

CHAPTER SIX

6. OBJECTIONS TO THE CHAPTER ON PROMOTING OUR COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY R1 - CONVERSION OF BUILDINGS IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE - AND PREAMBLE IN PARAGRAPHS 5.1-5.12

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.1 Our Objectives

RN310 Wickhambreaux Parish Council (2338)

- Emphasis on tourism is wrong

Paragraph 5.4 – Local Needs Housing in the Countryside

RN103 McCabe (548, 549)

- Affordable housing should only be through a housing trust with a survey through KRCC

Paragraph 5.8 - Residential Extensions in the Countryside

RN199 East Kent District Green Party (1523)

- What logic is it to ensure extensions should be subservient to the scale of the original building?

Policy R1 – Conversion of agricultural or rural buildings

RN120 English Nature (469)

RN226 BT Group Plc Represented By RPS (1681)

RN270 The Church Commissioners for England represented by Cluttons (1985)

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2515)

- Add "any conditions should be enforced"
- Farm buildings often serve as bat roosts: include reference to retention of roosts
- Unclear if all the criteria in policy R1 must be satisfied, or just one category
- Policy makes no allowance for enhancement by conversion or replacement of a building which does not meet the R1(a) definition
- Clarification needed between the conversion of buildings in the open countryside and those near to existing settlements
- Criterion (a) is too excessive and not supported by PPG7. Amend Policy and delete criterion (a)

Re: A5/005 – Reworded Policy R1

RD097 English Nature (20244)

RD092 BT Group Plc Represented By RPS (20223)

- Important that R1 reflects guidance in PPG7 & allows consideration of viable alternatives to prevent buildings becoming vacant & falling into dereliction. Policy would restrict development
- Make specific reference to bats as set out in original objection

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.1 The Council has made a number of textual alterations to the words in Policy R1, in response to the First Deposit Draft objections, and the redrafted policy wording and supporting text accords very well with what is said in paras. 17-18 of PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, which appeared in 2004. The text strikes a good balance between avoiding harm to the local rural context and not standing in the way of benign, sustainable development. I find that the English Nature objection about bat habitats has been satisfactorily dealt with by textual change in new paragraph 5.12b and a re-worded Policy NE1.

Recommendation

6.2 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R2 – NEW AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT – AND PARAGRAPHS 5.13-5.16

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.13 – A Working Countryside

RN310 Wickhambreaux Parish Council (2349)

- It is felt that the government does not really care about agricultural prosperity (but does towards supermarkets)

Policy R2 – New Agricultural Buildings

RN103 McCabe (550)

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2516)

- Add "any conditions should be enforced."
- Add (d): "the new building should have a proven economic need"

Re: A5/008 – Amended Policy R2

RD134 English Heritage (20510)

RD146 BSF Planning Consultants (20710)

- (d) re impact on the setting of heritage, add: "and their settings where appropriate"
- (a) - this goes beyond the GDPO provisions

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.3 The Council has put forward Further Amendment FA5/004, which deletes an erroneous "or" separating criteria (a) and (b) in Policy R2. The Revised Deposit Draft text strikes a good balance overall between accommodating demonstrable agricultural needs and avoiding harm to existing buildings of character and the rural surroundings. Nevertheless, I consider that criterion (b) would be strengthened and made more clear if rephrased to read:

“(b) the proposal avoids harm to its physical setting by its siting, scale, design, materials and external colours;”.

