



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Re: CANTERBURY AREA DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2020-2045 (Policy C5 in particular)

1 message

MARY ANNE SMITH SELLEN [REDACTED]
To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

16 January 2023 at 13:27

Dear Policy and Strategy Team,

I am a Canterbury resident, having lived here for the last 10 years, and previously for 13 years on the city outskirts. Additionally, from the age of 11 I attended school here and all of my working life (so far) has been in Canterbury.

I particularly want to register my very strong opposition to the proposed 'Merton Park' development of 2941 homes.

Firstly, the ongoing problems that beset Canterbury need to be addressed before any further development happens - you cannot expand a broken city, all that would happen is that the problems will be spread out even further. I am appalled at how Canterbury has degenerated over the last 30 years or so. A once genteel, sedate, cathedral city with long-standing local businesses and shops thriving, and safe to walk at all times of day and night, has somehow become a characterless ghetto of too many shops of the same type, with filthy, littered streets and graffiti everywhere. (To give just one example, there are several streets - including Old Dover Road from at least Riding Gate roundabout to the Nunnery Road junction - where the pavements are still covered with leaves that fell in the autumn). The only evidence of litter collection is by the wonderful, heroic volunteer litter-pickers who then post their results online. The amount they collect is staggering. Unless you get on top of these problems, your planned developments will spread them right out into what is currently unspoiled countryside, fields and orchards. I suggest that your team should go and visit other cathedral cities in England, e.g. Chichester, Wells and Lincoln, to find out why their councils have got it so right when Canterbury has got it so wrong. Visitors to cathedral cities want to enjoy the historic buildings and learn about the history of the area, also to buy locally made crafts and produce from shops in the historic centre. What they do not want is to find mainly the type of shops that you get in any large town or city or shopping centre - they don't come to a cathedral city to get a tattoo, buy a vape or American candy, have a shave or get their nails done. They certainly don't expect to see these things in the historical buildings with associated inappropriate signage and gaudy paintwork. They also don't want to feel unable to go out at night because of the noise and anti-social behaviour. Many people who live here don't want these things either and are ashamed of the city.

Please do not add to the shame by taking away from us the green spaces around the city that are such a welcome contrast to the city centre. Your cynical assurance that there will be 'Creation of new grassland, woodland, hedgerows and other priority habitats' is breath-taking, given how much of these things you will be destroying. It would take decades to recover the existing biodiversity - if ever. Any 'green space' that you provide will doubtless become targets for vandalism and anti-social behaviour. There is none there now, so leave it as it is! Once it is gone, it is gone.

The development you propose is also entirely inappropriate as few people will be able to afford these homes, and very few indeed will be able to afford electric cars so the new roads you propose will push the pollution out to where there is currently very little.

For the sake of the physical and mental health of the people of Canterbury (particularly the long-time residents rather than the transient student population) please register my objection to the plan in the strongest possible terms.

Mary Anne Sellen
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