

Subject: Formal Objection to Merton Park Development – Impact on Stuppington Lane and Surrounding Environment

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a resident of [REDACTED], where I live in [REDACTED], to formally object to the proposed Merton Park development and its impact on our community and environment.

Loss of Biodiversity and Protected Species

The fields and orchards surrounding Stuppington Lane are a thriving habitat for a wide range of wildlife. We regularly observe bats flying from the end of Stuppington Court LFarm up to the top of the Stuppington lane, passing directly by our homes. These bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which make it illegal to disturb or destroy their roosts or flight paths without proper ecological assessment and licensing.

In addition to bats, we frequently see badgers, hedgehogs, dormice, and a variety of nesting birds in the orchard and hedgerows. The proposed development would fragment or destroy these habitats, leading to a significant and irreversible loss of biodiversity. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), developments must deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain and avoid harm to protected species and local wildlife corridors (Paragraphs 174–179).

Last but not least, Orchards are home for many birds, 38 different species have been spotted and 11 of these are listed as endangered. This was discussed in a recent community meeting on Friday 17th of October in Wincheap Scout Hut and evidence is available upon request.

Loss of Public Green Space and Dog Walking Routes

The fields and orchards are not only ecologically important—they are also cherished recreational spaces for local residents. Stuppington Lane and its surrounding green areas are widely used for dog walking, family outings, and nature appreciation. The development would eliminate one of the few remaining accessible green corridors in South Canterbury, contrary to Local Plan policies that promote public access to open space and green infrastructure.

Traffic Congestion and Road Safety

Stuppington Lane is a narrow, rural road already under pressure from existing traffic. The Merton Park development would dramatically increase vehicle movements, both during construction and once the new homes are occupied. This raises serious concerns about:

- Increased congestion on Stuppington Lane, Ethelbert Road, Old Dover Road, and surrounding routes
- Greater risk to pedestrians, cyclists, and schoolchildren
- Emergency vehicle access being compromised

No clear mitigation strategy has been presented to address these issues, and the current infrastructure is not equipped to handle such a dramatic increase in traffic volume.

Pollution and Environmental Impact

The increase in site traffic and long-term vehicle use will inevitably lead to higher levels of:

- Air pollution, affecting respiratory health and contributing to climate change
- Noise pollution, disrupting the peace of this semi-rural area
- Light pollution, which will affect nocturnal wildlife and the character of the area

Construction activity itself will also generate dust, debris, and disruption for existing residents, with little evidence of how this will be managed or minimized. These concerns may warrant a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under the EIA Regulations 2017, given the scale and sensitivity of the site.

In Summary

The Merton Park development threatens to:

- Destroy a legally protected and ecologically rich habitat
- Eliminate cherished green space used by the community
- Overwhelm local roads and infrastructure
- Degrade air quality and increase noise and light pollution

I urge the planning authority to reject or significantly revise the proposed plans to protect the environmental, social, and historical integrity of Stuppington Lane and its surroundings.

Thank you for considering this objection.

Yours faithfully,

Sule Dervisoglu-Bonnie

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

[Redacted contact information]