

CANTERBURY DISTRICT DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031

KEY POINTS

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The target is for an additional 15,600 dwellings to be built in the district over the 20-year period from 2011 to 2031, which equates to 780 a year. The target is based on the recommendations of the Nathaniel Lichfield Report, produced for the Council in 2011. The Report assessed a range of other possible targets, including:

- 80-150 dwellings per annum, which would not require any additional land not already allocated for development;
- 510 per annum – the target previously adopted in the South East Plan;
- 1100-1200 per annum, which would meet all future needs but would also encourage an increase in commuting to work elsewhere.

The Report recommended the target of 780 because it claimed that it would promote economic growth and generate more jobs, although it would require building on greenfield sites.

The Council also commissioned a survey of public opinion by Ipsos-Mori in 2011. This showed that:

- 71% supported development at the level of 510 per annum or higher;
- 39% supported development at a level higher than 510 per annum (i.e. at the level proposed in the draft plan).

However, support for building new homes decreased by 42% if it would mean building on greenfield sites, and by 37% if it would lead to an increase in traffic and congestion.

There should be a particular emphasis on:

- more small and medium-sized housing;
- more affordable housing;
- more rented homes at rents local people can afford;
- an increase in purpose-built student accommodation to release housing for families.

Land allocated for new housing includes the following strategic allocations:

Canterbury Sites

Land at South Canterbury 4,000

Herne Bay Sites

Strode Farm, Herne Bay 800

Land at Greenhill, Herne Bay 600

Land at Herne Bay Golf Club, Herne Bay 400

Land at Hillborough, Herne Bay 1000

Whitstable Sites

North of Thanet Way, Whitstable 400

Rural Sites

Land at Sturry/Broad Oak 1000

Land North of Hersden 800

The South Canterbury site consists of the area between the Old Dover Road, Nackington Road and the A2 by-pass, and the area between the New Dover Road, Barton Road and the Dover railway line.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

There is evidence that a high proportion of HMOs in any given area (mostly family accommodation in Canterbury city occupied by students) changes the character of the area, and the nature of the local community. Research indicates that levels of late-night disturbance, untidy gardens and incidents of litter and poor storage of refuse experienced by local residents are significantly higher in areas with higher proportions of HMOs than those with lower proportions. The Council will therefore adopt a policy that changes of use to HMOs, or extensions to existing HMOs, will not be permitted in areas where the proportion of HMOs already exceeds 10%. However, in areas where there is an exceptionally high proportion of HMOs in any particular block of properties, consideration will be given to permitting further conversions. An Article 4 Direction will be put in place for the adoption of this policy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Local Plan will ensure that the area's traditional economic strengths including culture, heritage, leisure, hospitality and shopping can be sustained. It will continue to support the development of Canterbury as a 'Knowledge City' based on its education sector and private-sector knowledge-led businesses, together with financial and professional services.

The following sites allocated for housing also included allocation for business development:

Area	Site	Floorspace
Canterbury	Land at Barton Farm	70,000 sqm
Herne Bay	Land at Strode Farm	15,000 sqm
	Land at Altira Business Park	33,000 sqm

The following sites are identified and protected for business purposes, under Use Classes B1 and B8:

Area	Site	Site Area
Canterbury	Innovation Centre, University of Kent*	3.45ha
	Broad Oak Road/ Vauxhall Road	1.4ha
	Canterbury West Station	0.4ha
	Office Connection site, St.Andrews Close	0.1ha
Herne Bay	Eddington Lane (various)	8.2ha
	Altira Park	1.6ha
	Metric Site	0.2ha
Whitstable	Land at Wraik Hill	3.2ha
Rural areas	Canterbury Business Park (Highland Court)	3ha

Education as a sector is very important to the Canterbury district. It is a major employer in the public and private sectors and continued to perform well through the recession. The Council supports the preparation of long-term strategies for the University sites, and will work with the Universities to facilitate their preparation.

University of Kent

The Council will expect the University of Kent to prepare a Masterplan for the whole campus, prior to any significant development within the site. Such a Masterplan should maintain the campus character of the university; respect the setting of the site in the wider countryside; and identify the key uses and their disposition within the site and any relocation of uses within the wider campus area. It should also set out a landscape strategy for the whole site. Significant development proposals at the university will also be subject to updating of the university's transport impact assessment, and a review of the university travel plan.

TOWN CENTRES

Canterbury city centre should retain its position as an important regional centre for retail and consumer services, providing for the needs of residents, students, workers, tourists and the visitor economy generally.

In the area around St Peter's Street, Orange Street, the Marlowe Theatre and Westgate Hall, the Council will permit a range of 'cultural / leisure / tourism' uses, in addition to retail uses. Such uses might include museums, art galleries and event spaces to take advantage of the substantial cultural investment in this part of the City at the Marlowe Theatre, Beaney Institute, the Westgate Hall and the Westgate Towers.

The Wincheap Retail Area (currently the Wincheap Industrial Estate and Riverside Retail Park) close to the Park and Ride, is well placed to act as a satellite retail centre. It should cater for more mass market and large format retailers. Redevelopment of the area should incorporate a traffic management scheme to improve traffic flow on Wincheap (including a new off-slip from the A2, and a relief route for Wincheap itself).

There are gaps in the provision for leisure activities in Canterbury:

- The family orientated leisure sector - increased cinema provision and/or addition of large format entertainment such as an ice rink or bowling alley
- Higher end bars which would help to strengthen the early evening economy, to serve the professional and family market and complement the Marlowe Theatre.
- Mainstream health and fitness provision;
- The budget and high end hotel market could be strengthened.

