
Draft Canterbury District Local Plan: Focused consultation 2025

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I am the Chairman and River Keeper for the Tonford Fly Fishing Club whose fishing rights on the Great Stour run from Hambledown Creek (downstream) to Chartham Corn Mill (upstream). My comments relate to the impacts of the proposed Local Plan Policies as they affect the river and our use.

Generally, the Great Stour Chalk Stream suffers badly from surcharging by sewage from the inadequate capacity in the existing treatment works discharging untreated sewage into this critically endangered ecosystem already weakened by abstraction and lack of flow. The plan increases the number of dwellings which in turn increases the amount of sewage /foul water and run off the treatment plants will have to deal with. Given they cannot cope now the plan needs to build in expansion and improvement in this infrastructure. Government funding and section 106 agreements could be used for this purpose.

As sole users of the river with tenancy rights to quiet enjoyment and the custodians who maintain and keep the river in good order the Tonford FFC are concerned by disturbance and pollution . This would particularly apply to Policy N3 - Thanington Recreation Ground , Park and Ride Car Park proposal for 900 cars ,cycling and foot path. No footpath or cycle way exists along the river and as the A2 bridge stops it going anywhere and the existing bank vegetation acts a buffer to run off from the Recreation Ground. Pollution from the cars in surface water run off would be a concern we would like to see addressed in the Policy.

Policy N31- Chartham Paper Mill. The existing hazardous waste storage use is utterly unsuitable for this site and the proposed Residential use is a great improvement in our opinion. Sadly, the cost of demolition of the Paper Mill and the clean-up / reinstatement of the site will be very costly and could make the residential plan unviable. To help mitigate this we are co ordinating with all other interested parties like the EA , land owners and conservation bodies in the Chalk stream restoration lobby to find ways to restore the river to its natural environment without placing this burden on the residential developer if possible. We look forward to working with you to assist in bringing your policy to fruition.

Gary Lagdon

River Keeper/Chairman
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Tonford Fly Fishing Club

