
Submissions to the Draft Local Plan

From Alex Canterbury [REDACTED]
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Please include the following as a submission to the Local Plan consultation:

Policy N3 - Proposed allocation of the existing Thanington Rec as a Park & Ride Facility.

I wish to object in the strongest possible terms to Policy N3.

This is a particularly ill-conceived and thoroughly unsuitable proposal.

This area of the district is one of the most deprived. The allocation of the recreation ground as a car-park deprives local residents (particularly young people) of their only access to open-space.

The estate at Thanington was until recently surrounded by open-countryside. But due to previous decisions by Canterbury City Council each of these areas of open-space have systematically been developed as densely populated housing, or are now allocated to become such. The recreation-ground is therefore the ONLY open-space available for local people to use.

It is vital to the community, providing sports facilities, recreational space, areas for walking, picnics and play - and as a vital adjunct to the Thanington Resource Centre, which sits at the heart of this community, and has done so much to transform a previously troubled and disjointed community.

Policy N3 will devastate the lives of local residents. Taking away the lungs of the village - and destroying lives.

This allocation has been proposed and rejected before - as being wholly unsuitable. And, if anything the criteria used to determine that previous decision by the city council are stronger and more evident than they were then!

The City Council would be ignoring the evidence of its own adopted strategies if it were to concrete-over Thanington Rec as proposed in Policy N3.

The proposal flies in the face of the Council's recently adopted Open Space Strategy. That strategy specifically highlights that Thanington already suffers from a 'shortfall across all open space types' and frankly it seems inconceivable that councillors could be so criminally negligent to ignore the findings of their own (recently adopted) Open Space Strategy and in their next breath ignore their own findings.

IF there is to be any form of expansion to the existing Park and Ride provision it should only be considered (if at all) by providing a multi-storey solution on part of the existing car park. To deprive an already deprived area of its only amenity space, sacrifice already sparse sports facilities and condemn local children to a life of misery would be a criminal and callous act of vandalism, and the elected members of the City Council who make up the Executive, who at the last minute have foisted this proposal upon local residents, should hang their heads in shame.

Dr Alex Perkins (HC)
Former Councillor for Wincheap & Thanington
Former Leader of Canterbury City Council
Alderman of the City of Canterbury

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