

OBJECTIONS to Policy SS4 and the Canterbury Circulation Plan

1. Summary

Contrary to the arguments put forward in the draft local plan and the paper, "*Canterbury District: Transport Topic Paper*", my opinion is that the proposals in Policy SS4 and the Canterbury Circulation Plan (CCP) would lead to the following results:

- (a) an increase in traffic levels outside the city core that would cause increased air pollution;
- (b) a loss of trade to small and medium enterprise businesses within the zoned regions set out in the CCP, which could lead several of them going out of business;
- (c) greatly increased difficulty for residents in outlying villages to reach places within the zones *that have to be reached at a specific time* (such as appointments with GPs, hospital out-patient clinics, dentists, barbers, garage repair shops etc, picking up visitors arriving at either of the train stations with heavy baggage, catching trains when carrying heavy baggage, and many more scenarios);
- (d) greatly increased difficulty and expense for people employed at businesses within the zones, especially for those on low pay and/or zero-hour contracts (where they may be called with very little or no notice to come in for work and who may not be called again if they cannot make it in time);
- (e) reduced social life for residents in outlying villages who would be unable to respond to *spur-of-the-moment* invitations to join residents within the zones at cafés, restaurants or pubs – travel into the city by bus being subject to unpredictable wait times (as opposed to jumping into a car and arriving/parking within 20 minutes as at present);
- (f) a feeling of entrapment by residents within the zones through the loss of their freedom to travel by means that are most convenient and quick – by imposition of a central authority, something that is alien to this United Kingdom but common in countries with authoritarian regimes (such as Russia and China);
- (g) a segregation of communities between those in richer zones (e.g. Barton) and poorer zones (e.g. Northgate) – which would lead to potentially grave damage of community relations.

Evidence for these opinions is shown by examples in Section 2.

2. Examples supporting points in the Summary

(a) Increase in traffic levels:

Please see the examples in items (b) through (d) below concerning increased traffic journeys (compared to direct journey) and greatly increased bus numbers needed to service park-and-ride schemes at peak times (note: *two* park-and-ride journeys would be needed to replace *one* car journey direct to a place of work or health care appointment across a zone barrier).

(b) Loss of trade:

I live in one of the outlying villages outside the Barton zone. From time to time, my family decides they want fish-and-chips. Currently, I can get to one of two fish-and-chip shops in Wincheap or one in the Sturry Road in about 15 minutes, park outside, order and buy the meal, and get home within another 15 minutes while the fish-and-chips are still hot.

With the CCP zoning plan, I would have to drive through narrow country roads to join the A2 near Bridge, up to the Wincheap exit and then come back along Wincheap (approx. 30 minutes) – or a slightly more lengthy detour to get to the Sturry Road. Of course, such longer trips would lead to increased air pollution, though outside the city core (which is not to be dismissed). The return journey would take the same time, by which time the fish-and-chips would be cold (and re-heating them is always a disappointment). Of course, travelling by bus would be completely impractical for the above. Consequently, those shops would lose my trade ... and those of very many others.

I have the same problem with getting to garage appointments for MoT, regular servicing and emergency repairs. I have used a garage in Wincheap for over 10 years and have always been very satisfied with their work. However, with the CCP zoning restrictions, I would have to look outside Canterbury for this work and they would lose my custom.

(c) Appointments at a specific time:

For appointments with my GP or a hospital out-patient clinic – or the other scenarios listed in Section 1(c) – I have to be there at a specific time. Bus times to/from Canterbury are advertised in my village as twice per hour most times of the day, so I would hope for an average wait of 15 minutes but would have to allow 30. However, sometimes the advertised bus has been cancelled and sometimes two are cancelled – so, to be sure of making my appointment, I would need to set off 90 minutes + bus travel time + second bus and wait to get to the hospital (approx. 2 hours) in advance. With a car, the whole trip only takes 20 minutes.

Rather than bus the whole way, I could drive to the Dover Road park-and-ride and then catch the bus to the hospital. However, that is a longer car journey (more pollution) and more expense which some could not afford, especially if these appointments were frequent and regular.

The same timing problems apply to picking up visitors arriving at the train stations, or catching them myself. In addition, if either of us are taking lots of heavy baggage, public transport is not suitable. That leaves taxis, which are more expensive and results in exactly the same pollution as driving myself.

The same difficulty arises for all those households predicted to occupy Mountfield Park in the Barton zone and with residents commuting to London. They need to get to the MSCP next to the West Station in the St Dunstan's zone and I'm very doubtful of the capability of the "fast" bus service proposed to enable that in a reliable and timely way.

(d) People employed within the zones:

Unless they are fortunate to be employed in a zone to which they have direct entry, they will either have to make a long detour by car (at least doubling the journey length with increased pollution) or drive to a park-and-ride (also a further distance) and join the queue for buses into the centre and then out again to the zone in which they work. The latter means extra expense for them, but it also means significantly increased pollution from the very large number of buses that will have to be provided – far more than at present – to cope with the greatly increased number of people needing the park-and-ride service.

Section 1(d) outlines the serious implications for those on low pay and, especially, on zero-hours contracts (which includes my son).

(e) Reduced social life:

The words in Section 1(e) need no further elaboration.

(f) Entrapment and loss of freedom:

For me, this is the most serious worry raised by the CCP zoning restrictions. In the days of the Soviet Union, permission had to be obtained in order to travel from one part of the country to another. Almost certainly, the same is now happening in the Russian Federation. In China, permission to travel depends on having a sufficiently high "*social credit*" score – something that is truly terrifying and which has been proposed by very influential forces (such as the World Economic Forum) for *all* western nations – except that instead of "*social credit*", a "*green footprint*" score is proposed to be set and maintained in real-time by central banking schemes to which all have to belong. The CCP, with its emphasis on fighting climate change as a main reason for implementing it, is a small version of the Chinese scheme ... and could lead to greater versions, especially when other cities (e.g. Oxford, Bristol, ...) and the proposed devolved regions for the UK start doing the same. Deeply worrying.

(g) Segregation of communities:

This follows from all the issues described in items (b) through (f) above. We have not had such problems in the past (of which I am aware – I am not a historian). But the increased load of stress from money worries, job security, health care, everyday service needs, feelings of entrapment and the real loss of freedom implied by this plan could, and probably will, cause anger and protest that could lead to physical danger with grave damage to community relations.

3. Conclusions

The concerns listed in the Summary are real and serious. I very strongly object to Policy SS4 and the Canterbury Circulation Plan and they should be withdrawn from the proposals for the "*Canterbury District Local Plan to 2045*". Thank you.