



Local Plan Consultation

1 message

Michael Avery [REDACTED]
To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

5 January 2023 at 16:47

Dear Sirs,

As a resident of South Canterbury I wish to raise a number of concerns I have regarding the proposal to build 31,100 properties in the district that will adversely impact on today's residents, on the environment and on infrastructure pressure. I understand the need for more housing (in particular, affordable) but I question how these figures have been arrived at and whether indeed, a significant part of the "quota" is driven by the need to get developers to fund major road projects rather than to meet housing needs given these latest figures are beyond what national government required of this local authority.

- The figures produced are now possibly out of date given current economic factors which may make it more difficult for prospective buyers to afford mortgages and cover energy bills. Working practices will also have varied following the COVID epidemic. Given Michael Gove's recent intervention with the levelling up bill where a change of wording means local authorities can now take account in its local plan proposals of residents' concerns where the number of builds could result in significant loss or alteration of character to their communities, I feel that, at the very least Canterbury City Council should take up the minister's offer of allowing authorities to use the 2 year pause option while proposals are reconsidered and residents' concerns are addressed.
- Given that the current housing stock of the city of Canterbury is put at 22,900 and it is estimated that 15,500 of the proposed 31,100 new builds would be within that same geographic area, it is reasonable to state that would adversely change the character of the local communities. In particular, south/west Canterbury, where already there is a shortage of green space, with large developments planned at Mountfield Park, Merton Lane, and Cockerling Lane in Wincheap. One only has to look at Ashford which, until the 60's was a market town, and is now strangled by a ring-road surrounded by sprawling developments. Canterbury, as an ancient Roman settlement and a World Heritage city, cannot afford to go the same way; nor does it have the space to do so.
- It is difficult to see how local employment or working from home will be sufficient to meet the employment needs of such a large population influx so one has to assume a large number of individuals may be commuters to London. There is a local economic benefit to this with London wages providing higher spend but that changes the nature of local communities. Has any kind of assessment been made as to the proportion of new residents that might commute given that the current high speed train service goes from Canterbury West and many of these people would have to cross Canterbury to get to the station? Should there be consultations as to what possible changes could be made to service the needs of commuters so that yet more traffic is not added to what is flowing in to the city of a morning?
- World Heritage status is important from a tourism and economic point of view and nothing should be done that jeopardises that. A look at ordinance survey maps shows the city of Canterbury clearly defined in a relatively small area within a geographical bowl surrounded by upper fringes of this bowl from which views of the city and the cathedral can be seen from many approaches. It is on some of these surrounding areas that development is proposed and those views would then be lost for ever.
- Can we say that the proposed developments will not be harmful/at the expense of existing or future communities when we look at the impact they will have on transport/traffic, environment, sewage/wastewater provision and issues like hospital and general welfare care?
 - I frequently walk up and down the New Dover Road and, during term time and peak travel times there are often long queues of traffic backing up sometimes as far as the junction with the Old Dover Road by The Gate Inn which is also replicated in the Old Dover Road. Proposals have been made to provide relief to take care of additional traffic from these developments but, given that much of the infrastructure will only be put in after a proportion of the developments have taken place, what is the local authorities plan to alleviate the added congestion prior to that happening? Apart from the issue of congestion there is the concern of air pollution and the risk to health and there is still a need to demonstrate that pollution can be managed in the future at acceptable levels.

- The Environment Agency rightly is concerned about wastewater and sewage treatment. Is it really reasonable to be moving sewage daily by road tanker (this has already been give the go ahead for the Nasons redevelopment) and who will be wanting to buy the first phase of Mountfield Park housing development with this as a condition? What is the long term solution for the 1000's of homes to be built and when would that be available?

Michael Avery

