regarding the AONB, Wantsum Valley and protected landscapes of Blean, heritage assets, medieval Canterbury and the coastal areas – all of which make the district unique.

In relation to the proposed development in Blean, Tyler Hill and Rough Common, which will see 2000 homes being delivered in this tranquil, rural setting, I believe the plans pose a risk to existing plans to establish wildlife corridors and re-wild Blean. It is also my belief that additional pressure will be placed on existing sewerage infrastructure, road networks, and the Sarre Penn River, increasing the potential of flooding. It is worth noting that the previous Conservative administration rejected this development in the 2022 draft Local Plan, deeming it unsustainable with severe transport implications.

I have been unable to properly assess the ‘bus-first’ strategy as the transport modelling has not been provided. Without the forecast on potential volume of traffic or transport movements, it is impossible for me to make an informed decision. However, I have concerns that the only way for the strategy to be successfully implemented is to completely close Canterbury to traffic, removing city centre car parks, and forcing modal shift. In doing so, of course, the plan is not considering the impact on local businesses, and how they would survive should people visit Westwood Cross as an alternative.

I would advise the Council to err on the side of caution when making decisions that will significantly impact the livelihood of those working or owning businesses in Canterbury. While the proposal to increase bus use can be applauded, it should be in addition to other modes of transportation. The proposed infrastructure interventions such as bus gates, changes to junctions, and additional signalling appears to be ‘Zoning’ under a

different name - a proposal that was deeply unpopular in the previous consultation and subsequently removed.

Moreover, the proposed parking levy is just another way to punish those who own businesses or work in Canterbury. And, while I take note that this may not be implemented for many years, the suggestion the people could pay an additional tax simply for going to work is inexcusable.

For these reasons and others mentioned, I cannot support the draft Local Plan as it currently stands.

Kind Regards

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Louise Harvey-Quirke | Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for
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