



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Local PLaN Consultation

1 message

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

Dear Sirs,

I have looked at the new draft Local Plan for up to 2045 have read it with interest and attended several information meetings on it. I live in central Canterbury so my comments relate to areas immediately surrounding the city. I have the following comments:

1. Development of Prime Agricultural land. Many of the proposed development sites are on prime agricultural land which would be far better used for farming. The pandemic and Ukraine war has shown us the need for more British grown food to ensure food security, and less dependence on food imports. It is a waste to use this much sought after grade of land for housing. More brownfield sites need to be developed, far fewer green field ones. Or plan a brand new town in the country with its own infrastructure, schools, other public health services etc.

2. Proposed number of new houses: Although there is undoubtedly a need for more housing to be built in south-east England, in general as there is a well known shortage, what employment prospects locally are there for the residents of the 31,000 proposed new houses in Canterbury? there is no industry in Canterbury, retail is dying therefore most new residents would commute to London or surrounding areas for work and also use their cars for shopping, therefore exacerbating the high levels of traffic congestion and adding to the carbon footprint. Albeit, a small percentage might work from home, but a vast number would not.

3. Attracting Commercial enterprise: Related to the above, there is mention of space in the developments to be reserved for commercial use, but what efforts are the council doing to attract commercial enterprise in the city? Are there any plans for creating a technology hub, for instance, in the city in order to attract or keep young entrepreneurs (Canterbury has several top Universities of Higher Education) and to create employment and increase the average wage of a Canterbury resident? (I understand that the average wage is only £26,000 per year).

3. Calculation of numbers of new houses: now that the central government has removed specific targets for housing, how has this number of 31,000 houses been calculated? It should be calculated on need based on projected population growth (and existing shortfalls) in the Canterbury area. I saw no evidence of this being the basis for the figure. I am happy for houses to be built that are necessary but not just being built in order to receive revenue to build the new bypass.

4. Need for social/affordable housing: the plan includes provision for at least 30% of new housing being affordable or social. This is a worthy intention but how will it be enforced if the council is at the mercy of the developers? Will you fine developers for building more expensive houses to increase their profit margins?

5. Environmental effectiveness of housing standards: The plan talks of there being a net zero carbon effect but apart from the huge of carbon emissions in building the developments what enforcements will there be in ensuring that the new houses are truly energy efficient: eg. By mandating use of geo thermal pumps where possible, maximising insulation and installing solar panels on every new house?

5. Possible loss of WH status: The excessive number of housing developments on the perimeter of the city will completely spoil the view of the Cathedral which is a World Heritage site. Canterbury's status as a WH site is already in doubt because of lack of funding to keep the streets clean etc it could well be lost altogether if there is no view of it! Obviously, tourism is vital to Canterbury's economy so its WH status is vital. It is also important to the welfare of the Canterbury community to keep the views and green land around the city.

6. Pressure on water resources: there is already pressure on the delivery of fresh water to Canterbury and the surrounding area. Global warming is a fact so there will be more dry springs and summers to come. Building 31,000 more houses would add a population of approx. 74,400 (based on a conservative 2.4 people per household) to the existing population of 157,400 (2021 census) which would be a 47% increase. The proposed 'new' reservoir would need to come online very quickly to support that increase in population.

7. Sewerage system: much has been written about this already and ideas of building cess pits etc proposed but is this really sustainable?

8. Traffic Circulation Plan: I liked the overall idea of this plan as it is good for the environment and will encourage a little more cycling and walking as was seen during the pandemic when there were reduced levels of traffic congestion. I looked at the Ghent model and it seems that there has been a very positive attitude to the project. But there are problems: Although Ghent has a medieval centre like Canterbury, much of the city was rebuilt after the war with much wider streets. It also has an area more than 6 times of Canterbury's but a population that is only 3 times the size. You cannot really compare them.

In conclusion the development of Canterbury should be properly planned and managed by the council not left to the private developers and land vendors who are purely motivated by profit.

Lucy Fletcher-Jones



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