

From: A HAYNES [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 May 2026 16:13
To: Consultations
Subject: Regulation 19 Representation objection to Draft Local Plan

--Email From External Account--

Regulation 19 Representation, May 2026

Failure of the Sustainability Appraisal and Local Plan to comply with NPPF

A. Objection on BMV grounds

In the light of the government's most recent National Planning Policy Framework I consider that Canterbury City Council's Sustainability Appraisal for the Local Plan itself fails to comply with directives on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, meaning that the Plan itself should be rejected.

The NPPF 2024 is explicit:

- **§187:** BMV land (Grades 1, 2, and 3a) is a *finite resource* of national importance.
- **§188:** Local planning authorities must prefer poorer-quality land for development where significant development is proposed.

The Council's Sustainability Assessment does NOT demonstrate overall that it has met these requirements.

Furthermore, as a specific example of such a failure, inspection of the materials relating to planning application **CA/23/00484** shows that the "Soils and Agricultural Land Quality" documentation provided by the land agent used to claim that Grade 1 Agricultural land in a highly sensitive site, adjacent to a chalk stream (the Nailbourne) should be reclassified as mainly Grade 3b and therefore appropriate for building 300 houses, **COMPLETELY FAILED TO MEET THE REQUIRED MAFF GUIDELINES FOR SUCH A RECLASSIFICATION**. This site (Policy R 9) should therefore not even have been added to the Draft Plan at the late stage that it was.

2. SA fails to quantify BMV loss

The SA Framework includes the objective:

“11.2 Avoid the unnecessary loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.”

However, the SA does not quantify:

- the hectares of BMV land affected by each allocation
- the proportion of each site that is BMV
- the cumulative BMV loss across the district
- the comparative BMV impact of alternative spatial strategies

Without quantification, the SA cannot demonstrate that BMV loss has been minimised. This is a fundamental evidential failure.

3. No comparison of BMV impacts across reasonable alternatives

SEA Regulations require a transparent comparison of reasonable alternatives. NPPF §39–41 require a *justified* strategy.

Yet the SA:

- lists spatial options (Canterbury Focus, Coastal Focus, Rural Focus, New Settlement)
- but provides NO EVIDENCE comparing their BMV impacts
- and does not show whether alternatives would result in less BMV loss

This omission means the Council cannot demonstrate that the chosen strategy is the least harmful in BMV terms.

4. No evidence that poorer-quality land was preferred (NPPF §188)

NPPF §188 requires authorities to prefer poorer-quality land where development is proposed.

The SA does not:

- identify where poorer-quality land exists
- show whether it was considered
- explain why BMV land was selected instead
- demonstrate that BMV loss was unavoidable

This is a direct breach of national policy.

5. Cumulative BMV loss not assessed

The Plan proposes multiple large greenfield allocations, yet the SA does not:

- assess cumulative BMV loss
- assess district-wide agricultural impact
- consider long-term food security implications

Given the scale of development, this is a material omission.

6. SEA regulations – Legal duties

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 require:

Regulation 12(2)(b)

Assessment of “reasonable alternatives” and an explanation of why alternatives were rejected.

Regulation 12(3)

Assessment of likely significant environmental effects, including land, soil, biodiversity, and cumulative impacts.

Regulation 13

Publication of an environmental report that enables meaningful public and inspector scrutiny.

The SA fails to:

- quantify BMV loss
- compare BMV impacts across alternatives
- assess cumulative BMV loss
- demonstrate that poorer-quality land was considered

This is a **procedural breach** of the SEA Regulations.

7. The Plan is not “Justified”, “Effective”, or “Consistent with national policy”

Because the SA fails to assess BMV impacts properly, the Local Plan fails three of the four NPPF soundness tests:

Not Justified

No evidence that alternatives with lower BMV loss were considered.

Not Effective

No evidence that the spatial strategy is deliverable without unnecessary BMV harm.

Not Consistent with National Policy

Failure to comply with NPPF §187–188.

This renders the Plan **unsound**.

Outcome of failings

Given these failures, I request that the Council:

1. Withdraw the Regulation 19 draft as it relates to land use or
2. Re-publish it with a legally compliant Sustainability Appraisal, including:
 - quantified BMV assessment for each allocation
 - district-wide cumulative BMV analysis
 - comparison of BMV impacts across all reasonable alternatives
 - evidence demonstrating that poorer-quality land has been preferred

Until this is done, the Plan cannot lawfully proceed to Examination.

B. Objection on transport considerations

***with respect to A257 Corridor, Bekesbourne Lane, Bekesbourne Station & Polo Farm P&R)**

Not only does the current Regulation 19 Draft Canterbury District Local Plan fail on BMV grounds, but, extensive development on the agricultural land east of Canterbury is also unsustainable in relation to ongoing transport issues, quite apart from the further disruption involved in years of construction work that would affect air and life quality in this area. I therefore object to the on the grounds that the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and the Plan fail to comply with **NPPF 2024 transport requirements** in relation to:

- the **A257 corridor**
- **Bekesbourne Lane**
- **Bekesbourne Station access and parking**
- the **proposed 2,000-home allocation and Park & Ride opposite Polo Farm**

These omissions render the Plan unsound and legally deficient.