Recommendation

6.4 I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate Further Amendment No. FA5/004 as set out in Core Documents CD1.14, CD1.19 and CD1.21, and the altered wording I suggest in my paragraph 6.3 above, but that no other modification be made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R3 - AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.17-5.19

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.17 – Agricultural Diversification and Rural Enterprise

RN310 Wickhambreaux Parish Council (2350)

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- It is felt that the government does not really care about agricultural prosperity (but does towards supermarkets)

Paragraph 5.19 – Protecting the Best Agricultural land

RN010 Wilks (333)

- New policy should state: Grades 1 & 2 agricultural land will not be permitted for any development except changes to organic farming

Re: A5/011 – New paragraph 5.18a Rural Diversification

RD088 South Canterbury Trust represented by J & J Design (20306)

- Object to omission of tourism and community re-uses to paragraph 5.18a. Include these as acceptable uses for conversion of redundant buildings

Re: A5/013 – New paragraph 5.18c Rural Diversification

RD132 Whitstable Beach Campaign (2044)

- Para 5.18c after “agricultural” add “or fish (farming) purposes”

Policy R3 – Rural Diversification

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2517)

- Agree with policy but add "any conditions should be enforced"

Re: A5/014 – Reworded Policy R3

RD088 South Canterbury Trust represented by J & J Design (20305)

RD134 English Heritage (20511)

- (f) fails to recognise that the impact on the setting of heritage sites. Add “and their settings where appropriate”
- Omission of explicit reference to tourism or community uses inconsistent with Policy R1 which advises that these are preferable to residential conversions. Add 'or provide for tourism or community uses'

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 6.5 What is said in paragraph 5.19 about protecting the best agricultural land accords with what is said on this important matter in PPS7's paras. 28 and 29. Given the high incidence of land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification within the District, any stronger statement would be very impractical. This is because the Local Plan inevitably has to take some of this high value land when the Council has no alternative but to make allocations elsewhere than on previously developed land, or on undeveloped land within an Urban Area Boundary.
- 6.6 The Council has put forward two Proposed Changes. PC5/001 adds mention of community facilities to the third sentence of paragraph 5.18. PC5/002 amends new Paragraph 5.18a, adding tourism and community uses to the favoured categories of uses. I consider that these Proposed Changes are adequate to give religious bodies like the South Canterbury Trust a legitimate reason to use Policy R3 in pursuit of their interests, and that no specific change to the Policy text is necessary. I see no good planning reason to make mention of fish farming, a specialised activity, within a section of the Plan dealing with rural and agricultural matters.
- 6.7 I think that there would be no harm and some possible planning usefulness in redrafting the end of criterion (f) to read: “...nature conservation interest, or on sites of architectural or historic importance, or their settings where appropriate; and...”.

Recommendation

- 6.8 I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate Proposed Changes Nos. PC5/001 and PC5/002, as set out in Core Documents CD1.14, CD1.19 and CD1.21, and the altered wording I suggest in my paragraph 6.7 above, but that no other modification be

made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R4 - RURAL DIVERSIFICATION - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.20-5.21

Objections and Key Issues

Policy R4 – New Buildings in the Countryside

RN080 Dover District Council (1560)

RN120 English Nature (470)

RN278 South Canterbury Trust represented by J & J Design (1766)

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2518)

- The list of criteria would be more appropriate in a general policy as it is important to read the Plan as a whole
- Amend Policy to include; "or meet local needs for community facilities including places of worship"
- Size should be related to what is needed. No executive houses for managers, and should be protected from any change of use not connected with the rural economy
- Amend to refer to nature interests

Re: A5/016 – Reworded Policy R4

RD088 South Canterbury Trust represented by J & J Design (20303, 20304)

RD134 English Heritage (20512)

- Policy R4 d) fails to recognise that the impact on the setting of heritage sites could also be important. Add the words: "and their settings where appropriate"
- Policy omits any explicit reference to tourism or community uses. This is inconsistent with text at paragraph 5.18, which acknowledges local community needs. Add 'and tourism or community uses' to Policy R4.
- Criterion (c) should read 'use', not 're-use' - typographical error

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.9 The Council's redrafting of the Policy in the Revised Deposit Draft accords well with PPS7. Changes include an adequate reference to nature interests. An error is put right by Proposed Change PC5/003, deleting "re-use" from criterion "c". As to the objection of the South Canterbury Trust, I see no reason to mention community facilities or places of worship in the Policy. The Council has put forward a more logical change, which should meet the objector's essential planning needs; this is in Chapter Seven of the Plan, through a new paragraph following 7.58 (Further Amendment No. FA7/003), which I discuss in due course.

