
Objection to Proposed Park and Ride at Thanington Recreation Ground

From Mark Butler [REDACTED]
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To Consultations <Consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

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Dear Consultation Team,

I am writing in response to the consultation on the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan, and in particular the proposal (Policy N3) to build a Park and Ride facility on Thanington Recreation Ground. I wish to record my strong opposition to this proposal.

My family and I recently moved to the area and chose this community partly because of the access to the recreation ground. With two young children and a dog, we use the park daily, as do many other families, children, and older residents. It is one of the very few easily accessible green spaces in the area, and its loss would have a severe impact on the health, wellbeing, and daily lives of local people.

The council's own Local Plan emphasises the importance of protecting open space, supporting community wellbeing, and encouraging active travel. The removal of Thanington Recreation Ground would undermine these goals. For my children, it is not just a playing field but one of the only safe, open environments nearby where they can play, explore, and enjoy the outdoors. Once this land is built on, these benefits are lost forever and cannot be replaced by facilities elsewhere.

The suggestion that pitches will be "reprovided" within the future Merton Park development does not address the fundamental issue: the permanent removal of a much-used community park. Replacing formal pitches in a new development is not the same as preserving an existing, familiar, and freely accessible space that people rely on today.

This proposal also risks worsening environmental impacts. Removing mature green space contributes to biodiversity loss, reduces natural drainage, and increases traffic in the immediate area. These outcomes run counter to the Local Plan's stated commitments to sustainability, health, and protecting valued landscapes.

I fully understand the need to address transport and congestion, but this should not come at the expense of precious parkland. The council's evidence base already stresses the value of brownfield redevelopment and sustainable transport improvements, and these should be pursued instead of destroying one of the last remaining community green spaces in this part of the city.

For these reasons, I urge the council to withdraw the proposal to allocate Thanington Recreation Ground for Park and Ride and to prioritise protecting green spaces for current and future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Butler