



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Local Plan consultation

1 message

Luke Lavan [REDACTED]

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To: "consultations@canterbury.gov.uk" <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Dear Canterbury City Council,

I send you here my comments on the Local Development Plan, especially the possible development of a northern movement corridor.

I think any attempt to force a road north of the university is going to have major impacts on wildlife, and on the quality of life on the north side of the city.

The relationship with the woodland will be disrupted with casual use like fly-tipping facilitated and wildlife corridors disrupted.

The setting of Blean Church, with its sense enhanced by the skylarks, of being a different place to the bustle of the university will be lost and the archaeology of Blean Church field (iron age settlement and bronze age barrows) will be removed. The setting of the university and classic pilgrim views of the city may be disrupted or lost.

The environs of an internationally important archaeological site in Homestall Wood (see recent Archaeologia Cantiana article by Sparey-Green), likely the site of a pre-conquest Roman camp, will also be potentially disrupted by any road development on the NW side of the city. Just go and visit and see what scrambling bmx ramps have done to the E gate.

Above all, we are going to have to swallow a large amount of urban sprawl in deference to the motor car, of which a good proportion is tarmac road space not houses. The provision for bikes in Canterbury is absolutely pitiful. A child cannot get to the schools in south Canterbury by bike without daily risk to their life. I know because my son has tried to do it. He ended up unable to lift his bike over the horrid metal bridge behind the East Station.

Cyclists pay rates as much as road users but are ignored. Sometimes all that is needed is a tiny connection or even a ramp but that is not provided whereas huge roads seem to sail through as if they are inevitable. The whole city needs redesigning for the bike with appropriate plain-clothed enforcement. We need the Dutch model.

I am afraid I am simply quite disgusted by the vision the plans have offered, especially for south Canterbury, which is a re-tread of the 1960s car-driven urban sprawl. Has no-one seen what is happening to our climate, birds, amphibians, and insects? Since 1980 we are living with 80% less of them in many European countries. I am no green rebel but I am not blind.

In a place like Canterbury, with three universities, huge natural assets, and a historic environment, it should be obvious that quality of life is not inevitably tied to consuming more, and that the aspiration to live in a detached house with two cars is one that is not now affordable environmentally and should no longer be offered via our planning system.

We have something great in Canterbury and can share it with others but deference to the motor car and the type of development that comes with it will destroy what we have here. Even my daughter aged 8, out on our trips has been impacted by what has already been done.

The Stour Valley cycle path was an absolute triumph and made the countryside free of cars accessible to young families in Canterbury in an easy and enjoyable way. We use the path almost weekly. But now Saxon Fields has created a gash in the valley, visible even from Chartham Hatch. My daughter gasped and wailed when she saw it on our tandem from the path.

Now the pilgrim's way route out the city with its undulating landscape and little woods is to be ripped out for car suburbs and relief road and the identity of surrounding communities lost, just as it was around Manchester where I grew up. We build more roads that are ever fuller as people take individual children in huge newly-wide vehicles to choke and threaten the school run, as outside St Stephens every morning. Status symbols of flashy cash put over the health and security of our children.

We have a real sense that our wonderful city and its environment is being destroyed by materialistic individualism of another age, in which houses for gaz-guzzlers are destroying what we most value about living here. Yes we do need high-density car-less housing with public transport and cycling - you must indeed "cram us in", and respect nature, not try to reproduce the now-deadly mistakes of the 1960s.

Yours sincerely

Luke Lavan 

