
Objection to the Proposed Conversion of Thanington Recreation Ground into a Park & Ride Facility

From dave allard [REDACTED]
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To Consultations <Consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

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Dear Canterbury City Council,

I am writing to express my strong and unequivocal objection to your proposal to convert the Thanington Recreation Ground into a 900-space Park & Ride car park.

As a long-standing resident of Thanington, I am utterly dismayed by this plan. The recreation ground is not merely a patch of grass; it is the heart of our community. Families gather there for barbecues, children play football and ride bikes, local sports clubs train, dog walkers meet daily, and our youth enjoy the skate park and community centre that were established to reduce antisocial behaviour in the area. These amenities have transformed Thanington into a safe, thriving, and welcoming place to live.

To replace this vital green space with a vast car park is, frankly, incomprehensible, especially when the existing Park & Ride facilities in Canterbury are never full, even during peak periods such as Christmas. The city does not lack parking capacity; it lacks thoughtful planning and genuine investment in its existing infrastructure and local businesses. Rather than destroying one of the most picturesque and environmentally valuable areas of Canterbury, the Council should focus on revitalising the city centre, encouraging independent shops and community spaces, and addressing the blight of empty units and low-quality developments.

The once vibrant heart of Canterbury has become saturated with vape shops, burger bars, and other short-lived businesses that add little long-term value to the community. There are far better opportunities for regeneration, such as restoring landmark sites like Nasons and Debenhams, which could be repurposed into mixed-use developments that genuinely serve residents and attract visitors. In addition, the high cost of city centre parking actively discourages people from visiting Canterbury. Instead of adding unnecessary Park & Ride spaces, the Council should consider reducing weekend parking prices or improving public transport connections to increase footfall in a sustainable way.

This proposal would also have serious environmental consequences. The recreation ground borders the river, and the underlying chalk near the bridge is highly sensitive to heavy machinery. Increased traffic, noise, and air pollution would damage local biodiversity and degrade the very qualities that make Thanington special.

Please understand that if this development proceeds, I will ensure that every stage, including every tree felled, every piece of machinery used, and every instance of environmental damage, is fully documented and shared publicly across social media and community networks. The world will see what Canterbury City Council has chosen to destroy in the name of progress.

There is already a Park & Ride site just minutes away by the Wincheap Morrisons, which is a far more suitable and underused location. To add another so close by is not only unnecessary but deeply irresponsible.

This is a dreadful plan that would irreversibly harm our community, our environment, and our city's reputation. I urge you to withdraw it immediately and engage meaningfully with the residents of Thanington, who deserve to have their voices heard and their community respected.

Yours sincerely,

A deeply concerned and long-standing resident of Thanington