

Tom Hawkes

From: Planning
Sent: 22 October 2025 08:59
To: Policy
Subject: Fw: Objection

From: Paul Comper [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 October 2025 23:59
To: Planning <planning@canterbury.gov.uk>
Subject: Objection

[REDACTED]

--Email From External Account--

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write to register my objection to the inclusion of Thanington Recreation Ground in the current Draft Local Plan as a site for a future Park and Ride or Car Park.

This proposal directly contravenes the local councils own guidance that more freely accessible green open space are required to maintain a happy, healthy society.

I need not list the many advantages to many silent members of Canterburys Constituency who without this size and type of freely accessible Green open space would be further disadvantaged.

Please take into account the number of homes already within 15 minutes walk of this important public resource in your recommendation. Please bear in mind Thanington is set to double in size in the coming 30 years. Once this space is lost it will be impossible to replace. I have heard the planners respond to councillors questioning that all the future housing developments include "green spaces". However if we look at the Saxon Fields homes as an example it is clear to see that the privately owned and maintained green spaces included are not of a similar quality to that of Thanington Recreation Ground. Nor are they protected as proven by the loss to drainage pits on Saxon Fields. Those that remain are small and within hearing distance of local residents. Children playing, families engaging in sports, the lonely elderly benefiting from exercising pets, the solitary walker, fledgling golfer, and the nearby shut-in currently all grate on each other in and around these small piecemeal slithers of green yet privately owned land.

No current or future developments can be expected to afford the high quality of Green open space provision we currently depend on in Thanington and the surrounding area.

Thanington may appear relatively fortunate in aerial photography with regard to "green". However the vast majority of this space is either private, farmed, earmarked for development or accessible only to "look at" from narrow public footpaths and rights of way. Nowhere within the gold standard "15 minutes walk" of the current centre of Thanington is there another truly free open space to run, sing, shout and find your own patch on a whim regardless of how many other residents are enjoying their chosen freedom to play.

As I hope is clear, for the widest community, the quality of Thanington Recreation Ground will never be equaled with green spaces of the size, quality and providence in past or near future developments.

When questioned by councillors regarding alternative provision, the planners spoke of Merton Park's potential "sports pitches" and "stadium". These options do not compare with the full community accessibility provided by Thanington Recreation Ground as they will likely be privately owned, without 24 hour, 365 day unrestricted access offered to residents. Therefore not of the same "quality" to the widest possible section of the community.

I would also like to object to the practicality of this location for a car park.

I propose that the required car park should be place outside of the city suburbs as far as a reasonable bus service would allow. The eternal bottle neck of the A2-A28 junction is exactly the type of problem the "park and ride" style of car park is supposed to alleviate. Placing another park and ride so near to this junction would not

allow it the opportunity to keep cars out of residential areas as is its purpose. I would like suggest that the proposed Merton Park direct A2 access including car park and bus service is enforced on any Merton Park investors. Alternatively, if the requirement for parking spaces is aim at A28 traffic, a suitable space further from residential areas is explored, such as the Bretts, Howfield and Horton area.

If A2 traffic is a priority, either the original Merton Park A2 access be enforced on investors or the future of Old Dover Road and Renville cottages area is explored.

There are also concerns regarding the planners response to councillors questions regarding the alternate provision of freely accessible open green spaces in the event of the deletion of Thanington Recreation Ground. The planners mentioned “sports pitches” and “stadium” located in a Merton Park development. As already mentioned, privately owned and managed sports pitches and stadia are neither useful to nor accessible to the widest section of the constituency. Also their location in Merton Park would render them remote and inaccessible by Thanington Residents with the use of a car.

In short, I strongly object to the deletion of Thanington Recreation Ground to create a car park.

Yours sincerely,
Paul Comper



Planning Services



.....
Find us online at canterbury.gov.uk

This email, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain privileged or confidential information. Any unauthorised review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, immediately contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of this message.