6.10 As in Policy R3, I do think that there would be no harm and some possible planning use in redrafting the end of criterion (d) to read: "...nature conservation interest, or on sites of architectural or historic importance, or their settings where appropriate; and...".

Recommendation

6.11 I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate Proposed Change No. PC5/003, as set out in Core Documents CD1.14, CD1.19 and CD1.21, and the altered wording I suggest in my paragraph 6.10 above, but that no other modification be made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

NEW POLICY R5a – SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS - AND PARAGRAPH 5.23-5.29

Objections and Key Issues

Re: A5/019 – paragraph 5.23 Protected Countryside

RD137 MHP Partnership represented by Davies Arnold Cooper (20637)

- Add: “in so far as it exists”

Re: A5/020 – new Policy R5a

RD146 BSF Planning Consultants (20709)

- Should the second line of the second part read “over other planning considerations”?

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.12 The Council has met the BSF objection by putting forward Proposed Change PC5/004, amending new Policy R5a by removing the words “landscape planning considerations”, and substituting “planning considerations”. No other alteration is necessary.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate Proposed Change No. PC5/004, as set out in Core Documents CD1.14, CD1.19 and CD1.21, but that no other modification be made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R6 - AREAS OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.23-5.32

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.30 – Areas of High Landscape Value

RN023 Foreman (639, 640)

- Green Gaps or AHLV policy should also cover area immediately to north of Popes Lane and Hawe Lane, Sturry to prevent development spreading to ancient woodland & high landscape area to the north
- Parts of the Broad Oak valley presently uncovered by AHLV should be designated as AHLV

Policy R6 – Areas of High Landscape Value

RN080 Dover District Council (1559)

RN103 McCabe (551)

RN139 Pelham Homes Ltd Represented by Jennifer Owen Associates (1583)

RN152 University of Kent at Canterbury represented by BSF Planning Consultants (951)

RN229 Property Review & Development (2602)

RN242 R & P Marshall (2071)

RN322 English Heritage (1782)

- The AHLV is too general and restrictive, and should not be used as a means to stop development. The AHLV also ignores the 8 landscape character areas
- Those parts of the Campus of the University of Kent not in the City's valley setting should not be in the AHLV
- Add that the countryside has its own intrinsic value
- This policy could place unnecessary constraint on Blean Primary and Simon Langton Boys School. Add a caveat to policy; "unless there is an overriding need for the development."
- The archaeological heritage is worthy of a mention in support of preserving the existing landscape character
- Amend the boundary, as these are broad areas, containing opportunities for the diversity of sites within it
- There is conflict with Policy R11. The inconsistency creates confusion, and development proposals would have to meet different tests

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Re: A5/023 – Amended Policy R6 AHLV

RD134 English Heritage (20517)

RD146 BSF Planning Consultants (20712)

- Object to inclusion of historic setting within the criteria.
- Could be less ambiguous if reference was made to historic significance rather than setting in this instance

