

Fwd: Canterbury Local Plan Consultation - response of Watch Over Adisham's Woods

1 message

CCC Planning <planning@canterbury.gov.uk>

9 August 2021 at 07:58

To: Michael Bailey [REDACTED]

Regards,

Planning Team
Canterbury City Council
01227 862178



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From: **David Conder** [REDACTED]

Date: Mon, 9 Aug 2021 at 00:33

Subject: Canterbury Local Plan Consultation - response of Watch Over Adisham's Woods

To: planning@canterbury.gov.uk <planning@canterbury.gov.uk>

[REDACTED]

Watch Over Adisham's Woods response to Canterbury LP Consultation

1. *Watch Over Adisham's Woods* (WOAW) appreciates the extension of the consultation period. We have restricted our comments to items directly relevant to WOAW's purpose. This purpose to protect Adisham's 12 woods of antiquity, both woodland registered on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (in existence by 1600CE) and Long-Established Woodland (in existence by 1750CE but without evidence [to date] that it existed before 1601).
2. Canterbury City Council's (CCC's) wants to protect and enhance the first-class environment of the district, which includes nationally and internationally important wildlife habitat, beautiful rural landscapes of natural beauty and cultural meaning, a countryside full of signs and evidence of past generations and past peoples and significant access opportunities with one of England's best networks of public rights of way.
3. We ask CCC to adopt a policy that no new buildings/properties will be allowed in or adjacent to woodland in existence by the year 1750, unless there is a proven national imperative for such a development. Furthermore, we ask that CCC allow no further change of use, from forestry/agricultural/workshop use to residential, industrial or business premises in any wood in the district existing at 1750.

Rationale: woodland of such antiquity is not replaceable. Second, they are an asset to the district, important for the achievement of Canterbury's environmental objectives, and the features that make them special should be protected and enhanced to help achieve those objectives. Third, adopting this policy will, at the very worst, have absolutely no impact on the desire of Canterbury District Council to foster a world class economy within the district.

4. The proposal in section 3 above is key. In line with that and the need to enhance the two categories of woods of antiquity, CCC should make enforcement notices to remove development in these woods that was originally allowed under permitted development procedures but where it clear that the major and prime claimed purpose (e.g. forestry, farming, workshop) is just not proven. This principle should apply to aggregate-covered woodland roadways, where it is clear that the roadway's prime purpose is to service a building that is not, in truth, for forestry/agriculture/workshop, or as an informal race-track through the woods. The opportunity should also be taken to order the removal of large containers (shipping and lorry containers), dumps of construction waste and so on from both ancient woods and long-established woods.
5. Fencing should only be permitted around a wood of antiquity if it does not detract from the landscape and if it is of a type that will allow the daily/nightly movement of wild mammals and their seasonal migrations. The practice of 'lotting', dividing up a wood and selling the plots off to multiple new owners, is fundamentally destructive to woodland of antiquity and Canterbury City Council should do nothing further to support this corrosive practice. CCC's past support of this practice includes permissions for buildings, roadways, fencing inside a previously integral wood, the connection of utilities and security lighting inside these woods or adjacent to them. The last-named development (security lighting) is harmful to nocturnal wildlife and to the essence of these old woods as places of tranquillity. The only exception to this might be if the fencing was needed or approved by a conservation body (e.g. Natural England, Historic England, KWT, Woodland Trust, RSPB, National Trust or Canterbury Archaeological Trust) to advance a proven conservation or heritage objective.
6. The Woodlands Road corridor (also forms part of the route of Sustrans National Cycle Network route 16) covered by the Conservation Order: CCC should take action to improve this area, in line with the commitment made by CCC's then new CEO to a packed public meeting in Adisham in the mid 1990s.
7. Light pollution: there are some good proposals in the draft plan and WOAW applauds them. Highland Court's expansion could increase light pollution in the woods (most of which are on that side of the parish), especially if a sports ground is included in the scheme. The same is true for the huge expansion of Aylesham. At a more local level, the security lights must be removed from Adisham's woods entirely.
8. Traffic along Woodlands Road (and indeed all roads in the parish): the huge Aylesham expansion could flood the Parish of Adisham with traffic, as would the Highland Court scheme if it includes a sports ground. Hopefully CCC are talking with KCC and DDC about the implications of the Aylesham's proposed new estates.
9. The North Downs AONB and the North Downs AHLV: we do understand and support the trimming of the AHLV **if** this trimming is **only** for areas covered by the North Downs AONB. WOAW would absolutely oppose the loss of AHLV designation from any land in the parish if that land was not covered by AONB designation.
The extension of the North Downs AONB: Not only do *Watch Over Adisham's Woods* strongly support the AONB, we think there is a good landscape and heritage case for the whole of the Parish of Adisham to be covered by the North Downs AONB. Furthermore, the recent UNESCO initiative for the AONB demonstrates the opportunities for an alternative and more positive model of development in the countryside. While this is not in CCC's immediate remit, we hope CCC will support the case when the AONB's boundaries are next reviewed. -ENDS-

David Conder
Watch Over Adisham's Woods



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