



**CANTERBURY DISTRICT
DRAFT LOCAL PLAN
FOCUSED CONSULTATION (REGULATION 18)**

**REPRESENTATIONS BY
FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL**

21 OCTOBER 2025



CANTERBURY DISCTRICK DRAFT LOCAL PLAN FOCUSED CONSULTATION (REG18): REPRESENTATIONS BY FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL, 21 OCTOBER 2025

1. Introduction

These representations on behalf of Fordwich Town Council (“FTC”) are made in response to the publication of the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation in September 2025(the “Focused Consultation”).

2. Executive summary

FTC object to Policies N4 to N6 in their current form. Development on these sites must be made subject to a comprehensive solution to Fordwich’s current traffic and pedestrian safety issues. We set out our suggestions in this regard below.

3. Fordwich’s Unique Features

3.1 Neither the draft Local Plan nor the Focused Consultation mentions Fordwich in particular. As we said in our response to the consultation on the Draft Local Plan, Fordwich has a number of unique features which should, as a matter of strategy, be protected. Without repeating these in detail these include:

- **Heritage assets.**

The Pleistocene sands and gravels capping the high ground south of Fordwich (sometimes known as the ‘Fordwich Plateau’)

The entire town of Fordwich is a Conservation Area, an area that the Council has recognised as being of special architectural and historical interest. There are 23 listed heritage assets in Fordwich, including the Grade 1 listed Church of St Mary and Two Grade 2* listed buildings.

- **Environment/Ecology.**

Fordwich is set in Countryside which functions as an important green infrastructure supporting species such as great crested newts, turtle doves (and in the river) beavers and Fordwich trout. It is surrounded by ancient woodland also representing a high quality, high value habitat.

4. Massive Traffic Problem

4.1 In our response to the Draft Local Plan, we called on Canterbury City Council to consider these unique features and **address the excessive traffic movement** through Fordwich expressly in the Local Plan and to adopt as strategy the protection of these assets. We pointed out that FTC has obtained professional analysis showing more than 6,000 traffic movements through the town a day.

4.2 Since our response to the Local Plan last year, the traffic situation has deteriorated.

- More vehicles are passing through

- Vehicles do not adhere to the 20-mile speed limit and we have shared recorded instances where on the corner of High and King Street, we have had more than three accidents on one day;
 - Large lorries do not adhere to the width restrictions and these vehicles cannot negotiate the narrow bridge over the Stour or the tight corner on High and King Street. This has resulted in damage to private property and the bridge over the River Stour
 - Vehicles are noisy
 - Vehicles park on double yellow lines
 - Local residents fear for life and limb yet we are told nothing will be done until there is a **fatality**.
 - There is little or no enforcement of any restrictions
- 4.3 There are few roads connecting south and north Kent east of Canterbury. There are roads through Canterbury itself, the new development on the old MoD land – now mainly closed, Fordwich and Grove Ferry. It is likely therefore that all south north and north-south traffic will continue to seek to use Fordwich as a rat run.
5. **Vulnerable Road Users – the Policy Framework**
- 5.1 FTC reminds Canterbury City Council of national priorities for the safety and inclusion of **vulnerable road users (VRUs)**—pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, motorcyclists, and others.
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (“**NPPF**”) provides clear guidance in Chapter 9: ***Promoting Sustainable Transport***.
- **Paragraph 109** requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, including opportunities to promote walking, cycling, and public transport use.
 - **Paragraph 110** states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth to limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes, improving air quality and public health.
 - **Paragraph 111(d)** specifically calls for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking.
 - **Paragraph 113** requires that **developments generating significant movement provide a travel plan and measures to promote sustainable transport**.
- 5.3 These provisions align with the **Highway Code’s hierarchy of road users (Rules H1–H3)**, which places the greatest responsibility on those who can cause the most harm. This principle should inform local planning decisions, particularly in relation to junction design, crossing priority, and safe passing distances. Align local standards with the Highway Code hierarchy, ensuring safe junctions, crossings, and segregated routes wherever feasible.

6. **Objection to Policies N4 to N6 – Land around Littlebourne Road and Bekesboburne Road**

6.1 FTC clarifies that it is not in principle opposed to housebuilding on these sites, but these **developments must not take place without being subject to resolving the traffic and parking problems in Fordwich.**

6.2 FTC anticipates that contractors' vehicles will seek to by-pass Canterbury and bring materials through Fordwich. Once built, it is likely that local residents will wish to use the amenities at Sturry, including the schools, and the coast to the north. We anticipate that they will, like current residents in this area, seek to travel through Fordwich, hugely exacerbating the already unacceptable position.

7. **Solutions.**

FTC supports the council's objective of a bus-led transport strategy as set out at Policy SS3 - Development Strategy for the district, but calls on the council to adopt a bolder vision. The development of sites N4 to N6 should be subject to the production and implementation of a sustainable travel plan in line with NPPF guidance. Such a travel plan should include the following features:

- **prioritise safety of pedestrian and other vulnerable road users.** In Fordwich, this should include encourage active transport by designating the town a shared space and/or low traffic neighbourhood in line with Active Travel England's proposals so as to improve pedestrian safety and the way the streets are used. The shared space street and then be linked to the Sustrans cycle route to Canterbury as well as the extensive public rights of way network through the countryside around Fordwich, which are so prized by the local community;
- align **standards for travel through Fordwich with the Highway Code hierarchy**, ensuring safe junctions, crossings, and segregated routes wherever feasible.
- include ANPR at the entrances to Fordwich in the south at Moat Lane as well as the north by the bridges over the Stour, **charging vehicles** that just pass through a fee, but exempting those that do not travel through or travel through but remain in Fordwich for at least one hour; and
- in the district more generally, considering an extensive **mass public transport** such as trams or guided buses connected to the national rail network.

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