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 6.13 I have considered many objections classified by the Council as being made to this Policy in my findings on particular omission sites. An Area of High Landscape Value around Canterbury is a lower order, local landscape designation, inaugurated at District Council level. It is not analogous to a Green Belt, with a very strong presumption against most activity other than agriculture or forestry. It is seen by the Council as an area definition, within which normal open countryside policies obtain, identifying some specific landscape character and/or role that must be taken into account when any development is contemplated.
- 6.14 Inspector O'Rourke's 1997 report on her Local Plan Inquiry first considered this topic. She recommended that the Council carry out a landscape assessment to determine the landscape qualities, function and boundaries of the following areas: (i) the valley setting to the City of Canterbury; and (ii) Chislet Marshes. She recommended certain defined exclusions from those two definitions, but did not otherwise make boundary definitions. She required the Council to consider rigorously the function of and justification for the proposed designation of Area of High Landscape Value. She wanted any AHLV policy to "refer to the definition of the areas considered to have local landscape importance in terms of the particular quality/qualities of their landscape and the special landscape function they perform". She held that the policy approach should not preclude development, including diversification, but it would have to indicate necessary measures if development was permitted in the Areas. The wording of her recommendation left it clear that a defined AHLV could have two reasons for designation. One reason was that it possesses a landscape quality, revealed through the landscape assessment she required to be carried out. The other reason which might – but did not have to – coincide with landscape quality, was that an area had a special landscape role to perform in the control of development.
- 6.15 Inspector O'Rourke's report mentioned the conclusions of the EIP Panel, after it had considered the City Council's case for designating Special Landscape Areas in the Great and Little Stour Valleys and the Chislet Marshes, following the EIP into the Third Review of the Structure Plan in April 1994. She noted that "while the Panel considered that the areas contain many attractive features and were of great interest for their historical connections and in terms of nature conservation, they could not accept that, in landscape terms, either area could be described as unspoilt, nor could they define a common and consistent character in them".
- 6.16 My many site visits inside and outside Canterbury City have given me a familiarity with the surrounding landscape over the various seasons of the year. I also have a good visual acquaintance with other parts of the county, and adjoining areas of Sussex. Based on this knowledge, and with the evidence of the landscape quality of nearby AONBs and SLAs, I find that the actual landscape quality of the unbuilt land closest to Canterbury is no greater than pleasantly attractive open countryside of varying character. Of course I am not a landscape architect, but I am a Town Planner of long experience, possessing some visual sensitivity. I have seen and heard much written and spoken evidence on the matter, and that is my considered view. I must add that what I call "normally attractive open

countryside” is land which the adopted and emerging Structure Plans state “will be protected for its own sake”, whether it has a special designation or not. PPS7 makes it clear that criteria-based policies are to be considered sufficient for most landscapes that are highly valued in a locality, with local landscape designations only seen as justifiable where such policies cannot provide necessary protection.

- 6.17 The City Council’s subsequent “Canterbury Landscape Appraisal” appeared in November 1998 (CD5.2), the same month as the Adopted Local Plan in which Policy R5 designated one AHLV at the Wantsum Channel. The Appraisal identifies eight “landscape character areas” surrounding and related to the City. It categorises them as to character, condition and sensitivity, giving an idea of their tolerance to change. There is no doubt as to the value of the Appraisal as a tool in assessing development proposals of any kind, and as a prompt to making specific landscape improvements. These are wide reaching areas, considered to have a real relationship to the City. However, they are not the same thing as the precise terrain that has a special landscape role within the development control process, when the issue is the physical impact of a proposal on the historic setting of Canterbury. I find no tenable objection to the Revised Deposit Draft’s addition to the policy text concerning this “historic setting”. To me, this phrase seems easily understandable in the broad sense. Canterbury remains a modestly sized city which does not sprawl greatly, even after post-war expansion. It is not perceived by the adopted Structure Plan or this emerging Local Plan as a City which will grow appreciably beyond its present physical confines, although its framework will contain enhanced housing and employment activities.
- 6.18 I am convinced that there is a good case to identify a Canterbury-related AHLV, providing additional protection over that afforded by ordinary open countryside-related policies. However, this necessary Canterbury AHLV would not have a role of local importance simply because of the visual quality of its landscape. The AHLV’s special landscape role should be the prevention of visual damage to the City’s historic setting. For this purpose I do not find the title of this AHLV helpful. The designation will need to cover more than what is narrowly the river valley, while it must not stray into land not needed for the purpose. I consider the most apt area description would be: “Open Land beyond the City Edge Important to the Historic and Landscape Setting of Canterbury”. Thus I find no reason to make specific mention of archaeology in the Policy or supporting text, as English Heritage would wish. Paragraph 5.31 of the Local Plan should be redrafted and expanded to make what I have defined as the planning purpose of the Canterbury AHLV more clear.
- 6.19 As regards the boundary of this re-titled designation, this must sensibly be confined to land that makes a real visual contribution to the valley setting of the Historic City, the latter to this day dominated by its great cathedral. I consider that there should be omitted all the open land that is screened by the landform from human view to and from the Historic City and the upper parts of the Cathedral. These omissions should include land only offering intermittent views of them. I recommend using once more the determining factors of a point 60 m high on Bell Harry Tower, and a notional observer height of 1.5 m. I find that this 60 m point, relatively high on the Tower, would signify to any observer in his or her view from the approaches to the City. Of course, the precise height to use is an intrinsically subjective matter. Nevertheless, it is significant that no objector has suggested any more plausible alternative height in evidence.
- 6.20 I consider it important that the definition of the relevant landform should exclude any areas of land from which views are blocked by existing built development, or by significant areas or lines of planting on the land surface, even after leaf fall. It is not

