
From: Susan Davidson [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2025 12:48
To: Consultations
Subject: Sports Hub Impact on Local Residents and Canterbury Ring Road

--Email From External Account--

Dear Planning Policy Team,

I am writing to submit a formal objection to the allocation of Policy N1 (Land at Merton Park). My objection is specifically focused on the inclusion of a "regional sports hub" within the allocation as this will potentially act as a major, unmitigated traffic generator in its own right.

If players, trainers and supporters from across the region are to use the hub, then access from the A2 needs to be provided so that they do not add to the congestion already experienced from routes via Rhiems Way and A28 or from Old Dover Road and Nackington Road. These road systems regularly become snarled, which then impacts flow around the City ring road.

Once arrived at the ground, the premises needs to be able to provide parking for team coaches and supporters for several teams if it is to hold regional events.

In my experience, these types of venue then look for alternative revenue streams. Events such as firework displays and music concerts are promoted. The Canterbury Cricket Ground being such an example. Such a facility will generate significant car-borne trips, particularly on evenings and weekends when public transport services are typically less frequent.

These journeys will be in addition to the residential traffic from nearly 2,000 homes. The transport assessment for the site appears to focus on residential trip movements and fails to model the unique travel patterns associated with a regional leisure destination. This includes peaks of traffic before and after major matches or events, and the parking demand for hundreds of cars. The allocation is therefore not **effective**, as its transport strategy is blind to a major component of the proposed development.

The operational impacts of a regional sports hub/events venue are a major concern. The potential for high-intensity floodlighting and noise from crowds and public address systems will cause significant harm to the amenity of both existing residents and the future residents of the housing estate itself. The plan is silent on how these impacts will be controlled.

The inclusion of a large-scale sports facility is presented in the plan as a community benefit. However, its primary function appears to be to make the vast and otherwise unacceptable housing numbers seem more palatable. A **justified** plan must be based on a clear and robust assessment of need. The supporting evidence for the Local Plan does not contain a comprehensive, up-to-date Playing Pitch Strategy or Needs Assessment that identifies a specific, quantified need for a new *regional-scale* hub in this precise location. While the benefits of grassroots sport are undeniable, the plan fails to justify why this specific site, with its severe transport and landscape constraints, is the most appropriate location for such a facility, as opposed to enhancing existing facilities or identifying less sensitive sites elsewhere in the district.

Furthermore, the term "regional sports hub" implies a facility designed to attract users from across East Kent, not just the immediate local community. This has profound transport implications that the plan completely fails to address.

In essence, the sports hub is not a benign community benefit; it is a major, traffic-intensive commercial leisure development piggybacking on a housing allocation. Its need is not properly justified, its transport

impacts have been ignored, and its amenity impacts are unmitigated. It compounds every existing flaw in the Merton Park proposal. The policy is unsound because it bundles together two major developments without properly assessing their combined, synergistic impacts. I object to this unjustified and unsustainable proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Susan Davidson

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From: Susan Davidson <Susan@davidsonuk.net>
Sent: 20 October 2025 12:12
To: Consultations
Subject: Formal Objection to Policy N1: Years of Unacceptable Construction Disruption

You don't often get email from susan@davidsonuk.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

--Email From External Account--

Dear Planning Policy Team,

Please accept this as my formal objection to the allocation of Policy N1 (Land at Merton Park). My objection is focused on an aspect of the development that is often overlooked in strategic plans but has a profound impact on the lives of existing residents: the sheer scale and duration of the construction phase. The plan is not **positively prepared** because it fails to adequately consider or mitigate the severe and prolonged disruption that will be inflicted upon the local community for more than a decade.

As houses are built, they will be sold and become dwellings. The people in these first phases of development often 'live on a building site'. To enhance the safety of these residents and the local community, especially school children and the frail who are unable to cross roads quickly, the construction traffic should access the site from the A2 and not from already congested roads such as Nackington Road and Hollow Lane. Schools, hospitals and care homes are located on these roads.

The proposed access roads are not sufficient to accommodate the wide load and enormous vehicles that operate on a construction site. The development will generate tens of thousands of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements over its lifespan. These vehicles, carrying everything from aggregate and concrete to timber frames and roof tiles, will be using the same local roads as residents, such as Nackington Road and Hollow Lane. This will cause road safety issues, structural damage to road surfaces, and further, extreme congestion. The plan offers no designated haulage routes and no strategy for managing this enormous volume of HGV traffic.

Second, the environmental impacts of construction will be significant. There will be a constant problem with dust and mud, polluting the air and coating local homes and cars. The noise from piling, earthmoving, and general construction will be audible from a great distance and will last from early in the morning until the evening, six days a week, for years on end. This will destroy the peace and quiet of the neighbourhood and have a measurable impact on residents' mental and physical health.

Third, there will be significant disruption to local services and utilities as new connections for water, sewerage, gas, and electricity are made, likely requiring road closures and diversions.

A development of nearly 2,000 homes is not a standard building site; it is a massive civil engineering project that will last for many years. To allocate this site without a clear and binding Construction Management Plan is a failure to protect the amenity of existing residents. The impacts will be multi-faceted and severe.

A **positively prepared** plan should anticipate and plan for these impacts. It should ensure that the harm to the existing community is minimised. Policy N1 is completely silent on this matter. It contains no requirements for off-site road improvements to be completed before construction starts, no limits on construction hours, no mandated dust suppression schemes, and no requirement for a single point of contact for residents to report issues.

To expect the existing community to endure over a decade of such profound disruption without any protections or mitigation measures written into the strategic policy for the site is unacceptable. It demonstrates a lack of consideration for the people who already live here. The plan is therefore unsound

because it is not positively prepared to manage the immense negative impacts of the construction phase. The human cost of building this development is too high, and I urge you to delete this allocation.

Yours faithfully,

Susan Davidson

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