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18th May 2026

Dear Inspector,

Regarding the Canterbury District Local Plan

I am concerned that the CDLP (Reference 1) is significantly flawed and therefore not sound.

The Plan is supposed to have been written for the entire Canterbury District, and yet, in its treatment of the Rural areas of the District, the assumptions made do not appear to reflect the situation within the District's Rural areas.

One Village, Bridge, is recognised as a "rural service centre", to use the language employed within the Policy R1, and elsewhere, and yet whilst the CDLP states that the District will support infrastructure and development that comes forward from such Centres, the evidence is in direct opposition to the stated Policies.

For example, Bridge has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan in place, (Reference 4) which is thus the most recently proved and adopted Development Plan within the entire District. The Bridge Neighbourhood Plan envisages additional housing and local infrastructure, and contains Policies e.g. at C2, specifically aimed at improving the local infrastructure and leisure amenities. Exactly as repeated within the Rural Policies of the CDLP (e.g. CDLP R1 points 2) ; and yet at this first opportunity to support it, the District has chosen to decline to do so. Monies arising by way of Community Infrastructure Levy which are due to the District, (as distinct from that share retained within the Parish), are thus to be taken out of the Village and used to improve the transportation within the City and to help fund the Sturry By-Pass scheme. Hardly the sentiment contained within Policy R1.

Clearly it would be profoundly disappointing should the District act in any way that might suggest that Policy R1 is not actively supported by the CDLP, for then doubt would exist in relation to each Policy that the District administration has included within their CDLP. I am certain that Bridge Parish Council would be very willing to engage with the District administration, and with yourself as CDLP Inspector, so as to ensure that support for rural service centres, such as Bridge, is actually forthcoming as is stated within the CDLP presented to you.

With respect to the transport, the District has worked up an unambitious Bus Strategy. Given that much of the District is Rural, it is a target (only) for some areas to have an infrequent bus service up to 10 pm, a target that the CDLP hopes to achieve, if that is the correct word, by the year 2042. But even this is not supported by the facts: bus services that serve the Rural areas are being reduced by the privately owned local service providers. This withdrawal of service within Rural areas is reflected

across the District. And is outwith the control of the District's Plan. The ideas, the hopes within the CDLP are therefore,, in a very real sense, fantastic; being the fantasies of those that dreamed up their Transport Strategy. This part of their Plan is also, therefore, not sound.

Further, the Transportation Strategy supporting the CDLP predicts significant modal switch; towards walking and cycling and buses. This Strategy is, by the writers' own admission, taken from schemes trialled in places such as central Oxford. Whilst such a translation might work for the City of

Canterbury, it is not realistic to base the CDLP Transport Strategy upon the hope that the residents of Rural areas from around this District walk, or cycle to the City; the rural roads are not suitable for that, (we do not e.g. have the pavements that Urban Oxford has), and the Bus network within the rural areas is privately owned and is already, since work upon the Bus Action Plan was first begun, being cut back. And yet, the CDLP assumes a 42% increase in numbers walking/cycling/using buses within the rural areas for journeys to Canterbury. Again, it is a fantasy, and so cannot be considered sound.

Other groups and organisations will point at other unrealistic Policies; here at Bridge we are profoundly concerned that the Canterbury DISTRICT Local Plan has rather ignored any development for the Rural areas of the District, and appears rather ignorant of the actual situation outside of the City of Canterbury. Of course, I again extend the offer, on behalf of Bridge Parish Council, to work with yourself and the District, towards attaining the goals set out within the District's Policies, but if that cannot be, you are asked to require that they revisit their CDLP.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Alan Atkinson

Chairman

Bridge Parish Council

References

Reference (1)

Canterbury District Local Plan – Publication (Regulation 19) and Submission (Regulation 22) and associated matters :

(as presented by CCC senior officers, and approved without amendment by Members at Committee and Council)

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Overview Committee, 05/03/2026 19:00](#)

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Note Policy R1 point 2 : Rural Service Centres

Reference (2)

Canterbury District Bus Action Plan (February 2026)

https://ehq-production-europe.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/86c2e1059ec957fdd78cb7cdd57f38cfeec57af/original/1772039612/3a91e73d5fcad364e5f3c7612a1bbb8e_Canterbury%20Bus%20Strategy%20Update_Final%202026_February_Clean.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIPIQP5NM%2F20260516%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20260516T162941Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=9d4d9d409441e583644d40b5dfee2d47f94687623a4f9b82b1f0c1179bf0b3a6

Especially page 34; service targets by 2042.

Reference (3)

Draft Canterbury District Transport Strategy

https://ehq-production-europe.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/f14de2ad5e7205e799ed2d83213198f9284f2/original/1772039494/f033f88558e1f833b49c53809bf304f0_Canterbury%20District%20Transport%20Strategy.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIPIQP5NM%2F20260516%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20260516T165623Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=f22e1400797676d481f3ecccda7da24d75ed369b3bcbcb85f847e5387abf56f63

Page 36 'Improvements to Rural Bus Services'.

Reference (4) adopted Bridge Neighbourhood Plan

Available <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Bridge%20Neighbourhood%20Plan.pdf>

See Policy C2 page 16