sensible to take no notice of these categories on the grounds that they might, in theory, disappear at some point in the future. Subsequent Plans/Development Frameworks can always make necessary adjustments if these elements change significantly in the future. In defining the exact boundary line on the Proposals Map, the logic of my favoured approach would only use a road or visible field boundary, when the latter was very close indeed to the physically assessed stop to human view. In all other cases the actual extent of visibility, perhaps a particular woodland edge, contour or ridge line, would form the Proposals Map boundary of the AHLV.

- 6.21 The only exception to this methodology should be open land bounding the built-up area that lies in the floodplain of the Stour; the outer boundaries of this floodplain land seem to me reasonably defined at present. The present boundaries of the AHLV differ in their distance from the historic City, but there would be no need to draw them further in, unless the resurvey established that they do not meet the criteria I have set out.
- 6.22 The process I commend will inevitably somewhat diminish the defined area of the AHLV on the Draft Local Plan's Proposals Map. It is not possible or desirable for me to say in detail the precise extent or location of land that will be removed. Some University of Kent land to the north of the major ridgeline on its campus seems a strong candidate for removal. The fact some open land still within the AHLV after re-survey will contain existing or permitted University of Kent buildings within campus parkland does not affect the purpose of the designation, or its relevance as an assessment tool for future University projects.
- 6.23 Obviously, the Broad Oak land that I have recommended as a housing allocation would be removed, but other open land around it would also be resurveyed, so a greater extent of land than the allocation could also disappear. Around the Barton Farm Business allocation, seen as a potentially expandable 20 ha core just beyond the built-up area, I consider that the re-appraisal would logically involve resurvey of the envisaged small but significant permanent separation of those two entities by open land, as well as the potential land for expansion. Whether every contiguous part of the green edge to the built-up area should be included within the AHLV would depend on the evidence of the re-survey, the criterion being always an identifiable contribution to the landscape setting of the City.
- 6.24 Thus far I have discussed only the Canterbury related AHLV. The actions I have thought necessary do not affect the Wantsum Channel AHLV definition, which has not attracted specific objection. This definition is clearly prompted primarily by the quality of "the dramatic open landscape", and it does not present remotely the same problems or ramifications as the other defined area.

Recommendation

- 6.25 I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate altered wording, and actions as suggested in my paragraphs 6.13-6.24 above, but that no other modification be made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R7 - GREEN GAPS - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.33-5.41

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.39 – Green Gaps

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2520)

- Green Gaps are important and need protecting. For example, Fishpool to Littlebourne

Re: A5/025 - Amended Paragraph 5.39

RD137 MHP Partnership represented by Davies Arnold Cooper (20638)

- Add: “other than in the Rural priority Area/Regeneration Zone / the remainder of the Former Colliery land at Hersden” after “outside the urban areas”

Paragraph 5.41 – Green Gaps

RN103 McCabe (554)

RN274 Davis (1748)

RN315 Blean Parish Council (2306)

RN311 Bridge Parish Council (2280)

RN359 Harbledown Conservation Association (1945, 1946)

RN316 Herne and Broomfield Parish Council (1303)

RN306 Parish Council of Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne (2323)

RN310 Wickhambreaux Parish Council (2351)

RN023 Foreman (638)

RN029 Bridge Parish Council (436)

