



Canterbury District Local Plan

1 message

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To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

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From: Mrs Lois Hodgson, [REDACTED]

My objections to the Draft of the Canterbury District Local Plan are as follows:

The people most likely to be affected by plans outlined in this Draft Local Plan have not been given time to study this long document. The plans involved require serious consideration and its content need to be thoroughly digested. This means that my objections have had to be made in less time than I would have liked, particularly as I am a resident of Fordwich, a town likely to suffer quite seriously from the plans suggested. In some cases, for example, the language used in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 is so positive with reference to the improvements planned, that it is hard to detect the negative and long-term effects of these proposals.

Canterbury is visited by tourist arriving by ferry from Europe and, as such, I believe it should be easily accessible and welcoming. At present, although there is much to object to in terms of shops shutting and a feeling of desolation in some parts of the centre, nevertheless, it is still a beautiful city to visit with much to recommend it in terms of its historic value and ease of entry. The idea of the proposed Zoning Scheme, which will prevent this easy access to the city must surely negate all these present advantages, not only for visitors but also for those local inhabitants who enjoy spending time there. One example of this is that if the proposed Zoning Scheme goes ahead, those of us who use the Sturry Road to get into the city will find that we are no longer able to drive directly to the other side of Canterbury. As it is, as things are at present, the Sturry Park and Ride is now closed, which means that those who were benefitting from spending the whole day in Canterbury now find it difficult to stay long there because of the high parking fees. This cannot be helping shops and businesses already struggling to survive within the centre of the city I cannot envisage that this situation will be improved from the plans outlined in this document. Apart from the inconvenience which will be caused by this proposed Zoning Scheme, surely it must be obvious that it is an inappropriate plan for a city the size of Canterbury. As I understand it, the scheme only works in much larger towns and cities where each zone has its own infrastructure.

I have lived in Fordwich since 1987 and witnessed the huge build-up of traffic in our little town. Despite the 20mph speed limit, with the size of cars ever increasing, not only is this becoming potentially dangerous, but the damage to the brickwork in the houses and walls along the High Street shows a strong indication of the pollution caused by this traffic increase. Many of our residents have been fighting for years to find ways to avoid the town being used as a slip road and in the past, petitions and suggestions for alternative routes have been put forward without success. At first glance the Eastern By-Pass could have been a possible solution to our problems. However, studying the effects of the plan negates any enthusiasm for this alternative suggestion to our traffic problems. This is not a by-pass: instead, it will serve to link the A28, A257 and the A2 and by cutting across both Well Lane and Moat Lane will divide the civil parish of Fordwich in two. It will also cut through much of the Fordwich Conservation Area and will damage our local countryside and heritage. Fordwich is intrinsically linked to Canterbury and, therefore, of significant importance to this area of Kent.

I am opposed to the further increase in housing development. The UK government no longer mandates housing targets and I am of the opinion that the only people likely to benefit from these proposals would be property developers: certainly not local residents, who even last year suffered a hose ban because of a water shortage in the area. At present, the beauty of Canterbury is its easy access for residents and visitors. To build more and more houses would in no way mirror the uniqueness of this compact city.

At the very least, the deadline for residents to submit their objections to this draft Local Plan should have been deferred until after the public exhibitions of the latest vision of the proposed Broad Oak reservoir at Broad Oak Village Hall on Tuesday 17 January and Tuesday 24 January at the Tyler Hill Memorial Hall. East Kent is a drought area and there is not enough water supply or waste water treatment to provide for a huge increase in the population. Proof of this is shown not only by the hose ban last year, but in previous summers. Building the Broad Oak reservoir has been discussed over many years, going back to the 1970's. Southern Water have previously estimated that it would be 10-15 years from start to finish to be an effective resource. It is estimated that to prepare the foundations for the reservoir, disruption to traffic in the Broad Oak area could be up to three years. According to the site: <https://getinvolvedsoutheastwater.uk.engagementhq.com/broad-oak-reservoir/widgets/57768/faqs#15949> the reservoir will be filled by:

'A mixture of abstraction from the Great Stour and rain water over a period of time'.

This does not seem a very realistic or economically viability. As already stated, rainfall in this area is low and in order to avoid the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve, obtaining water from the Weatherlees Water Treatment Works would be costly. I understand that in the past, proposals relating to the construction of Broad Oak reservoir have been put on hold on the grounds that there is no guarantee that this proposed reservoir could function properly.

I am concerned about the implications in the draft Local Plan in Chapter 1: Spatial Strategy for the District - 1.5 which states:

These levels of growth will undoubtedly place pressure on existing infrastructure, such as our roads, schools and water supply and, with limited "brownfield"

or previously developed land available, will necessitate further development on agricultural land.

I consider that this important issue has not been explored sufficiently in this Draft Local Plan. For many obvious reasons, taking more agricultural land for housing development could be potentially damaging to the wildlife and the welfare of those living in his area. This seems particularly relevant when, apart from the need to protect our countryside, there is growing demand from consumers for sustainably produced food. Ideas are constantly being considered at national level for local land to be maintained to supply food for local communities. One benefit of this could be to avoid unnecessary carbon emissions from large food container lorries. Once again, the needs of the developers are being put above the needs of residents.