

Canterbury City Football Club CIC



BY EMAIL 18th May 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

R.E. CANTERBURY CITY FOOTBALL CLUB REPRESENTATION IN SUPPORT OF THE MERTON PARK ALLOCATION (POLICY C10)

On behalf of Canterbury City Football Club, I write to support the proposed development of Merton Park (Policy C10) within the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan (Regulation 19, 2026).

The Club has for many years been without a suitable stadium within the City of Canterbury and has had to rely on arrangements outside the city to fulfil its fixtures, which has constrained its ability to host home matches locally, build a consistent supporter base, secure sponsorship, and retain and develop players. Securing an appropriate, high-quality facility within the City is therefore critical to sustaining and growing this local community asset.

This issue has been highlighted publicly in recent reporting, which notes that the Club's return to the Canterbury area at Thanington has been accompanied by an unavoidable step down in league status, linked to the difficulties of securing facilities of an appropriate standard and the wider challenges associated with operating without a long-term home ground within the city. In our view, this provides important and current evidence of the real-world consequences of facility constraints for community sports organisations, and reinforces the need for a plan-led solution that enables the delivery of suitable sporting infrastructure in Canterbury.

The Merton Park allocation presents a clear opportunity to strengthen local sporting and community infrastructure in a way that is responsive to identified need and aligned with the Plan's objectives. In particular, it represents an opportunity to help address Canterbury City Football Club's long-standing absence of a stadium within the City by supporting the provision of suitable land and facilities through a comprehensive, plan-led approach, including the potential for a multi-sport community hub delivered alongside the wider development. The increased adjacent resident population arising from the wider scheme will also play a key role in supporting the long-term vitality of the Club, helping to broaden its supporter and membership base, sustain participation across all age groups, and reinforce its function as a valued community hub.

For these reasons, we support the Merton Park allocation and consider it deliverable and consistent with relevant planning policy.

Yours faithfully,

Trevor James Chairman of Canterbury City Football Club