

From: Vanessa Wilson [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2025 20:32
To: Consultations
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to Proposed Relocation of Wincheap Park & Ride to Thanington Recreation Ground

--Email From External Account--

Dear Sirs,

I write this letter to lodge my objection to the proposal to relocate the Wincheap Park and Ride car park to Thanington Recreation Ground and ask that you reject the proposal. My objection is based on several points:

Firstly, the recreational ground is the only green space in Thanington, and is a popular destination for the local residents for leisure activities. The proposed Merton Park sports is not an equivalent local replacement, being 1.9 miles away equivalent to a walk of over 40 minutes for a healthy person. As someone who is mobility limited Merton Park is not a viable alternative option for me, and I'm sure that I'm not alone in that regard. It is also a specialist sports facility rather than an informal open space, so is not a like for like replacement and unsuitable for activities such as dog walking, child's play, kite flying, picnics or enjoying the peace by sitting on the riverbank. I believe that the Council's Open Space Strategy 2025-2040 already identifies Thanington as being deficient in open space and actually commits to protecting existing recreational grounds. The Strategic Land Availability Assessment has already identified Thanington Recreation Ground as being an unsuitable location for the car park.

Secondly, when the Thanington Park development was seeking community support it was promised that it would include a park and ride car park, a community centre, sports pitches and a primary school, all of which have failed to materialise. Thanington residents have already suffered years of disruption and the loss of open space in exchange for broken promises. To turn the recreational ground in to a car park would compound the damage and lack of respect done to existing residents and another example of punching down when the council failed to hold Pentland Properties to their original plans.

Thirdly, if you go to the recreational ground, you see many molehills and signs of wild rabbits and squirrels. This wildlife has been in Thanington long before any council members or residents were born, and to turn the recreational ground in to a car park would destroy the wildlife's natural habitat.

Finally, an unintended consequence of the plan would be to make the Thanington Resource Centre unviable. This charitable organisation has played a vital role in improving Thanington, helping to reduce crime, and provide a hub for the local community. It also operates as a food bank, youth club and safe space for residents. The Resource Centre relies on fees from room bookings to

survive which will surely suffer due to construction related disruption and noise. To take this away from the local community, and take jobs from the staff, would be to hit those most in need, the very people that the council is supposed to help and support. If you haven't already, then I suggest you read this recent article which highlights how important the recreation centre is to Thanington (<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/canterbury/news/the-woman-who-helped-transform-one-of-kent-s-most-notorious-331174/>)

I ask you to look at other options for the Park and Ride car park and not destroy a vital part of the local community. Thanington Recreation ground is the only green space our parish has and it's tied to a Lottery-funded Resource Centre that's been serving this community for 25 years. The slip road may have been a highways project, but Canterbury City Council approved it knowing it would reduce Park & Ride capacity. The answer cannot be to tarmac over our only recreation ground and put a nationally funded charity at risk.

Yours faithfully,

Vanessa Wilson