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Sent: 18 May 2026 13:55
To: Consultations
Subject: for the Inspector Regarding the Canterbury District Local Plan

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18th May 2026

Dear Inspector,

Regarding the Canterbury District Local Plan

I am concerned that the CDLP 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.

The Plan recognises "rural service centres", 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.

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 have to exist in relation to the operations towards delivery of each Policy that the District administration has included within their CDLP. And yet whilst that CDLP states within their Rural Policies, that there would be support for such centres to deliver services, in fact it is feared that there is almost none: indeed, it is proposed that CIL monies generated within such Villages, eg Bridge, monies which would be paid to and retained by CCC that might be used to deliver exactly that support are to be taken out of the Village to fund road schemes elsewhere, using nebulous time-frames which makes tracking anything near impossible. So what is the District actually going to support within these service centres? They support

almost nothing at present, and cannot expect that other Councils, KCC and Parish Councils, will step up to fill the gaps that exist in the CDLP. The District Plan is supposed to serve the District; it does not effectively reach into the Rural areas, and so cannot be sound.

With respect to the transport, the District has worked up an exceedingly 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 that would stop for most areas by 10 pm, a target that the CDLP hopes to achieve, if that is the correct word, by the year 2042. By the end of the Plan's life; they hope that the Villages that make up a significant proportion of the District might have an infrequent service up to about 10 pm.

And yet they talk quite aggressively about 'modal switch' to this bus service, that is privately owned, and thus over which they have almost no control. But even this low service level target is not supported by the facts: bus services that serve the Rural areas are being reduced by the privately owned local service providers. A gradual withdrawal of service, a reduced connectivity within Rural areas, is being experienced 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. The road and bus networks within the City and within the greater Rural areas are not the same: some change may well be possible within the build-up areas, but not within the Rural areas. 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 individuals and organisations will point at other unrealistic, so unsound, Policies; I am 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. Given that, the CDLP in its present form must be considered unsound, and you are asked to require that they revisit it.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Atkinson

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