Leisure and cultural activities would be suitable uses at both the Kingsmead Depot mixed use site and Wincheap Retail Area,

The Council will grant planning permission for development in the city centre that could lead to significant evening and night-time activity provided that:

- a) The development does not lead to a significant increase in anti-social behaviour in the area;
- b) The proposal incorporates adequate measures to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- c) There will be no unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

TRANSPORT

Canterbury's medieval streets, heritage buildings and railway crossings make traffic management very difficult. Although the City is bypassed to the south-west by the A2, the highway network is under acute pressure. As a result, Canterbury suffers from significant peak hour congestion especially on the inner ring road and inner radial routes. This contributes to the poor air quality, particularly in areas within the Air Quality Management Area.

Merely building more roads would not be the right answer. The best approach, while maintaining and improving road access and avoiding traffic build up, is to shift to more efficient ways of travelling that take up less road space. The way of doing this is to promote alternative forms of travel such as walking and cycling for short journeys and bus and rail use for longer journeys.

- Pedestrian priority measures in residential streets will be sought and vehicle speeds must be kept low.
- Canterbury already has a good cycle network and more routes need to be identified to make cycling a sustainable alternative to the car. All new development will include traffic-free segregated cycle routes.
- Bus travel has been Canterbury's transport success story. While bus use across the UK has continued to decline, Canterbury has seen rapid growth since 2004. Improved frequency of services plays a key role, and can be further improved by public investment and new bus priority measures such as on the Sturry Road.

800 new park-and-ride spaces will be provided:

- Sturry Road +100 spaces (total 700 capacity)
- Wincheap +300 spaces (total 900 capacity)
- New Dover Road/south Canterbury +400 spaces (total 1,000 capacity)

As part of the development in South Canterbury it is proposed that the existing New Dover Road park and ride is expanded and re-sited close to a new A2 interchange. If a new park and ride site is needed, consideration will be given to the site at Faulkner's Lane, Harbledown. There are no plans for park and ride sites at the approaches into Canterbury from Whitstable and Sandwich as bus services on these routes have recently received substantial investment and this might be undermined by new park and ride sites.

Development of the Wincheap industrial estate will include improved traffic management including a new A2 off-slip road, expansion of the park and ride, a relief road with bus lanes, and pedestrian and cycle routes to Castle Street and the city centre.

To relieve congestion in Sturry, the new development sites in Herne Bay, Sturry, Broad Oak and Hersden will be used to pay for a Sturry by-pass that avoids the level crossing by providing a new road bridge (including a bus lane) over the railway line.

The possibility of a new eastern Canterbury by-pass will be investigated, to link the A28, A257 and A2. This could be part of the development for South Canterbury and the barracks site.

TOURISM

Tourism plays a large part in the local economy, but it must be managed so that it does not increase traffic congestion, with alternative modes of transport between tourist destinations. Measures are needed to disperse visitors across the district, and to convert day visitors to overnight stays. There is a need for more hotels at the top end of the market, as well as more guesthouses and self-catering accommodation to support current demand and encourage overnight stay visitors.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The issue of climate change is of global importance, and it is essential that activities in the District contribute to national objectives for reducing carbon emissions. Measures will include:

- giving priority to sustainable forms of transport;
- promoting developments that generate renewable energy;
- encouraging Combined Heat and Power at strategic development sites;
- designing development to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Adaptation to climate change will focus particularly on reducing the risk of flooding. New developments will promote Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) including soakaways, swales, rain gardens and porous/permeable surfaces, to allow stormwater to enter the ground directly and not place unrealistic loads on the downstream water network. Green roofs can also have the advantage of slowing down runoff from roofs and also providing a useful refuge for wildlife.

ENVIRONMENT

The Council will protect and enhance the World Heritage Site incorporating the Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey and St Martin's Church. It will protect significant views of the city and the World Heritage Site including the views from specified locations at Tonford Meadows, Harbledown, St. Thomas Hill, St. Martin's Hill, St. George's Field, New House Lane, Neal's Place, the University Road/University Slopes, and Beaconsfield Road/St. Stephen's playing fields. Planning permission will not be granted for development in the areas that are of special importance for the preservation of the views, unless it can be shown that the development will not affect one of the identified '*long distance views*'.

The landscape character of the District is an important asset. The particular qualities of the landscape play a major role in defining sense of place and provide the fabric of and home to, our natural resources and biodiversity. Local residents and visitors value the beautiful and peaceful environment and countryside within the District and the difference which this makes to quality of life.

The Canterbury District Landscape and Biodiversity Appraisal will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and will be used to ensure that development proposals reflect the distinctive character, qualities and sensitivities of the area, maintain local identity and protect and enhance the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks.

The Open Space Strategy is currently under review and will be updated in line with the adoption of the Local Plan. The Council will seek to ensure the creation of a comprehensive and attractive network of formal and informal recreational facilities and open space, which is informed by a district wide audit, to identify areas of need for all forms of open and recreational space. The Council will protect existing open space in the district, and improve the quality of this open space for residents, workers and visitors, as well as taking every opportunity to provide additional open space where there is a recognised need. The overall deficiency in open space in the District means that the Council is especially determined to prevent the loss of existing open space within the urban boundaries, whether publicly or privately owned, by reason of its contribution towards recreational or visual amenity.

The Green Gap policy will aim to retain separate identities of existing settlements, by preventing their coalescence through development.