

RE: The draft Canterbury City Council Local Plan 2040 Objection from Mr John Elliott

Wed 29/05/2024 09:18

To: Consultations <Consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Cc: 'Timothy Bentley'

📎 1 attachments (33 KB)

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN 2040.docx;

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To Local Plan Consultations

Please take this e-mail as a formal objection to the designation of the 'Blean' development (C12) as part of the Local Plan and in its own right.

I am sorry that for health reasons I am not able to wade through the documents and construct a full objection, however the Traffic effects that Mr Tim Bentley (who I have known well for 25 years when I joined Pfizer) has drawn attention to the extra traffic which would cause havoc on the streets of the whole of Canterbury especially when considered with the other proposed housing developments. His objection, which I fully support, is attached as a word document; significant parts of his text refer to traffic and transport issues which form the core of my objections to the Local Plan.

I recognise that there is a housing shortage in the south east. While governments seem loath to provide real help in creating jobs on brownfield sites in the north instead (to reduce pressure on the south east), any extra housing must have a fully worked out planning and transport strategy, costed, and with secured finance, before such developments are included in the Plan. The Transport 'package' has to either ensure that there is no net traffic generation from the developments (clearly unrealistic) or a full strategy is worked out and approved to reduce existing traffic in Canterbury by at least the amount likely to be generated by the new developments.

A strategy to improve public transport, provide more cycle routes improve pedestrian facilities, extra park and ride facilities etc would only marginally reduce the traffic from such 'unsustainable' developments. It is notable that the Travel Plan that Pfizer introduced, with secured massive improvements to bus, cycles, pedestrians and a substantial reward for not using cars, delivered a 20% car use reduction. Even this was well short of the reductions now required to make the Blean, or other major developments around Canterbury, to work in traffic terms.

While 'theoretically' the road through Blean could physically take more traffic (with substantial detriment to the residents), junctions and links closer to Canterbury or Whitstable are operating at their maximum capacity. Thus any increases in traffic would immediately go into much longer queues/congestion throughout the City of Canterbury and also on the approaches to Whitstable. The nature of traffic capacity at junctions is, that once a junction is full, no more traffic will be able to pass through it - so any traffic increase immediately result in very long queues and traffic chaos.

A fully worked up strategy is likely to need an effective congestion charging or workplace parking charging scheme for the wider area of Canterbury (including of course the University of Kent) with

any proceeds going into all modes of sustainable transport initiatives. This would need securing with funding and agreement/support from all authorities including Central government as a prerequisite to any of the major developments being agreed. It is also suggested that all private non residential car parks including supermarkets should be included with legislative support from Central Government. To 'sweeten the pill' car park owners could provide carrots for those not using the car parks similar to Pfizer and perhaps have an agreed reduction in charges.

Such an effective transport strategy is not presently included in the Plan let alone agreed and financed; accordingly the Blean (C12) and indeed other such developments, I contend should not be included in the Local Plan until a full Transport Strategy is worked out and approved. I should add that any tinkering with some new roads and junction improvements cannot comprehensively solve the problems of extra traffic caused by such developments included in the Local Plan. Furthermore actually delivering any reasonably comprehensive road 'improvement' strategy would be beset by funding and strong local objections; furthermore such a strategy would encourage more traffic and undermine any sustainability objectives.

Finally I should add that working in the Transport Planning field on both sides of the fence for 50 years, I am well aware that once an area has been designated for a use (eg. housing), it is much harder to refuse any proposed development for a parcel of land by an individual developer regardless of the likely local or wider impact or indeed the views of local people.

Any queries or elaboration on the contents of this objection please contact me.

Kind regards

John Elliott