RN004 Chislet Parish Council (602)

RN061 PACE (33)

RN183 Sturry Parish Council (12)

- Council should take a bolder initiative with Green Gaps - relatively small area covered
- There is no reference to a Green Gap between Canterbury and Bridge/Patrixbourne. Should be an explicit reference to a policy to prevent developmental encroachment between Canterbury and Bridge
- List of Green Gaps excludes gap between Upstreet and Hersden
- Land between Herne and Greenhill should be designated a green gap
- The land between the north boundary of UKC and Tyler Hill, Blean should be added to the list of Green Gaps
- The area between Harbledown and Canterbury should be included in the list of Green Gaps
- A green gap should be retained between Herne and Greenhill to retain separate identities
- Between Westbere and Sturry and between Sturry and Westbere are green gaps that are being filled in
- Green Gap or AHLV policy should also cover area immediately north of Popes Lane and Hawe Lane, Sturry to prevent development spreading towards ancient woodland & high landscape area to the north
- Bridge should be in the list of green gap villages
- There should be a green gap for playing field adjacent to Whitstable Road/ Giles Lane, The Salt Way and Park Wood
- The Green Gap between Canterbury and Sturry should be a true Green Gap, without the spread of polytunnels or other temporary structures
- Would like to see some specific commitment in this plan to protecting the gap between Canterbury and the villages to the south which are seen as being under significant threat
- The area between Rough Common and Canterbury should be included in the list of Green Gaps

Policy R7 – Green Gaps

RN017 Harbledown Parish Council (608, 610, 612)

RN061 PACE (34, 35, 36)

RN229 Property Review & Development (2593)

RN275 Mr Baker etc (1757-1759)

RN306 Parish Council of Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne (2324)

RN311 Bridge Parish Council (2279)

RN314 Kingston PC (2297)

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RN315	Blean Parish Council (2300)
RN316	Herne and Broomfield Parish Council (1304)
RN328	Westbere Parish Council (2412)
RN348	Littlebourne Parish Council (2521)

- Is unclear whether the overall character of the landscape in relation to the Green Gap relates to the area beyond the Green Gap or the Green Gap itself
- Land between Herne and Greenhill should be designated a green gap
- This policy as it applies to Montgomery School is covered by the protection playing fields (C21) and could add an additional constraint on the school. Add "Community facilities" and clause b) of C21
- Should be a Green Gap between Tyler Hill and Blean
- Should be a Green Gap between Bridge and Canterbury
- Should be a Green Gap between Tyler Hill and Canterbury
- Preserve Green Gap between Gate Inn at Canterbury and Bridge village
- Object to Bridge not being included in the list of Green Gap villages
- Protect the gap between Canterbury and villages to the south
- Criterion (a) falls short of the aim to retain openness and should be strengthened and clarified
- A Green Gap is needed at Rough Common to protect the rural character of the area from development
- The break between Rough Common and Canterbury should be subject to the policy through two defined breaks on open land both sides of the A290
- Land north of Oaks Park Road should be a Green Gap to separate Rough Common and Blean
- There should be a green gap for playing field adjacent to Whitstable Road/ Giles Lane, The Salt Way and Park Wood
- A need for a Green Gap between Harbledown and Canterbury
- Include areas between Westbere Conservation Area and The Villas at eastern end of parish
- There should be Green Gaps on land on both sides of the A290, west and north of St Edmund's School; also on land west of the A290 at Tile Kiln Hill, Blean
- Land between Canterbury and Littlebourne should be a Green Gap

Re: A5/036 – Amended Policy R7

RD018	Gilbey (20026)
RD019	Kingston Parish Council (20028)
RD099	Maydowns Road Residents Association (20260)

- The words "and obtrusive" could be counterproductive. Unobtrusive development could weaken protection too