1. The A257 corridor is already operating at or beyond capacity

The A257 is a constrained single-carriageway route with:

- AADT ~13,500 vehicles/day (DfT Count Point 16567)
- Peak hour flows of 1,100–1,250 vehicles/hour
- No continuous cycle infrastructure
- Discontinuous footways
- Pinch points through Littlebourne
- Congestion approaching Canterbury

The SA does **not** assess:

- baseline A257 performance
- peak-hour queueing
- junction stress at St George's roundabout
- cumulative impacts from the 300-home Littlebourne allocation
- cumulative impacts from the 2,000-home Polo Farm allocation
- the effect of a Park & Ride generating thousands of additional daily trips

This is a breach of **NPPF §122** and **SEA Regulation 12(3)**.

2. Bekesbourne lane is vehicularly inadequate and unsafe

Bekesbourne Lane is a **narrow rural lane** with:

- single-track sections (3.2–3.8m)
- no footways
- no cycle provision
- poor forward visibility
- limited passing places
- unsuitable for safe pedestrian use
- becoming increasingly unsafe given the rapid growth in use of large SUVs

The SA does **not** assess:

- the impact of additional traffic from the 300-home allocation
- the increased risk of conflict between vehicles and vulnerable users
- the likelihood of rat-running between the A257 and A2
- cumulative impacts with the 2,000-home Polo Farm allocation
- the effect of displaced parking from Bekesbourne Station

This is contrary to **NPPF §123**, which requires assessment of existing network conditions and safety.

3. Cyclist and pedestrian safety is not assessed

The A257 and Bekesbourne Lane offer no safe active travel routes.

The SA does not assess:

- the absence of continuous footways
- the lack of safe cycling routes to Canterbury or Bekesbourne Station
- the increased conflict between vulnerable road users and higher traffic volumes
- the feasibility of delivering safe active travel infrastructure

This breaches **NPPF §120(c)** and **§122(a)**.

4. Bekesbourne station has poor access and limited parking

In the Plan Bekesbourne Station is treated as a sustainable transport asset, but in reality:

- it has fewer than 20 marked parking spaces
- parking is regularly at capacity
- there is no safe walking route from Littlebourne
- there is no cycle infrastructure
- access is via Bekesbourne Lane, which is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists
- there is no bus interchange
- there is no step-free access

The SA does not assess:

- whether the station can accommodate increased demand
- whether safe access can be delivered
- whether parking displacement will worsen lane safety

- whether the station can realistically reduce car dependency

This breaches **NPPF §122(b)** (realistic and deliverable transport solutions).

5. The 2,000-home allocation and Park & Ride opposite Polo Farm will severely overload the A257

The proposed 2,000-home development (c 15 and C 16) together with the Park & Ride on the south side of the A257 opposite Polo Farm will:

- generate thousands of additional daily vehicle movements
- add significant peak-hour pressure to an already constrained corridor
- create major turning movements across the A257
- increase queueing and delay at St George's roundabout
- worsen air quality in Littlebourne and Canterbury
- increase rat-running via Bekesbourne Lane and other rural lanes
- undermine cyclist and pedestrian safety along the A257

The SA does not assess:

- the combined impact of 2,000 homes + Park & Ride + 300 homes at Littlebourne
- the interaction between the Park & Ride and existing congestion
- the safety implications of new junctions on the A257
- the effect on bus reliability and journey times
- the cumulative impact on the junctions in Littlebourne and near Bekesbourne

This is a major strategic omission. NPPF §129 and SEA Regulation 12(3) require cumulative impacts to be assessed.

The SA does **not** assess such cumulative impacts

These are legal failures similar to those at **Ashdown Forest (2015)**, where cumulative impacts were unlawfully omitted.

7. The Plan is not “Justified”, “Effective”, or “Consistent with national policy”

Because the SA fails to assess transport impacts on the A257 corridor, Bekesbourne Lane, Bekesbourne Station, and the Polo Farm allocation, the Local Plan fails three NPPF soundness tests:

Not Justified

No evidence that the chosen strategy minimises car dependency or performs better than alternatives.

Not Effective

No evidence that the A257 or Bekesbourne Lane can accommodate the proposed development.

Not Consistent with National Policy

Fails NPPF §120–129 and §156–161.

Action required from transport assessment inadequacies

To comply with NPPF and SEA law, the Council must:

1. **Re-run the Sustainability Appraisal**, including:
 - quantified modelling of A257 and Bekesbourne Lane impacts
 - cumulative assessment of all allocations, including the 2,000-home Polo Farm site
 - safety assessment for cyclists and pedestrians
 - realistic evaluation of Bekesbourne Station access and capacity
 - assessment of Park & Ride impacts on corridor performance
2. **Re-publish the Local Plan** for consultation with a legally compliant SA.

Until this is done, the Plan cannot lawfully proceed to Examination.

A W Haynes

[REDACTED]