

Local Plan 2045

Firstly I believe that the building of so many houses in order to generate the necessary funds to construct the Eastern Movement Corridor is irrational and not thought through or costed properly. There is no guarantee that the EMC is even feasible, let alone that developers will, by the time the time has come, have provided enough money to meet whatever the cost of a new road will be in the future. There is not even a guarantee that developers will want to build more houses than are actually needed (as shown by the estimates from the expert consultant who recommended about 850 per year, not the 1250 needed to pay for the roads). This would create the worst of all worlds – houses in locations which are predicated on the EMC but without the road materialising. A revised number of houses should be looked at based on recent comments made by Michael Gove re councils setting their own housing numbers to suit demand.

I wish to draw your attention to the following points which will affect me and my fellow residents of Littlebourne Road.

We cannot support the scale of the proposed development within the radius of one mile of our neighbourhood. C12 details 1400, C13 another 645, C14 a further 67 and C15 another 74. This will move us from a semi-rural to an urban part of Canterbury. Where is the evidence that such numbers are actually required in this area? How will the necessary resources for water supply and sewage disposal be managed. Littlebourne Road is an increasingly busy thoroughfare with the current expansion of housing at Howe Barracks and in Littlebourne itself before the proposed 200 at the St Martin's hospital site are constructed. I am concerned that the concentration of houses all in this area is solely to produce the developer funds to pay for the EMC. It is also questionable how many people would wish to live in one of the properties within C12 with the main EMC running through it. The majority of these are proposed to be built on Grade 1 farmland – where are we going to grow the food necessary to feed our growing population.

I am concerned that the large number of houses will have a significant effect on the Lampen Stream –both by run-off pollution from the new EMC and from drainage from the new houses that are proposed. The Lampen Stream needs to be kept clear of pollution as Beavers are living in it. The proposed roundabout/junction with the A257 is squeezed in around the entrances to two properties, the Lampen Stream, the main sewage pipes/pumping station for the Littlebourne Road sewage, Public Rights of Way and entrance to the farmers field. Siting it so close to the Lampen Stream will allow a lot of polluted water to flow into it damaging the wildlife within. This is also where a most of the accidents occur down this end of the A257.

The site at C15 is right next to the SSSI (Old Park and Chequers Wood) and we are concerned that the disturbance from human habitation and long term disturbance of habitat and urbanisation will be destructive, as will the construction activity. The RSPB calls for a buffer zone for SSSIs of 400m.

C15 does not fit with Local Plan strategic objective 'Protect and enhance our rich environment and valued landscapes, supporting wildlife and biodiversity and improving the health and well being of our communities'

The Littlebourne Cluster is an important wildlife corridor where rare species such as turtle doves and nightingales nest. The proposed EMC (C16) will cut across this area, introducing more light, noise and traffic pollution, and interrupting the connectivity for wildlife between the SSSI at Old Park and Chequers Wood, via Hospital wood, Moat Rough and Trenley Park Wood to the internationally recognised RAMSAR site at Stodmarsh. All of these are Ancient Woodland and safe sanctuary for numerous birds, mammals reptiles and Flora. The Local Plan mentions the importance of increased habitat connectivity to fragmented woodlands but the EMC is in direct opposition to this. Lighting and noise from the new EMC will affect flight paths of birds into the Nature Reserve at Stodmarsh. Local residents have had Planning Applications refused because of their proximity to the Ancient Woodland so why is it proposed to destroy this with a major road. Therefore, C16 does not fit with Local Plan strategic objective 'Protect and enhance our rich environment and valued landscapes, supporting wildlife and biodiversity and improving the health and well being of our communities'

Not only is the Old Park and Chequers Wood designated as SSSI but there are archaeological sites within the area of significant importance which are currently being excavated. Moat Rough and Hospital Wood have had very recent archaeological studies with their findings due to be reported shortly. Canterbury Golf Course (95 years old) is carefully managing its ancient woodland – where does the Council think the three holes they are going to destroy be resited.

This area is criss crossed with numerous Rights of Way and Bridle paths which are well used by the general public. There is little indication as to how these paths will be able to cross the proposed new road. There is much emphasis on walking within the aims of the Plan but it would appear that walkers will have to negotiate the various road junctions in order to follow these routes since footpaths are not always continuous straight across the road but 100-200m down the road. Walkers and Riders should be able to cross safely and not run the gauntlet of heavy traffic– The Council could take the opportunity to make the footpaths more connected so that they don't have to walk along the roads to find the opposite path. There is no information in the Local Plan as to how they propose to sort this.

