
Canterbury District Local Plan (Regulation 19) consultation

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Dear Consultations Team

Having read through the Canterbury and District Draft Local Plan 2042/43 (March 2026) I wish to submit the following observations and comments for your consideration.

General comments.

I live in Chartham (around 4 miles outside of the city) and use the bus or train or the Wincheap Park and Ride on a regular basis if driving which I find to be a very useful service. Some comments below on traffic congestion in the city.

1. Traffic congestion: much of the document in various sections (including Policy SS5) refers to traffic congestion through the city as a major problem due to the historic environment which is true at certain times of the day. However I think it is slightly misleading to suggest that car drivers are driving through the city unnecessarily when they could be using public transport or are driving in to use the city centre car parks. I have noted some examples below of why many drivers from different parts of the city and from outside areas need to drive around the city walls to reach their destination.

- i) The only council refuse tip is located on Vauxhall Road, off Sturry Road to the east of the city.
- ii) The only large retail stores (such as B&Q, The Range, Matalan and Curry's) are located in the same area, there is nothing comparable at Wincheap apart from B&M so provision is not equal.
- iii) Waitrose supermarket, city centre location.
- iv) Kent and Canterbury Hospital. There is a connecting bus service from the bus station but many people who live on the outskirts of the city or in surrounding villages would need to drive to the Park and Ride then take a bus to get to the bus station, so taking two buses, not ideal for many people, especially if they have issues with accessibility.
- v) Access to the A2 at Wincheap for drivers who live in the city area or to the east of the city.
- vi) Access to Ashford and surrounding areas via the most direct route for drivers who live in the city area or anywhere to the east of the city.
- vii) Access to schools in the city.

I do not consider that people are making unnecessary car journeys just to park in the city centre, I think most people are just trying to get through as there is no other way around the city so consider that the focus on removing much of the city centre parking is flawed. If public transport was improved this will obviously help but will not resolve this problem.

Specific comments.

Policies C1 and C8: while I welcome positive regeneration of the Debenhams and Nasons sites in the city centre which are long overdue, I consider that the closure of so many of the city centre car parks will have a negative effect on the city, particularly in relation to the night time economy. I appreciate that it is part of the Transport Strategy to reduce traffic congestion through the city, however evening visitors to the Marlowe Theatre, cinemas, bars, restaurants and clubs will find it very difficult to park so may go elsewhere, thereby running the risk of destroying what is currently a vibrant night time scene which brings in substantial revenue. To close Pound Lane, Miller's Field (Policy C4), North Lane, Watling Street and Queningate car parks would reduce the amount of evening parking considerably. These car parks are all very well used in the evening with people coming in from Ashford plus other towns and villages surrounding the city, there is no viable public transport system in the evening to and from many areas and the Park and Ride closes around 7pm. People who live close to the centre are able to walk in but many live outside of this area. There could also be an issue with safety if lone visitors are unable to park in the evening and have to walk some distance to access any edge of town car parks or public transport that may be intermittent.

Soundness

I do not believe that the policy to close so many car parks meets the Soundness criteria as being Justified or Effective and also does not meet the Positively Prepared criteria as vastly reduced city centre parking would not meet "the area's assessed needs" in relation to Canterbury's night time economy. The potential loss of business for the city in addition to decimating such a vibrant evening scene which attracts visitors from the surrounding areas would be hugely negative for the city.

If the Park and Ride services (including the new P&R locations outlined in the Plan) were extended to run in the evening (perhaps Friday and Saturday) this could potentially alleviate the issue mentioned above to some extent although not completely.

Additional comments.

Health and police; Further to the large number of new dwellings planned over the next few years (23,000) and the increase in population in the city and surrounding areas, I had hoped to see some mention of how any corresponding increase in police and acute and local health services would be achieved but could only see brief references to health centres (Policy SS6), nothing relating to how services at The William Harvey Hospital in Ashford (nearest local 24/7 A&E service) and the Kent and Canterbury Hospital (Urgent Treatment Centre) will match this increase in population. I understand that there are likely to be consultations with the relevant authorities, however it would be helpful to see mention of this in the Local Plan to reassure residents that this aspect is being considered in light of the considerable growth in population in the city and surrounding areas.

Many thanks for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Kind regards

Maggie Batchelor