

From: Julie Dod [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2025 17:43
To: Consultations
Subject: Merton Park and Thanington Rec: objection to plans

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

--Email From External Account--

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a resident of [REDACTED], to formally object to the proposed Merton Park development and its impact on our community and environment.

Loss of Biodiversity and Protected Species

The fields and orchards surrounding Stuppington Lane are a thriving habitat for a wide range of wildlife. We regularly observe bats flying from the end of the Rugby Club up to Juniper Close, passing over the footpath to the Langton school and directly by our homes. These bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which make it illegal to disturb or destroy their roosts or flight paths without proper ecological assessment and licensing.

In addition to bats, we frequently see badgers, hedgehogs, dormice, foxes, and a variety of nesting birds in the orchard and hedgerows. There is an established badger sett in the field next to Juniper Close. The proposed development would fragment or destroy these habitats, leading to a significant and irreversible loss of biodiversity. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), developments must deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain and avoid harm to protected species and local wildlife corridors (Paragraphs 174–179).

Last but not least, Orchards are home for many birds, 38 different species have been spotted and 11 of these are listed as endangered. This was discussed in a recent community meeting on Friday 17th of October in Wincheap Scout Hut and evidence is available upon request.

Loss of Public Green Space and Dog Walking Routes

The fields and orchards are not only ecologically important—they are also cherished recreational spaces for local residents. Stuppington Lane and its surrounding green areas are widely used for dog walking, family outings, and nature appreciation. St Nicholas

School frequently use the area for nature walks to help their students' mental wellbeing, and the paths are used by countless school students, rugby club and hospital users, dog walkers, hospital staff, residents and visitors every day.

The development would eliminate one of the few remaining accessible green corridors in South Canterbury, contrary to Local Plan policies that promote public access to open space and green infrastructure. To develop this area would also be in direct contradiction of the Council's own policy set out in the Local Plan, to "not develop in the countryside".

Traffic Congestion and Road Safety

Stuppington Lane is a narrow, rural road already under pressure from existing traffic. The Merton Park development would dramatically increase vehicle movements, both during construction and once the new homes are occupied. This raises serious concerns about:

- Increased congestion on Stuppington Lane, Hollow Lane, Merton Lane, South Canterbury Rd, Ethelbert Road, Old Dover Road, and surrounding routes.
- Greater risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and schoolchildren
- Emergency vehicle access being compromised

The proposed access points are totally inadequate as they do not connect directly to major roads, especially when considered alongside the impact of 4,000 additional homes in the Mountfield park development, and 900 at Cockering Road.

The proposed new ramp for the A2 at Wincheap, and the transfer of the Park and ride to the wrong side of the junction, will only exacerbate traffic issues in that area. The loss of Thanington Rec for this plan is completely unacceptable; not only is the land protected by the Carnegie Trust covenants, it is a vital accessible asset for that very vulnerable community, with no decent, safely walkable alternative proposed.

No clear mitigation strategy has been presented to address these issues, and the current infrastructure is not equipped to handle such a dramatic increase in traffic volume. Whilst a token cycle route is shown on the plan, it does not connect with a suitable safe route into the city centre.

Pollution and Environmental Impact

The increase in site traffic and long-term vehicle use will inevitably lead to higher levels of:

- Air pollution, affecting respiratory health and contributing to climate change
- Noise pollution, disrupting the peace of this semi-rural area
- Light pollution, which will affect nocturnal wildlife and the character of the area

Construction activity itself will also generate dust, debris, and disruption for existing residents, with little evidence of how this will be managed or minimized. These concerns may warrant a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the EIA Regulations 2017, given the scale and sensitivity of the site.

In Summary

The Merton Park development threatens to:

- Destroy a legally protected and ecologically rich habitat
- Directly clash with the strategy to not build in the countryside, as this is a purely greenfield site
- Eliminate cherished green space used by the community
- Overwhelm local roads and infrastructure
- Degrade air quality and increase noise and light pollution
- Not add anything of value to Canterbury in terms of new employment, green spaces, leisure or entertainment.

I urge the planning authority to reject or significantly revise the proposed plans to protect the environmental, social, and historical integrity of Stuppington Lane and its surroundings.

In addition, the total amount of development including Ridlands Farm, Mountfield and Cockering needs to be urgently reassessed as the local infrastructure is woefully inadequate and the proposed changes do nothing to address this. It seems poorly thought through, to allow such a heavy burden of development on one side of the city when the central transport network is completely unable to disperse even the existing traffic in this area.

There is also an almost complete lack of new business and commercial property in the plans, meaning no meaningful jobs for the new residents, and apart from rugby and

football, no inclusive leisure and entertainment provision. There needs to be far more of a balance between development, environment, employment, health and leisure across all of these 4 proposed sites (and the recent development in Thanington). And there must be wider green “bands” between development areas, to allow residents and commuters to enjoy proper green open space every day and allow the existing nature to thrive.

Thank you for considering this objection.

Yours faithfully,
Julie Dod

