



CCC Consultations <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Re: CANTERBURY AREA DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2020-2045 Policy C6 Land at Merton Park

1 message

Howard Laughton [REDACTED]

13 January 2023 at 15:36

To: "consultations@canterbury.gov.uk" <consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

Dear Policy and Strategy Team,

As a Canterbury resident I wish to express my vehement opposition to the proposed Merton Park development. Once again, the City council proves it has no vision whatsoever, little express concern for urban green space and is quite ready to bulldoze an 'edgeland' where many of us have sought peace and quiet during recent, and continuing, turbulent times.

The policy doc pays lip service to the landscaping and green infrastructure. Perhaps we're considered fools; we'll be taken in by the green bits! But this plan is about housing, first and foremost. If the council were to propose a more balanced view, where the site might have *only* social (passive) housing with extensive green space (50%), I might be more inclined to consider it a valued proposition - although if I had my way I would turn the whole site into a much needed nature reserve bursting with biodiversity and proving pioneering in futureproof urban planning. When are we going to stop building over the countryside? Where does it stop? Where? Housing policy in this country needs rethinking from the bottom to the top.

Instead, you cede to government pressure, you continue to cuddle up with partners (developers) who put self-interest first and I wonder how many of you are, in fact, town residents...

But hang on! Good for you re constructing a new hospital on the site! Except we know the developer will build a shell, and concentrate on raking in the profits from 'affordable housing' starting at money I certainly don't have, like those being built at Thanington; and the recent Observatory development in Wincheap. Mmm, that Observatory stock began at £450k, didn't they, and went up to was it £800k?

Honestly, nearly everywhere I look, and I've been a resident in Canterbury for 20 years, I see a net loss. (Every time I go to Whitefriars, I could be anywhere, sadly. It really makes me sad. Trees, where? How much more inviting it could have been...)

So I fear this is just another scheme to hurt the Canterbury majority in favour of the minority, and the land in general. I haven't yet read all the other proposals for housing locally but I wouldn't be surprised if it's the same depressing reading.

Howard Laughton