

From: Laura Kingston [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2025 22:09
To: Consultations
Subject: Objection to the Merton Park Development Proposal

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Objection to the Merton Park Development Proposal (1,930 New Homes)

I am writing to formally object to the proposed Merton Park development, which outlines plans to construct 1,930 new homes on the site south of Canterbury.

I am submitting this objection as I believe this development, in its current form, poses serious and irreversible consequences to the local environment, infrastructure, and community wellbeing. My key reasons for objection are as follows:

1. Loss of Vital Green Space for Community Health and Wellbeing

The proposed development threatens to permanently remove a much-valued and freely accessible green space, which is used extensively by residents of all ages for recreation, exercise, play, mental wellbeing and social connection. This area is not just open land; it is a cherished part of daily life for many in the community. To destroy such a space is to erase a vital social and environmental resource that cannot be replaced.

2. Irreplaceable Loss of Biodiversity and Wildlife

The site is home to a rich mosaic of habitats—trees, hedgerows, grassland, and farmland—that support a wide variety of plant and animal species. Particularly concerning are the numerous bird species recorded on site that appear on the RSPB's Red List of highest conservation concern, including the Eurasian Skylark, Starling, Yellowhammer, Spotted Flycatchers, Fieldfares, Common Linnet, Cetti's Warbler, Herring Gull, House Martin, House Sparrow, Greenfinch. These species are already in significant decline nationally, therefore we should be looking at ways to protect their habitats, not destroy them. A significant number of bird species on the RSPB's 'Amber List' which are also of conservation concern in the UK, have also been recorded at the site.

Once gone, this biodiversity cannot be restored.

3. Deliverability of essential infrastructure

The proposed plan includes provisions for a school, sports hub, and community centre. However, recent local experience with other developments—such as Saxon Fields—shows that promised infrastructure, including a primary school, has yet to be delivered.

This raises legitimate concerns about whether the necessary facilities would be delivered in time (or at all) to support the influx of new residents, placing immense pressure on existing services and undermining community trust.

Furthermore, the proposal includes a ‘sports hub’, however this cannot compensate for the loss of the freely accessible space offered by this site, and the Thanington Recreation ground, which is also currently under threat from development.

4. Road Access and Traffic Impact

Local roads such as South Canterbury Road, Nackington Lane, and Lime Kiln Road, are simply not equipped to handle the volume of traffic generated by nearly 2,000 new homes. These roads are narrow, already congested, and not designed for the heavy use that such a development would entail, especially during construction.

5. Air Pollution

The council’s own Air Quality Action Plan highlights existing air pollution concerns in Canterbury, especially at the Hollow Lane/Wincheap junction. Adding significant new traffic to this route from this development could exacerbate air quality problems. Moreover, the removal of the orchards and mature trees that would occur if this development goes ahead, could further deteriorate air quality by removing these ‘carbon sinks’, impacting public health, particularly for children and the elderly.

6. Risks to Pedestrian Safety

As traffic increases in the area, particularly around school zones and residential roads, so too does the risk to pedestrians—walking to and from the nearby Wincheap Primary school. Current roads are already under strain and unsuitable for further traffic volume without substantial infrastructure and safety improvements.

7. Artificial light at night

Given the location of the proposed development atop a hill, the resulting artificial lighting emitted at night would have an amplified and widespread impact on surrounding areas. This would negatively affect both local residents and nocturnal wildlife, and risk breaching planning guidelines regarding dark skies and environmental light pollution.

This development presents a serious threat to our community’s wellbeing, local wildlife, environmental health, and the character of the surrounding landscape. The long-term

costs of losing this natural asset, in both ecological and human terms, far outweigh the potential housing gains—especially when other, less environmentally damaging locations or brownfield sites could be considered.

We must protect what little green space remains in this area for the benefit of future generations.

Therefore, for the reasons outlined above, I urge you not to proceed with the Merton Park proposal in its current form.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this objection.

Yours faithfully,

Laura Archer