

**Tom Hawkes**

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**From:** Deborah [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 October 2025 23:50  
**To:** Consultations  
**Subject:** Fwd: Canterbury Surveys re proposed development

**--Email From External Account--**

Dear Council Team

Please find below my recent correspondence with Gummer Leathes regarding the proposed development at Merton Park, which I would be grateful if you would note and consider.

I completed the surveys on their website this week. One concern was that, for three questions there was a bar which was set at a neutral answer as a default setting. For one question, relating to the preferred balance between historical and modern outlooks in relation to the development, I tried to move the bar to reflect the answer I wanted to give. It would not move. It therefore came as no surprise to me to find that the current survey results indicated an exact 50:50 response - this would reflect the neutral default setting. One of the other question defaults was also unmoveable (the other worked perfectly). I am therefore concerned that when the responses are considered the true thoughts of the responders will not have been captured.

In addition I have made a number of general points to Gummer Leathes regarding my concerns about the development as proposed. I hope you will read them. I have completed the online consultation too.

Many thanks for considering this correspondence.

Kind regards

Deborah MacVean

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Deborah [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Mon, 20 Oct 2025 at 17:51  
**Subject:** Re: Canterbury Surveys re proposed development  
**To:** Alice Seller [REDACTED]

Dear Alice

Thank you for your detailed reply to me, which is appreciated. I am pleased that you will be checking that the dials work as appropriate for the surveys to avoid relying on possibly incorrect results.

I will make a note to look at the website around New Year and to try to attend any meetings you hold. I had not been aware of your website until this week.

Living so close to the proposed development I do have major concerns about it. It's huge. The Canterbury traffic and parking issues are already very serious, even without this development. The proposal to reduce amenity by replacing Thanington recreation ground with a new Park and Ride to try to address this is an appalling one which will adversely affect residents of one of the poorest wards in Canterbury where the efforts of often unpaid volunteers to improve outcomes for the local children will be lost. I am concerned about the loss of amenity generally as I walk in the development area virtually every day and so enjoy it (even today in the rain!). I also have an interest in botany, and would be very distressed should the uniquely biodiverse area of Stodmarsh and the river area around Thanington be affected by the development or associated works. Also, we have a real lack of amenities such as schools and medical services already and unfortunately developers often promise these but they don't eventually get done (only today there has been publicity in Kent Online because the primary school promised to provide places for children on the new Wincheap development will now not even be started for another 3 years at least).

I am afraid I find the proposals very dispiriting.

Kind regards

Deborah MacVean

On Fri, 17 Oct 2025 at 13:53, Alice Seller [REDACTED] wrote:

Good afternoon Deborah,

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey and share your feedback - it's very much appreciated.

Regarding the survey results, the 50:50 statistic reflected responses at the time, with roughly half selecting 'innovate and modernise' and half 'maintain historical tradition.' While the dial defaults to neutral, the vast majority of participants have adjusted it to show their preference. We'll be publishing an updated summary of the latest results soon. To be certain, I've asked our team to recheck that the dial is functioning correctly, and it appears to be working on our side - but we'll review it with our IT team to make sure everything is operating as it should.

To clarify, South Canterbury already has been allocated, with outline planning permission in place. Since consent was granted in 2023, we've been working closely with the community - meeting and engaging with more than 2,000 residents - particularly on water, transport, and infrastructure. You can see details of over six recent community events on our website, including recent sessions in September and October that focused on updates on engineering and water management. Further events are planned for next year, which I hope you'll be able to attend and will be published on our events page by the New Year.

The current survey is designed to capture local ideas to help shape design codes and community priorities for phasing, rather than to revisit technical matters such as nutrient neutrality or transport infrastructure. These areas are already being addressed by our engineering and transport specialists in line with national requirements and our signed Section 106 commitments. We are, however, continuing to explore how we can go beyond those obligations - including work on transport, health, and education - and will share updates and engage on this to test ideas and communicate as this work progresses before submitting anything.

Although we already have outline consent, our approach remains to engage early and often because it's the right thing to do. I'm in Canterbury weekly, working with over 60 local groups and charities, residents, and businesses to ensure local voices are heard in the design room. As a master developer, our focus is on creating the infrastructure and setting the framework for high-quality, sustainable places that reflect the community's needs and selling parcelled plots to housebuilders under a considerate and consulted design code.

Thanks so much for your comments and if you ever want to discuss, please do get in touch.

All the best,

Alice Seller



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**From:** Deborah [redacted]  
**Sent:** 15 October 2025 23:58  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Subject:** Canterbury Surveys re proposed development

Dear Alice

I have just completed your mini surveys online.

I notice that you say that currently the results show that the balance between the view that development should reflect the history of Canterbury or take a new modern approach is 50:50. I can tell you that this is because the default setting for this question is neutral and this cannot be amended when completing the survey - it is stuck! There are 3 such questions in total throughout the surveys and only one of them works. You should not therefore rely on the answers to these questions, as the results will be false.

In addition, the surveys mention nothing about sewerage issues (and the knock-on effect of new development on our precious habitat at Stodmarsh) and little about the increased traffic which will result from this huge development, both of which issues are of great concern to those who are aware of them. I don't think the surveys are sufficient to enable you to fully consider these and other very important issues e.g. how the existing medical provision such as GP surgeries and the small local hospital and inadequately-performing large hospitals at Margate and Ashford, both of which are at some distance from the city will cope with the occupants of 4000 new houses. In short, in my opinion, you are 'consulting' selectively and inadequately.

I would welcome your comments.

Kind regards

Deborah MacVean