



Canterbury District Draft Plan

1 message

Rupert Brown

15 January 2023 at 15:11

To: consultations@canterbury.gov.uk

I am writing on behalf of Wincheap & District Allotment Association (WDAA) in connection with the Draft Canterbury and District Local Plan. The allotment plots we manage (Buck Oast 1 and 2) are immediately adjacent to the NW corner of the proposed Merton Park development (Policy C6) and so we have a direct interest in this part of the Plan.

We discussed the proposed plan at a recent committee meeting of the Association. We wish to comment on: (1) the planned development of Merton Park as a whole; and (2) a specific element within the plan – namely, the proposal to create 74 new allotments on the northern border of the development (p. 32).

1. We are opposed in principle to the proposal contained within Policy 6 to construct more than 2000 houses and other buildings on this site.
 - (a) In a time of food insecurity, we believe it makes no sense to lose over 40 hectares of prime agricultural land and fruit orchards.
 - (b) This development is also inconsistent with responsible environmental planning and the target of trying to reduce the country and city's carbon footprint.
 - (c) The associated infrastructure issues of new road links to and within the proposed site and problems of sewage disposal will also be environmentally detrimental.
 - (d) The loss of the green amenity of this site will be keenly felt by all the residents in the surrounding area (South Canterbury and Wincheap). During the COVID pandemic, this area was widely used as a space for exercise; it still is.

2. Notwithstanding our general objections to Policy C6, we welcome the proposal contained within it to create 74 new allotment plots on the northern edge of the area. In fact, in view of the demand for allotments in Canterbury, we suggest that the Council should be creating many more plots than this. We have approximately 50 people on our waiting list and the current wait time for a new plot is about one year.

If these new allotments are created, we urge the Council to give proper consideration to the following:

 - (a) Security of the proposed new allotment site. This would involve the erection of proper fencing to surround the site and the installation of CCTV cameras at the entrance and at various places on its boundary. In recent years, WDAA has experienced several break-ins with the loss of valuable tools and sheds. We would not want the new allotment holders to suffer the same fate.
 - (b) The planting of trees and hedges along the allotment boundary to provide proper screening and a habitat for wildlife.
 - (c) Mitigation of the risk of flooding and water run-off created by the new building development. This will be important not only for the proposed new allotment site but, even more so, for the lower lying plots on our allotments on Buck Oast 1 and 2.

Rupert Brown, Chairperson, Wincheap & District Allotment Association