As the current indications of the proposed 'zoning' of Canterbury stand my local community association would be split with members unable to use the junction at Stodmarsh Road/Littlebourne Road. Stodmarsh Road has no pavement and is unsuitable for pedestrians. How will we be able to support our neighbours on these two roads without a lengthy detour? There are businesses along Stodmarsh Road who are dependent on visitors (Garden Centre, Farms, Stables and Care Facilities). Will such visitors need to get an exemption to access that junction to avoid a fine? Will they bother? Will such businesses survive? How are RSPB members and others to access the National Nature

Reserve in Stodmarsh? If the answer is to drive around the EMC how will all the extra mileage and attendant traffic pollution square with the avowed aim to cut down on this? Will visitors to Stodmarsh NNR need permission to use the Stodmarsh Road exit from EMC? If so, that will be very discouraging for visitors. Stodmarsh Road is also the widest of all the roads that lead down to the Nature Reserve. Getting traffic to access from another direction causes havoc as can be seen whenever Stodmarsh Road is closed for maintenance work. Residents who live in Canterbury should have access to all the zones without lengthy detours – care must be made when routes like Littlebourne Road are on a boundary as communities will be cut off. The A257 is already a very busy road – using the Zoning we will in addition get all the traffic for the caravan park, Golf course, Polo Farm, the two Nursing homes as well as the 2000 odd houses that are proposed to be built. This will also have a huge effect of traffic into Littlebourne and the villages beyond.

We are concerned that it is not clear how safe it will be for Stodmarsh Road residents to cross from one side of the EMC to the other. Will there be a turning lane for cars, possibly requiring traffic lights? Will there be a controlled pedestrian crossing with traffic lights so that pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders can safely cross? It will be needed but there is no mention. In addition, there is the preservation of the public rights of way which has not yet been worked out. If these details are missing here, we are concerned that they have not been costed into the calculation either. Regarding Littlebourne Road, how are the houses going to exit onto the A257 with the increased traffic – the houses close to the proposed junction do not have the luxury of a pavement and have to pull out blind onto the road.

Being single lane each way, the EMC will not be large enough to cater for all the traffic generated from the extra houses. The EMC needs to be continuous all the way round the city – not jumping onto and off little bits of road. The Wincheap traffic lights will not be able to cope with this extra traffic and it is already a complete mess at the moment. Directing all the traffic onto one road will bring Canterbury to a complete standstill if there is an accident on any part of the new road system.

The distance our community is from the City Centre would mean that very few of our residents would cycle/walk and that it is imperative that a cheap and efficient bus network is in place to tempt people from their cars. The older population also like to go to the shops and meet people and view what they are buying not stay at home on their own waiting for a courier to deliver their shopping. You cannot expect people to walk or cycle with numerous heavy bags of shopping. If you don't make it easy for a person to visit, people will go elsewhere to shop like Bluewater, Ashford Outlet Centre or Westwood Cross to get their shopping where the parking is free and they know they won't be fined for going into the wrong zone without an exemption.

Perhaps the most destructive and damaging proposal in the whole draft Local Plan is that to “upgrade” Rough Common Road and use it as an integral part of the envisaged “outer ring road”. Rough Common Road is the central spine road through the village and almost wholly residential. The

“upgrading” would inevitably involve road widening and loss of car parking, destruction of property and loss of gardens, together with vastly increased traffic at all times of the day and night. The village would be virtually destroyed.

The proposal would blight large numbers of properties for years to come: no one would be able to sell their houses and no one would buy them.

In general terms I feel that should this Plan ever come to fruition in its current form then Tourism will be adversely affected. How will such visitors have any idea how to get from A to B without incurring fines? Why should they bother?

If cycling is to be encouraged it will not be enough to provide cycle paths. Cyclists from out of town will need facilities such as secure parking and the ability to change wheels and probably clothes.

I believe that this Plan has not been thought through; I find it unsustainable, unjustified and undeliverable. I suggest building a more realistic number of homes, of the size and type which are really needed by local residents together with the infrastructure to support them Doctors, hospitals, jobs etc., then the money saved by not building the EMC could be more usefully spent by the Council in innovating the approach to public transport, improving and extending bus services. This in turn could encourage less reliance on vehicles thus serving the twin aims of reducing car usage and therefore emissions/pollution and obviating the need to build new roads which encourage more use of vehicles. Try new things on the ring road now – the residents all know where the problem areas are – it is a shame the Council don’t want to acknowledge our views.

Mrs K Vaughan