
Merton Park development Local plan regulation 19 response

From Eleanor Ould [REDACTED]
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To Consultations <Consultations@canterbury.gov.uk>

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Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to object to section C10 'The Merton Park development' of the local plan. Although I specifically wish to comment on the soundness of this part of the plan some of my objections, such as lack of fresh water, also relate to the wider proposal.

The provision of the Merton park development is reliant on the introduction of additional education settings, health care and water provision and transport links. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) states that infrastructure must be in place for development (P 29 section 101). This infrastructure is not available, and it is unlikely that it can be established within an effective timescale.

The NPPF states that a sufficient choice of early years schools needs to be available and that issues need to be identified and resolved prior to application (p 29 section 100, 101). Local primary schools are already at or near capacity (Gov.uk). A primary school is proposed on site (Canterbury City Council, 2026). However, the proposed primary school at the adjacent Saxon fields development which should have been completed last year (Issue details, 2023) is on hold and its future uncertain. Local faith in the provision of services is low. The proposed expansion of Canterbury hospital has now been removed from the plan as funding is not available to expand existing services (Canterbury City Council, 2025). Additionally, to support development in this area a reservoir is needed (Canterbury City Council, 2024) the proposed reservoir will not be operational prior to occupation of the development. Southern water stated at the consultation 18 meeting (23rd October 2025, Esson, 2026) that there is not water provision for a development at Merton Park until this was in place.

Planned traffic mitigation relies on the assumption that individuals will use public transport, cycle or walk. While admirable and part of the NPPF this is highly unlikely and an additional two thousand dwellings is likely to produce at least one additional car per household. A sports hub and primary school will also bring additional cars into the area. The majority of commuters are likely to be using Canterbury West to access London and will be a significant distance from this station. Existing road networks at Nackington road and Hollow Lane have limited potential for expansion due to geography and existing dwellings. Expansion of Hollow Lane would result in the loss of a large section of established hedgerow and mature trees and pedestrian access to New House Lane and footpaths. There are no alternative options and potential connections to the A2 have been discarded (draft local plan regulation 18, 2025). Additional traffic along these routes is going to significantly impact residents and have an adverse impact on general traffic congestion and pollution in the area. In addition, existing residents will have to use cars to access green spaces. Non drivers such as I will lose access altogether. The bus station does not have capacity for additional high frequency services (District bus action plan 2026).

Local infrastructure cannot support this development, and the impact of additional traffic has not been mitigated failing to meet the NPPF (P29 section 101, P 31 sections 110 c and 111 b, P 33 section 15). For these reasons I find the plans to be unsound, ineffective, and inconsistent with national policy. I ask that it be deleted from the local plan.

The area of land proposed is a much used and highly valued public space with views of the cathedral and the city of canterbury. The national planning policy framework (2024) states that communities should have accessible high quality green spaces where there is opportunity for physical activity and recreation and the benefits of nature (NPPF p28 section 96 c, p 30 section 103). This land, in its undeveloped state, is what the community has been using for many years. The NPPF recognises that undeveloped land may have multiple uses (P36 section 125 b) as is the case in this area, it is not just farmland but is a community resource, a pedestrian or cycle travel route to schools and healthcare, a cultural heritage site and an important habitat for wildlife. The NPPF states that where possible pre-existing green spaces used by communities and valued for their tranquillity and amenities should not be built on (P30 section 104 a, b, c and p57 section 198 b) and that communities should be allowed to identify green spaces of importance (P30 section 106). The planned development is not consistent with national policy.

The NPPF recognises that established trees should be preserved where possible and wildlife rich habitats should be safeguarded (P40 section 136, P54 section 187, P56 section 193 c). The orchards and hedge rows at hollow lane represent a rapidly shrinking valued habitat for British wildlife including those mentioned specifically, swifts, bats, and hedgehogs (P54 187 a, b, d). The proposed plan allows for small sections of green space but is not clear what form these would take, and the required amount includes football and rugby pitches (local plan regulation 19, 2026). The vast majority of habitats would be destroyed.

The plan for C10 Merton Park is not sound and is not effective as identified needs cannot be met and significant impact on the existing community and natural environment are not mitigated. I request that it be removed from the local plan.

Yours Sincerely

E. Ould

[Redacted Signature]

1. Canterbury district bus strategy (2024) prepared by Steer for Canterbury city council ref: 24510401, <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/Draft%20Canterbury%20District%20Bus%20Strategy.pdf>
2. Draft Canterbury district local plan focused consultation (regulation 18) (September 2025) Canterbury city council [b6cbf71e01caafc680109e6d43ba6fdf Draft Canterbury District Local Plan Focused Consultation R18 \(September 2025\).pdf](https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-09/b6cbf71e01caafc680109e6d43ba6fdf_Draft%20Canterbury%20District%20Local%20Plan%20Regulation%2019%20%20%20%282026%29.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIPIQP5NM%2F20260512%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20260512T112941Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=69a96b0d864c6b898f89c79831436d4480590f6141c0c0cb99641c2053de6044)
3. Draft Canterbury District Local Plan (2042/43) (2026) Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 https://ehq-production-europe.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/803c1a11417a47f4a23583ad8cdd09f0546c8c25/original/1773836657/ab3f245a6308eb5b31b4fbe0b00346ad_Draft%20Canterbury%20District%20Local%20Plan%20Regulation%2019%20%20%20%282026%29.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIPIQP5NM%2F20260512%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20260512T112941Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=69a96b0d864c6b898f89c79831436d4480590f6141c0c0cb99641c2053de6044
4. Draft infrastructure delivery plan (2024) Canterbury City Council https://ehq-production-europe.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/4bb4dde2b73a5aca6de2330b77a63e0fa278a501/original/1753706537/2d5934c50e40abd7e2412fc659aa2220_Draft%20Infrastructure%20Delivery%20Plan.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA4KKNQAKIPIQP5NM%2F20260512%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20260512T124838Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=9af939ca11f2ee12f050400ffe23363cc36ca4f51a8227a5c23e49543f40cacb
5. Get information about schools. Gov.uk. [Get Information about Schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-schools)

6. Issue details (2023) Kent County Council [Issue details - 23/00001 - Proposal to establish a new 2FE Primary School in Thanington Canterbury for September 2025.](#)
7. National planning policy framework (2024) Ministry of housing, communities and local government, [National Planning Policy Framework](#)
8. Water firm will 'struggle' to supply new homes (2026) Esson, D. BBC [South East Water says it will 'struggle' to supply new Kent homes](#)