

Tom Hawkes

From: Amanda Stephenson [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2025 20:52
To: Consultations
Subject: Objection: Merton Park Development

[REDACTED]
--Email From External Account--

Objection to Proposed Development at Merton Park

Amanda Matthews

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Date: 19/10/2025]

Consultations Team, Canterbury City Council
14 Rose Lane, Canterbury, CT1 2UR

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Objection to Planned Development at Merton Park

I am writing to formally express my strong disapproval of the proposed development at Merton Park. My objection is based on two principal concerns: the inadequacy of existing road access and infrastructure, and the irreversible environmental loss associated with the destruction of vital green space, which serves as a habitat for rare and endangered wildlife.

Road Access, Infrastructure, and Safety

The planned access to the development via the A2 around Wincheap/Thanington raises significant issues regarding traffic congestion and air pollution. This area of the A2/A28 is already subject to considerable delays throughout the day, and any additional traffic generated by the new development will exacerbate these problems. Increased congestion will result in higher

emissions, undermining local and national efforts to improve air quality.

Furthermore, the proposed access route(s) pass in close proximity to Wincheap Primary School. This presents a clear safety risk to pupils, parents, and staff, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times. The lack of sufficient road infrastructure in this area to support the expected increase in vehicle movements, especially construction vehicles, heightens the risk of accidents in an area that should prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children. Furthermore, the local road network around Stuppington Road and South Canterbury, including Nunnery Fields and into the Wincheap area are residential roads that are already heavily congested and struggle with high volumes of traffic at key times of the day when users are avoiding the queuing traffic on the A28/Wincheap Road and Canterbury ring road. The proposal to add a significant number of residential dwellings into an area of Canterbury that also has challenges of traffic congestion seems poorly conceived and harmful to the health of local residents due to increased traffic pollution.

Environmental Impact and Loss of Green Space

The area designated for the Merton Park development represents one of the few remaining areas of natural green space in our locality. The planned development will result in the loss of irreplaceable and biodiverse habitats, threatening the survival of several rare and endangered species that have been documented in this area over the recent years. The mitigation measures and suggested reinstated 'green corridors' outlined in the planning documents are, in my view, woefully insufficient to compensate for the scale of environmental harm anticipated. The loss of land would be devastating to wildlife given the diverse habitats which are unique to this area for Canterbury, and home to species that are currently on the Red [globally endangered] List such as Eurasian Skylark and Yellowhammer as well as other protected species such as badgers, slow worms and hedgehogs. More recently, red kites have been spotted which demonstrates the positive natural expansion following reintroduction into

neighbouring counties. The area also provides habitat to non-native migratory birds such as Fieldfares and Redwings which are themselves also on the Red or Amber list.

This area's unique biodiversity is of significant ecological value, not only to the immediate area but also as part of the wider regional network of green corridors. Destroying such habitats undermines efforts to conserve and enhance biodiversity in line with national and local policies.

Community Wellbeing and Public Amenity

In addition to its environmental importance, the proposed development area for Merton Park today functions as a crucial space for community recreation and physical activity which importantly supports our mental wellbeing. The loss of this open space would deprive residents of all ages of a safe and accessible area for leisure, social interaction, and respite from urban pressures. The social value of such amenities cannot be overstated, particularly in light of increasing urbanisation and the well-documented links between access to nature and public health.

Legal and Policy Obligations

I feel it's important to draw the Council's attention to its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972, which emphasises the importance of promoting the interests of local communities, and the Local Government Act 2000, which requires authorities to improve the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of their areas. In the context of these statutory duties, the current proposal appears to fall short of the standards expected, particularly in relation to sustainable development and the protection of community assets.

Request for Reconsideration

In light of the above concerns, I respectfully urge Canterbury City Council to reconsider both the size and the location of the proposed development of Merton Park. I request that a thorough review be undertaken, taking onboard the critical points that myself other local residents have raised, to ensure that any future

development is compatible with the long-term interests of our community and the natural environment.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Amanda Matthews

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