

**Tom Hawkes**

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**From:** Sally-Anne Ritchie [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 21 October 2025 17:40  
**To:** Consultations  
**Subject:** Objection to proposal to build a park and ride facility on Thanington Recreation Ground

[REDACTED]

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

Dear Planning Team,

I am emailing to register my extremely strong objection to the proposal in the current local plan to build a park and ride facility on the Thanington Recreation Ground. My main and overriding objection to the removal or reduction of this valuable green space is that it is essential to the Thanington community. The Recreation Ground is used by children, families, friends, dog walkers, residents and visitors. Thanington, a deprived neighbourhood compared to many other parts of Canterbury and surrounding areas, has no other recreational space of similar or even close size or quality, and it is absolutely unconscionable that you would consider taking this facility away from the people of Thanington. There are many other objections to this park and ride proposal, including the negative impact on wildlife and the increased flood risk from rainwater runoff, however it is the impact on the local community which concerns me above all else.

It is my understanding that the proposal in question runs contrary to local commitments to preserve recreation spaces, and also to government guidance on planning proposals which state that existing open space should not be built on unless it is to be replaced with an least equivalent provision. As there is not a plan (nor one possible) to replace the open space WITHIN Thanington, this condition is not met.

The proposal for a sports hub at Merton Park cannot be considered a replacement for the Recreation Ground. This will not be a place where children can fly kites, families can enjoy picnics or host informal children's birthday parties, or where people can walk their dogs. Even if it were able to fulfil these roles, it is not in Thanington, but rather will be a walk of more than 40 minutes away, and therefore unavailable to many local residents, including children and those with more limited mobility.

There are alternative options which must be explored as the ONLY options. By this I mean that Thanington Recreation Ground is NOT an option for a car park of any kind. It is our community space and it is needed here. All other options must be considered on their own merits, without Thanington Recreation Ground on the table. I would urge you to look at options including an additional storey on the existing Wincheap park and ride site (to replace the capacity lost following the building of the A2 slip road in that area), a site further out of town which would be more helpful in reducing traffic into the outskirts of Canterbury (including Thanington), or increased capacity at the New Dover Road park and ride site to replace the Wincheap site, as both this and the Wincheap side of town are both accessible from the A2 anyway.

I know you will have received many objections to the proposal in question and I hope that this has convinced you of the importance of the Recreation Ground to the community in Thanington. I implore you to do the right thing and leave our beloved green space for us all to continue to enjoy in perpetuity.

Yours sincerely,

Sally-Anne Ritchie

