
Response to Local Plan 2025 Consultation

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Here are some comments for consideration about the Canterbury New Local Plan 2025:

INTERACTIVE MAP

The interactive Map is helpful, but could be improved:

Each site should be marked up with the reference in the plan (N1,N2 etc etc) to assist with identification.

Also the map should include areas which have been given permission for development but nothing has yet been built, eg Mountfield Park where 4000 houses are going to be built SE of Canterbury. The omission of sites like this gives a false representation of the density of housing that we will have to contend with in the life of this 2025 Plan.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

I appreciate that your hands are tied by government policies from Westminster, but I do question the LOCAL need for huge numbers of houses. Anecdotally I hear that swathes of these new houses are acquired by London Boroughs for their social housing needs. Why do we have to house these people?

We need Social Housing for local people, starter houses and houses for senior citizens. These types of houses should be prioritized over 4 and 5 bedroom executive boxes that the developers are fond of building and earning maximum profits from.

WATER & SEWERAGE

Water could well become scarce due to climate change. Whilst I understand that the water companies are obliged to supply water to all new houses, they can't do the impossible. Great care must be taken to ensure that proposals put forward in this Local Plan does not overwhelm water resources.

Sewage disposal arrangements should be sensible: Either a development is connected to the existing sewer or a bespoke treatment plant should be installed by the developer for the particular development.

The sewage system must be installed BEFORE any houses are occupied. Developers should not be allowed to get away with tankering away sewage as a means of disposal. There should be safeguards in place BEFORE any houses are occupied for the developer to have a maintenance contract in place to ensure that any bespoke equipment is kept in good order.

ROADS

Reading through the various individual proposals, particularly N4,5 & 6, I notice that link roads are mentioned. Surely this is the moment to grasp the nettle and construct a proper bypass around the south and east of Canterbury. Traffic should be able to proceed from Bridge around to Sturry without having to go through the City centre.

Provision should be made to encourage people to use bicycles, especially in getting children to cycle to and from school.

ENVIRONMENT

It should be mandatory for all new housing projects (and industrial) to have solar PV panels fitted to roofs that have a suitable aspect (i.e. not facing north!), preferably with some battery storage too. Fitting solar PV is much more cost effective if installed during building construction rather than being retrofitted.

PLAN OVERALL

This plan is a vast IMPROVEMENT on previous versions and SHOULD BE ADOPTED.

The City Council should ensure that all infrastructure that developers are required to or have pledged to install (water, sewerage, roads etc) is in place at the START of the particular project. Don't let the developers get away with getting the project half built and then saying that they can't afford to provide the promised infrastructure.

ONE MORE THING

Policy C17 from the last plan (I think) should be scrapped. This refers to the proposed winery that was to be built on land at Highland Court, Bridge.

The land in question is in a designated "Area of Outstanding Natural beauty". This, despite the tight development restrictions imposed on it, was controversially granted permission for Chapel Down to build a winery.

Now that CD have dropped the proposal, and the adjacent wine company (not in the AONB) are apparently pursuing other plans outside the county, the pressing need for extracting the land from its AONB status has disappeared. Therefore this land should return to agricultural use in the AONB forthwith.

The City Council should resist approaches from developers for other schemes.

Thank you for reading this. I hope that you find my remarks constructive.

Regards,

Guy Steward

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