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 6.26 The supporting text makes it clear that this is a policy where the Proposals Map designations are limited to modest "pinch points", where closely related settlements are at particular risk of coalescence. In such gaps, even the smallest developments could harm the retention of separate identities. It is a depressing but true to realise that the Policy almost always stems from past failures to control development with adequate rigour and foresight. Agricultural buildings, and rural clutter can exacerbate the problem, and can be less easy to control.
- 6.27 It is quite understandable that a number of objectors with altruistic motives would like the Policy extended to other areas perceived as gaps. This often reflects a worry that the normal kind of policies applicable in open countryside will be less than effective in checking sprawl and require an additional designation – a kind of "belt and braces" approach. Though I appreciate the latent concerns, I do believe that this kind of policy must be used sparingly, where the gap is very narrow, or it will run the risk of being regarded as a rural commonplace, and devalued.
- 6.28 The Council has responded positively to First Deposit Draft representations seeking an additional Gap between Canterbury and Tyler Hill. I have visited all the remaining candidate areas, some on more than one occasion. I have judged each against the written policy criteria, and have compared the physical circumstances of each against the seven

favoured Green Gaps. None really amounts to a pinch point, where one or two further developments could obliterate the distinction between two settlements. Proper adherence by the Council to its existing open countryside policies should meet potential problems affecting separation in all the areas that understandably concern objectors.

- 6.29 The Policy does not amount to a total prohibition on all development requiring planning permission. Two criteria refine the application of the policy, and I consider that the wording in the Revised Deposit Draft will be able to capture and control every proposal that would materially narrow a Green Gap. I find that the added words “and obtrusive” in (b) strengthen the Council’s intention and would not in reality allow smaller development to be built more easily than before. All the Gaps are seen as potentially useable for open-air sport and recreational uses. This will require a restrictive and properly sceptical attitude from the Council when it considers proposals, in order to minimise inescapable ancillary structures. Nevertheless, these uses may sometimes prove to be the best long-term solution in certain Green Gaps.
- 6.30 The Council has put forward three Further Amendments in this section. FA5/001 deletes the words “on some small pockets of land” from paragraph 5.36. FA5/002 deletes the words “by a proliferation of Green Gaps” from the end of the third sentence of paragraph 5.39. FA5/003 amends the final sentence of Policy R7 by a tightening of the wording concerning related built development, bringing in specific mention of criteria (a) and (b). All three Further Amendments appear to me to refine the text and make it more effective in controlling development.

Recommendation

- 6.31 I recommend that the Local Plan be modified to incorporate Further Amendment Nos. FA5/001, FA5/002 and FA5/003, as set out in Core Documents CD1.14, CD1.19 and CD1.21, but that no other modification be made to the text of the Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R8 - TOURISM - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.42-5.43

Objections and Key Issues

RN179 Kent Wildlife Trust (189)

- Criterion (e) wording not specific enough

Re: A5/029 – Amended Policy R8 Tourist Accommodation

RD134 English Heritage (20513)

- Policy R8 e) fails to recognise that the impact on the setting of heritage sites could also be important. Add: “and their settings where appropriate”

Reasoning and Conclusions

- 6.32 The Council has significantly expanded the wording and scope of criterion (e), and I find it quite adequate in scope. The contents of the Policy and all its complementary criteria make yet more wording about “setting” unnecessary here, given other heritage related material in Plan Chapter Six .

Recommendation

6.33 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICIES R9 & R10 - VILLAGE FACILITIES AND SERVICES - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.44-5.46

Objections and Key Issues

Policy R9

RN054 Attwood (79)

- Take out “need”; insert “demand”

Paragraph 5.44 – Village Facilities and Services

RN316 Herne and Broomfield Parish Council (2364, 2365)

- Where appropriate, small village businesses as pubs and post offices should be assisted by granting them zero rating for business tax
- Village and church halls should be added to the list public amenities that the City Council wishes to protect

Re: A5/031 – amended policy R9 Loss of Village facilities and Services

RD135 KCC Education & Libraries (20559)

- Community facilities could apply to schools & other KCC services. Use of word “demand” is not correct; replace “demand” with “need” in criterion a)

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.34 Policy R9 now includes mention of village halls. The word “demand” seems to me more appropriate in criterion (a) than “need”, as it conveys the better the harsh realities of declining custom for particular facilities in one particular place, when an alternative is available and generally preferred. “Need” on the other hand is a quality that is easier to claim than to prove.

