

Draft Canterbury District Local Plan: Focused consultation 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to comment further on the Local Plan development.

I think given the changes to the NPPF you have an almost impossible job in identifying sufficient sites for housing development, that is if you keep approaching the matter in the way it has been to date. As Lord Gascoigne, Chairman of the Built Environment Committee has said “An infrastructure first approach should be adopted; the common approach of only providing physical, commercial and social infrastructure once houses are built needs to change.” To achieve this the council needs to be looking at a new town.

This draft plan makes provision for 23085 homes over a 19 year period by tacking them onto and within existing settlements where the infrastructure cannot cope. Putting this scale of housebuilding into context it is a 34% increase on the number of homes in the Canterbury District at the 2021 Census. It is 37% bigger than Whitstable was at the 2011 census.

The proposed local government restructure and the likelihood of an East Kent Unitary council provide an opportunity to look on an area wide basis at provision of a new town properly planned as recommended by the Built Environment Committee. The government and local government need to be considering reorganisation and local plans development holistically. The four further questions you pose should be considered in this light.

I note that at paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24 you do not seek further comment on existing sites. Whether sought or not, I wish to comment on Brooklands Farm in the context of the decision to exclude the University site and the proposition that the district spatial growth strategy has a proviso that “no residential development will be allocated in the countryside. The university site has been excluded from the latest iteration of the Plan as it is not considered suitable due to concerns regarding suitable access, impact on the highway network and impact on ecology including on ancient woodland. All these factors apply equally to Brooklands Farm. As regards “no residential development will be allocated in the countryside I think most Whitstable residents and anyone on the Clapham omnibus would consider the Brooklands farm site as countryside.

Regards

J McDonald