

CANTERBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 2040

Submission from Andrew Ellison, [REDACTED]

As a resident of Littlebourne, my main interest is in the rural areas and in particular, the affect on the local area.

There is much to commend in the report. The Visions and Objectives are sensible and the stated approach to local ecology, landscape management, history and design for example are to be applauded. However, it is the detail that matters and I wonder just how much will actually be achieved given the very considerable costs involved. If we look at a few specific aspects commented on in the report:

Restoring and enhancing habitats and landscapes. Is this really going to be possible while at the same time building over 1,000 new homes a year?

Improving river and coastal water quality, minimising flood risk and undertaking a full recovery of the Stodmarsh nature reserve. The poor quality of our water and sewerage systems is in the news on almost a daily basis and 1,000 new homes a year, coupled with climate change, is only going to exacerbate the problem. I live in Nargate Street where again this year since January we have had tankers removing sewerage sometimes up to 5 or 6 times a day closing the road for some 15 minutes each time.

Walking and cycling networks. I would love to be able to cycle more but in a rural area like Littlebourne the increased traffic, narrow and potholed roads makes this a hazardous undertaking.

Improving bus services. In practice, in this area, they have deteriorated over the past few years with a reduced and less reliable service with the result that I actually now have to use the car more often than I did a year ago.

Perhaps I am cynical but I just cannot see the substantial infrastructural requirements needed in the areas I have mentioned actually happening. The danger is that we will get the additional housing with the consequent substantial increase in traffic movements but see little, if any, of the improvements outlined in your Visions and Objectives.

Littlebourne

The possibility of another 400 houses (**R7 & R8**) in addition to the 75 in the Laurels development will create what is, in effect, an urbanised suburb of Canterbury. Calling it a Rural Service Centre is a complete misnomer.

However good the local convenience store it is not a substitute for the price, quality and range of products available in supermarkets and local farm shops. There is a surgery in Littlebourne but it is part of a larger practice with appointments now often being in Bridge or sometimes Canterbury. If all the 400 houses are built we could be looking at another 600 vehicles needing to travel in and out of the village.

In point 1. of **R1 Rural Service Centres** you state “within the boundaries of these settlements new development will be supported on suitable sites” yet both **R7 The Hill** and **R8 Court Hill** are outside the village envelope.

A planning application for 150 houses on The Hill has already been refused so it is very difficult to see why this site has been included in the Plan for some 350 houses. The many arguments against developing this site have been made in response to the separate planning applications but highlighting three key issues:

Traffic – the A257 is already extremely busy and with additional traffic from other possible developments it can only get worse, particularly with another 600 or so vehicles from Littlebourne. With cars having to park on the pavement in the High Street and other narrow roads with parked cars and no pavements it is not easy to see how cycling and walking can be much improved. Short of taking down houses how is it proposed to improve the safety at the A257 junction with Nargate Street and Bekesbourne Lane?

Sewage/Wastewater – it seems the proposal for an on site treatment works at The Hill have now been dropped but the problems of sewage treatment and wastewater impact on the Nailbourne/Little Stour, which have been well documented in technical papers issued to the Council, are not addressed in the Plan.

Agricultural Land – the Plan comments on the need to build on agricultural land but the two sites in question are both on Grade 1 agricultural land that has been growing produce for many years. Surely with the requirement for more home grown food we cannot afford the permanent loss of this top grade land.

Please think again on the points I have raised.

Andrew Ellison
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