Recommendation

6.35 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R11 – LEISURE, RECREATION AND ACCESSIBILITY – AND PARAGRAPHS 5.48-5.49

Objections and Key Issues

Policy R11 – Sports and Recreation facilities in Countryside

RN103 McCabe (558)

RN179 Kent Wildlife Trust (190)

RN224 Sport England (1688)

RN228 Kent County Council (1638)

RN322 English Heritage (1783)

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2526)

INSPECTOR’S REPORT ON THE CANTERBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

- Criteria (a), (b) and (c) overly restrictive and inflexible
- Add to the criteria: " No extra noise"
- Could expand to cover golf course development, with issues of landscape/re-contouring works requiring waste materials, with a need for County Council input

Re: A5/033 – Amended Policy R11

RD086 Sport England (20314)

RD137 MHP Partnership represented by Davies Arnold Cooper (20639)

- Add to (b): sites or features of acknowledged nature conservation interest
- Amendments do not address previous objection

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.36 This is a general all-sports policy, with no particular need to mention golf courses specifically. The wording has been expanded and somewhat strengthened in the Revised Deposit Draft, but I find that the requirements of the policy could all be met without undue difficulty if potential sites were searched for outside the most sensitive areas. There is no planning need to qualify the term “sites and features of nature conservation interest” further in this context.

Recommendation

6.37 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.

POLICY R12 - HORSE RELATED DEVELOPMENT - AND PARAGRAPHS 5.50-5.51

Objections and Key Issues

RN103 McCabe (559)

RN179 Kent Wildlife Trust (191)

- Should be more safe bridleways and shared use with cyclists
- Reword criterion (b)

Re: A5/034 – Amended Policy R12

RD134 English Heritage (20514, 20515)

- Policies R11b) and R12 b) fail to recognise that the impact on the setting of heritage sites could also be important. Add the words: “and their settings where appropriate”

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.38 Criterion (b) has been expanded to meet the points made by the Kent Wildlife Trust. The contents of the Policy and all its complementary criteria make yet more wording about “setting” unnecessary here, given the existence of other heritage related material in Plan Chapter Six. I see no planning need for extra policy content.

Recommendation

6.39 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.

PARAGRAPHS 5.52-5.55 – RURAL TRANSPORT

Objections and Key Issues

Paragraph 5.52 – Rural Transport

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2530)

- More cycle routes are needed

Paragraph 5.53 – Rural Transport

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2528)

RN103 McCabe (590)

- There should be more safe bridleways and shared use with cyclists. Cyclists have been using bridleways since the 1980 Countryside Act
- No horses should be allowed on the Public Right of Way

Paragraph 5.54 – Rural Transport

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2531)

RN183 Sturry Parish Council (16)

- Reference should be made to heavy lorries accessing farms & damaging roads and riverbanks
- Better controls are required for the management of traffic in rural areas. The drivers of heavy vehicles ignore the restrictions

Re: A5/035 – Amended Paragraph 5.54

RD090 Bekesbourne with Patnixbourne Parish Council (20207)

- Supports amendment referring to damage by heavy traffic but no joined-up thinking linking this to the lack of any Policy or objective to contain growth of traffic in rural areas

Paragraph 5.55 – Rural Transport

RN348 Littlebourne Parish Council (2532)

- Rural lanes need protecting from rat runners and made safe for walkers and cyclists

Reasoning and Conclusions

6.40 The Council has written what I regard as four unexceptionable paragraphs on rural transport, but without a specific policy. The objections tend to ask for a range of actions, some not the province of town and country planning. Other matters are pursued in the Council's Canterbury District Transport Action Plan (CD7.8). The text in the Revised Deposit Draft is not in need of alteration.

Recommendation

6.41 I recommend that no modification be made to the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan in respect of these objections.
