



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

response to the local plan consultation

1 message

Gunnar Moeller [REDACTED]

16 January 2023 at 00:02

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

Dear councillors and city planners,

I would like to comment on several aspects of the Canterbury local plan.

Firstly, the overall vision of growth for the district is far too elevated. Despite residents' overwhelming objections to the 'Preferred Option' of the 2021 draft (10.3% agree, 66.8% disagree) which sought to increase housing in the District above the Government target, the current Draft Local Plan still seeks to massively increase housing over the next 20 years by ca. 1,250 per year, totalling >30,000 new dwellings and an overall increase of 40%. This continued urbanisation will destroy the current character of the District, as well as increasing complications of fresh and waste water, remove prime agricultural land, increasing traffic, alter the rural character of many villages, and place extra burden on services.

My core complaint against the local plan is the proposal to divide Canterbury into five zones and rule out private traffic to run directly between the zones. This approach constitutes an extreme and unjustified intrusion into inhabitant's daily life choices and is in clear contradiction with human rights and the right to free travel as formulated for example in the 1707 Act of Union.

Furthermore, the environmental reasoning put forward by the Council in proposing the zoning approach are flawed:

More Mileage:

A first point is that not being able to use short routes means that the enforcement of zones will significantly increase the mileage inhabitants will have to drive. Hence, this will result in higher fuel consumption, more air pollution and more road maintenance requirements - contradictory to the intended benefit for the climate and improvement of air quality.

Destruction of local greenspace:

The proposed south-east bypass is totally unnecessary, ill-conceived, will affect currently protected lands and in sum environmentally catastrophic!

The northern bypass not only threatens to destroy green spaces such as the areas of outstanding beauty by Duke's and Neals' Meadows, or alternatively, the integrity of Rough Commons, and if extended in the future, further farmland and the integrity of the crab and winkle way north of the campus of the University of Kent. Such a bypass will cause extra traffic noise in a green area, destroy significant part of these, but also diminish any remaining ones of the surrounding green spaces, including Duke's and Neals' Meadows

The bypass will also increase traffic fall onto the campus of the University of Kent, which would be negatively affected by additional through-traffic through campus.

Atomisation of the local community:

By enforcing constraints on circulation between neighbourhood zones, the social fabric of Canterbury would be negatively affected, as social gatherings and meeting friends would necessarily become more difficult for all. Some trips for service provision also necessarily need to cross the proposed zone boundaries, as larger supermarkets are present only in three of the zones, while more specialised stores such as home improvement or building supplies are present only along Sturry Road or in Wincheap. These trips require the ability to transport goods, so cannot be replaced by walking or cycling.

I believe that the initial focus of any traffic management in Canterbury should focus on improving the quality of cycle-paths and walkways. With regards to car traffic, it would be advisable to discourage traffic into the city centre such as by imposing higher

parking charges or congestion charges at peak hours, as well as encouraging alternatives by expanding and providing the P&R services free of charge to the users. It would be desirable to remove unnecessary through-traffic by providing alternative routes.

To summarise, the proposed local plan is unacceptable in its current form, as it impinges on residents' vital rights to free movement and to exercise their life according to their own choices. The zoning plan needs to be revoked, and a dialogue with residents needs to be central in identifying other means to alleviate traffic congestion in the city.

The proposed significant expansion of the local population is not acceptable, and will only lead to further problems in service provision and circulation. This is too much too fast, and it constitutes a threat to the rural character and natural beauty of the area.

With best wishes,

Dr Gunnar Möller

