

Helen O'Connor

From: Leo Whitlock
Sent: 11 October 2025 15:37
To: Consultations
Subject: Fw: Objection to relocation of Wincheap park and ride to Thanington Recreation ground .

From: Jean Butcher [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, October 11, 2025 9:57:16 AM
To: Leo Whitlock [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Objection to relocation of Wincheap park and ride to Thanington Recreation ground .

--Email From External Account--

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Aileen Lopez [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 9, 2025 12:56:22 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to relocation of Wincheap park and ride to Thanington Recreation ground .

--Email From External Account--

Dear Councillor.

I am writing to you today because I strongly object to the proposal to build a 900 space park-and-ride on Thanington recreation ground.

I have listed below my reasons.

- 1) Members of my family have lived there since the 1950s. I grew up there and some of my family still live there. During this period of time three generations have used that big green space with trees so we could run play sit, watch or play sport and enjoy the fresh air and it was invaluable to us all.
- 2) The recreation ground is established in 1930 in partnership with the National Playing fields Association and the Carnegie trust, who gave large donations towards the purchase. In addition to this there were local donations from the dean and chapter the ecclesiastical commissioners, the land's previous owner, Mr Lillywhite and the headteachers association amongst others. Money was also raised in the in local area towards this. Canterbury was seen as at the vanguard of the playing fields movement in Kent and received the largest

Carnegie grant in Kent. In 1935 there were only 300 residents when the parish council was granted and now there are significantly more residents.

Because of this history, I believe it's important to preserve this green space in perpetuity as was the original agreement and that this should be honoured and carried forward positively. I believe there's an opportunity to link this recreation ground to the Holbrook Meadows and further increase the biodiversity and nature in this area and the proposed building of the football facilities at Merton Park would support this. There's an opportunity to enhance the Thanington recreation ground to include wildflower meadows, A community Orchard, An accessible pathway around a green space that's both attractive and safe. It's clear that there's still a need for sports space in Thanington as that's been included in councils own proposal, despite it being quoted as temporary.

For children to have a place that they can run around without fear and feel safe in a deprived area is really important.

There are going to be approximately 3300 more homes built between Saxonfields Merton Park and those planned on the Wincheap redevelopment. The Recreation ground could continue and serve as a green space Amenity for all of those residents. The proposal for residents of Thanington to access Merton Park for recreation requires them either to walk from Thanington through Wincheap to Merton Park or access Merton Park through a tunnel under the motorway. Whilst on paper this might look acceptable Wincheap is a very busy thoroughfare for children to walk through and I would be concerned that a tunnel under the motorway would very quickly become somewhere where Homeless people may take up residence and drugtaking by others may occur. Neither of which make these safe options for our young people. Compare this to crossing the A28 via a traffic light crossing to Access Thanington recreation ground I'm sure I know which would be preferable.

3) The position of the playing field next to the resource Centre links it inextricably to the centre and it's transformation to a car park would surely damage that. I can't see any way that the residents would like to attend a centre on its own set between a motorway and a car park and I believe that the building work would chase people away because it would be such an unpleasant place to be whilst the work is going on. The resource Centre supports people in the top 10 most deprived areas in Kent and its work means that Thanington is no longer named little Beirut. It's an important asset to both Canterbury and Thanington and I would hope that Canterbury Council would hate to return to the old days. The current children's play facilities are planned to remain and I believe the motorway and the park-and-ride with massively increase air pollution in that area to the detriment of the people using the resource. Partner, I believe it's 10 years

4) I don't believe that this is the only option for a park ride nor do I believe it's needed. I worked in Canterbury for 10 years using the park-and-ride daily and even at Christmas I was able to park at lunchtime for an afternoon shift. During these 10 years very rarely did I see spaces occupied at the end of the car park where the proposed slip road is going. Since I've read the proposal, I visited the park-and-ride on four separate occasions and I've seen no more than two cars parked at the end of the car park where the proposed slip road will go and many spaces in the remainder of the car park. I've also walked the car park and I believe based on the plans submitted in the Wincheap options report that there will only be less than 30 spaces lost of which I believe 20 could be gained by using the space currently for the two

entrances. The Wincheap options report shows the entrance and exit is proposed to be where the current two exits are so I challenge the fact that there will be a loss of many spaces. Incidentally, in the Wincheap options report Produced in 2022 there are two proposals of how Wincheap could be redeveloped . In the introduction to the development plan it says the council seeks the provision of a multistorey car park with 300 spaces. In addition the two plans submitted as options show either office or hotel space built on the current Wincheap park-and-ride. Surely another 300 spaces would mitigate any loss at Wincheap. The option report also also indicates that Thanington recreation ground has a larger flood risk than the current park-and-ride at Wincheap and I would be concerned that concreting over such a large piece of green space that might never ever be green space again would increase the possibility of flooding into the city of Canterbury. It's almost as if there was a plan in 2022 to move the park-and-ride at Wincheap to Thanington in order to fulfil the Wincheap development option plan.

Further to this, I've been unable to find any evidence in the 2024 consultation that national highways and KCC raised concerns with the technical feasibility and deliverability of the A2 off slip at Merton Park. I would ask that you request that this information be provided to you and published to ensure there's transparency.

As part of the local plan there is a proposal to remove Ridlands from Merton Park and to allocate 310 Dwellings. From looking at the plans, this is where the proposed park-and-ride would've gone. If the KCC and National National highways consultation responses can be re-examined and challenged then there may be an opportunity still to provide the slip road to park-and-ride as was originally planned and agreed by the planners regarding in Merton Park. In addition this would also help access to Merton Park as I feel that the proposed access via Hollow Lane and Victoria Road is inappropriate as these Roads are narrow and currently difficult to drive through already and would be terrible once the development has been completed. In addition if Canterbury football continues to develop as is their intention additional parking at a park and ride would be very beneficial

5) Lastly, in the 2018 2031 Green infrastructure document Thanington recreation ground is listed as a protected Open space. I believe the council should take this opportunity to celebrate its own foresight in 1930 to grab the opportunity of providing a large open green space for the people of Canterbury. The council in its documents speaks of the need to Protect green space and enhance it for the use of the people of Canterbury. The river stour runs along the bottom of the recreation ground, Holbrook Meadows are on the other side of the river. Preserving The Thanington recreation ground gives you the opportunity to further enhance links to nature in Canterbury and I ask that you to put yourself in the place of those that you represent and to take into account all of the views of the local population in thanington and Wincheap and think of their needs, not just the needs of those who park in Canterbury and those who live and drive around the inner city of Canterbury.

With kind regards and hoping you take into account my heartfelt plea to save this resource from concrete.

Aileen Lopez

[Sent from the all-new AOL app for iOS](#)

Leo Whitlock

Head of Policy and Communications
Strategy and Improvement



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