

Local Plan

1 message

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To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

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Thank you for inviting me to comment on the next Local Plan.

The format set out via the link to your site is rather in depth and yet constrained by pre-set 'options'. It seems to me this might lead to 'nimbyism' – and I want avoid that. Rather than focus on a city, coast or villages plan I prefer to signal a few principals I think should be taken into account when members decide a way forward. I hope this I acceptable.

1. Minimise planned travel. Even when we get to zero emissions, if we ever do, some form of energy generation will be required to move people around. Any plan should seek to minimise predictable movements. For example, when a new secondary school is required by population growth it should be built away from Canterbury which already has sufficient school capacity if students from other parts of the district do not have to travel in. A location close to the railway – possibly the most environmentally friendly travel option – and in walking / cycling distance of well populated areas would be best for the new school. Other travelling 'draws' like health care should be catered for in the plan. A hospital that can provide all but the most critical needs within the locality would mitigate the need to travel to Thanet or Ashford. Local services like Whitstable's fantastic Estuary View would reduce travel and congestion further.
2. Restrict housing development until essential services are in place. I understand the imperative to provide more housing but this must only be developed when and where service can cope. This might mean development has to start in locations were services like sewage, water, schooling, etc. are already capable of expansion. Southern Water has failed to deal safely with sewage in Whitstable ... and possibly elsewhere ... and no more development should take place until essential services can be guaranteed. Southern Water, South East Water and others are likely to say they can deliver because more roof tops mean more standing charges and more profits; members must perform due diligence in these matters to safeguard the health and well being of residents and to safeguard the environment.
3. Maintain and develop 'green breaks'. I'm not sure if it is the case but anecdotal stories say earlier local plans require one side of the old Thanet Way to remain undeveloped. Whether the stories are true or not I think this an excellent policy. It allows corridors for wildlife and reduces the potential for air quality pollution build up. I think this a laudable principle that should be applied throughout the district. The green breaks might benefit from tree planting in some places and use as allotments has obvious advantages.

Regards,

Alan Nutten