



CCC Consultations &lt;consultations@canterbury.gov.uk&gt;

## Response to Canterbury and District Local Plan 2023 - 2045

1 message

Alice Wilson-Sharp [REDACTED]

13 January 2023 at 18:01

To: "consultations@canterbury.gov.uk" &lt;consultations@canterbury.gov.uk&gt;

Good afternoon,

### Response to Plans for the Eastern Bypass and Development of Canterbury

The stated rationale behind this scheme is to decrease traffic into the city centre.

**1. Financial objections:** simply put, the council does not have the money for this. Councillor Fitter-Harding stated to Kent Online (5 August 2021) that the cost for the eastern bypass alone would be an estimated £100 million - money that the council does not have!

As it is, the council is increasing car park charges across the area in order to recoup the financial losses from lockdown, despite the implications for local businesses which have also taken a financial hit due to lockdown. Already, this has had an impact on my place of work in Canterbury city centre where we have lost a regular booking (and therefore income) because of the car parking charges. Others who work in the city are struggling with the cost of travelling into Canterbury. Increased parking charges in conjunction with decreased shopping facilities is inevitably going to lead to further decline in the city centre.

In an article in the Kent Gazette online from 5 August 2021, we are told that with up to 17,000 new homes, the roads would not be able to cope so the bypasses are necessary. We are told in the same article, by the same councillor, that the houses are needed to fund the bypasses. (<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/canterbury/news/double-bypass-vision-to-solve-gridlock-hell-251781/>) Neither are needed.

The Council is considering building new Park and Ride sites around the city, at considerable cost, whilst the Sturry Park and Ride remains closed because the Council cannot afford to run it.

These grandiose plans will cost millions to put into action and are essentially a means to generate money for the Council: through installing more ANPR cameras (so that the public can be fined for any transgressions and so increase revenue for the council) and houses (again to increase revenue for the council). It will not in any way improve the quality of life for those who live and work here, especially in these difficult financial times.

When the example of Ghent is given, it should be noted that the deputy mayor of Ghent looked at the models of Copenhagen and Utrecht to see what was done there and concluded that it was not possible with his budget. Therefore, he developed plans that would work within his budget and within his tenure in office. (Source: <https://www.camcycle.org.uk/blog/2022/05/how-to-ghentify-your-city-with-filip-watteeuw/>). Canterbury City Council would do well to note this.

**2. Infrastructure:** the council is already building new homes without any consideration for the basic essentials of infrastructure necessary to provide for the increased population. We do not have the reservoirs or sewage facilities for these houses. Our schools, dental surgeries, GP surgeries and hospitals are already overwhelmed and oversubscribed. A recent NHS report for Kent shows that the East Kent hospitals had the highest number of patients waiting for 12 hours or more for a bed. (See <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/the-three-kent-hospitals-bearing-brunt-of-worst-a-e-crisis-o-280308/>) The facilities we have are already overstretched and in need of investment.

The example of Ghent has been given, but this is a significantly bigger geographical area and each zone has its own facilities and infrastructure. Essentially, there exists a series of independent towns. This will not transfer to

Canterbury where the facilities we have are already stretched to capacity. It is a grandiose scheme which is simply not feasible.

**3. Environmental:** firstly, building more houses and roads would significantly increase the disruption to Canterbury residents and all those who live and work in the area. It will increase the traffic with lorries and all other vehicles needed to build houses, thus increasing pollution.

Once the houses are built, even if each household only has one car each that dramatically increases the number of cars on our roads on a regular basis. Many households have more than one car, so we could reasonably expect in excess of 17,000 additional vehicles on the roads of Canterbury.

In addition to this, it is all very well to talk about environmental issues to make this project sound noble, but it is not reasonable to try to convince us that the Council is motivated by improving the situation through building across fields and ancient woodland. We should be protecting our natural heritage and wildlife-rich areas, which cannot be replaced.

For the sake of the environment and our quality of life here, we should be making the most of our assets as a small city with a rich historical and ecological heritage.

In the first instance, re-open the existing parking facilities on the Sturry Road Park and Ride so people can park there and use the ordinary bus service at reduced cost. This should be the first point of consideration in reducing traffic and increasing revenue for the council. Then use the funds to improve the cycle paths and pathways and make the most of these in what we offer residents and tourists. We offer informative walks for the Canterbury Festival, why are we not offering informative walks or cycle rides across the year?

We should be working with what we have, rather than aiming to be something we are not.

Yours sincerely,

Alice Wilson-Sharp