

Tom Hawkes

From: Hilary Jarman [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 October 2025 14:18
To: Consultations
Subject: Re: Draft Canterbury District Local Plan – Comments on Policy N1 and Policy N3

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Policy N1 – Development at Merton Park

I am writing to express my objection to the proposed development of 1,930 new homes at Merton Park.

Large-scale housing projects in Kent have a track record of delays and under-delivery. For example, Mountfield Park was approved in 2016, yet not a single house has been completed. Similarly, the Chilmington Green development near Ashford, which was set to include up to 5,750 homes, has seen painfully slow progress. As a result, the accompanying infrastructure—roads, schools, and services—often lags far behind or fails to materialize at all.

Our existing infrastructure is already under significant strain. Southern Water’s network is operating beyond its capacity, with frequent sewage overflows into rivers and coastal waters. Introducing nearly 2,000 additional homes without concrete plans for infrastructure upgrades would exacerbate both pollution and flood risks.

Traffic congestion is another serious concern. Roads such as South Canterbury Road, Nackington Lane, Hollow Lane, and Lime Kiln Road already experience high volumes of traffic. Designating Hollow Lane as the main access route for the development would place further pressure on these already congested roads. Additionally, traffic funnelling toward Wincheap risks pushing vehicles through narrow residential streets and past Wincheap Primary School, increasing air pollution and posing safety risks for local children.

To date, no recent or comprehensive traffic impact assessments have been made publicly available. It is unclear how this proposal aligns with other nearby traffic plans, such as the changes to the Wincheap gyratory and the addition of a southbound A2 slip road. Without proper coordination, these projects risk compounding traffic problems rather than solving them. Even the suggested “fast link” route lacks detail, making it little more than an unproven ambition.

The green fields around Stuppington Lane are an important part of Canterbury’s countryside and comprise valuable agricultural land. These areas support a rich variety of wildlife, including many species listed on the RSPB red list—among them the Eurasian Skylark, Yellowhammer, Starlings, Spotted Flycatcher, and House Sparrow. Fragmented green strips within housing estates cannot replace the diverse habitats that would be lost.

These fields also offer iconic views of Canterbury Cathedral, a key part of the city’s visual and cultural heritage and essential to its identity as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Ultimately, the Merton Park proposal threatens to overwhelm roads and services, destroy important habitats and farmland, and bring years of disruption to the community—with no firm assurance that necessary infrastructure will be delivered.

Policy N3 – Thanington Recreation Ground

I am also opposed to the proposed removal of the recreation ground in Thanington. At a time when access to public green space is more important than ever—for both physical and mental health—it is deeply troubling that the only freely accessible outdoor area in the community may be lost.

Replacing it with a private sports facility located two miles away is not a realistic substitute. Parents cannot be expected to send children on a 40-minute walk to play sports, especially when access to the new facility is uncertain and likely to be restricted by cost or availability.

The mature trees on the current recreation ground not only support biodiversity but also help manage excess groundwater in an area prone to flooding. This ecological function was one of the reasons previous proposals to relocate the park and ride facility to the old allotment site near Perch Road were rightly rejected.

Rather than pushing through this deeply unpopular policy, the council should be opposing the unnecessary and damaging proposal for a new A2 junction, which will only place further pressure on the historic Wincheap Road.

Kind regards

Hilary Jarman 

Sent from my iPad