

Harry Butcher

From: Sacha Goring [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 May 2026 15:08
To: Consultations
Subject: Local Plan Review Regulation 19 consultation

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to formally object to the proposed Merton Park development included within the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation on the grounds that the proposal is neither justified, effective nor consistent with sustainable development principles set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

My family and I moved to [REDACTED] in October last year. One of the major reasons we chose to buy our home here was the surrounding landscape, orchards, open fields and accessible green space around Wincheap and South Canterbury. These spaces are not unused land; they are already deeply valued and actively used by local residents every single day.

As parents of two children and a dog owner, we use these orchards and fields regularly for walking, exercise, recreation and wellbeing. The ability to access nature close to home is incredibly important for family life and mental health. Losing this green space so soon after moving here would be devastating for our family and many others.

The proposed scale of development appears entirely disproportionate to the existing infrastructure in the area. Traffic congestion around Wincheap, South Canterbury Road, Hollow Lane and surrounding routes is already busy on most days. Adding hundreds or potentially thousands of additional vehicle movements will inevitably worsen congestion, air pollution, noise and road safety concerns.

The surrounding roads are already narrow and difficult to navigate for larger vehicles such as buses and emergency services, particularly along Stuppington Lane and Ethelbert Road. Any further increase in traffic risks creating serious delays for ambulances and other emergency responders. This is especially concerning given the proximity to healthcare facilities and Canterbury's only hospital.

Additional congestion could also negatively affect NHS staff and carers trying to get to work on time, as well as patients attending appointments and treatments. The prolonged period of construction work, including noise from heavy construction vehicles and machinery, also risks affecting the wellbeing, recovery and care environment for nearby patients and healthcare settings.

The impact on local schools would also be substantial. Increased congestion and disruption would affect daily travel for pupils, parents and staff attending nearby schools including The Langton Grammar School for Boys, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, St Anselm's Catholic School, St Nicholas School, The Orchard School and Wincheap Foundation Primary School. Many of these schoolchildren walk through the fields to get to and from school and this would greatly impact their route as well as create a safety issue. There could also be wider impacts on access routes around

Barton Manor School, Barton Court Grammar School and The Pilgrims' School. These roads are already heavily used during school drop-off and collection times and frequently experience delays and congestion.

The assumption that increased use of park-and-ride or public transport will offset traffic impact does not reflect reality. The existing park-and-ride buses are frequently underused from what I have personally observed, and many people cannot realistically give up their cars due to work requirements, disability, caring responsibilities, school transport needs or the high and increasing cost of public transport. The proposal appears to rely on unrealistic and ableist assumptions around walking, cycling and public transport use while failing to properly address the limitations of the existing road network.

I am also extremely concerned about the environmental and health impacts during both construction and long-term occupation. My child suffers from asthma, and the prospect of years of construction dust, airborne pollutants, heavy vehicle traffic and noise is deeply worrying. Air quality in the Wincheap area is already a concern and there appears to be insufficient evidence demonstrating how worsening pollution levels will be prevented or mitigated. Mounting evidence shows that poor air quality has a substantial negative impact on health and this is unacceptable, especially to a city that's home to many schools, colleges and universities. The younger generation deserves to breathe clean air.

No clear construction traffic strategy appears to have been identified either, despite the likelihood that existing residential roads would bear the impact for many years during construction. This would significantly harm the quality of life of existing residents, many of whom have lived here for decades.

There are also serious unresolved concerns regarding water supply, wastewater infrastructure and sewage management. Existing infrastructure across Kent is already under strain, and there appears to be uncertainty regarding whether adequate water supply and wastewater capacity can realistically support development on this scale within the proposed timescales. The lack of certainty around this infrastructure raises serious questions regarding whether the proposal is deliverable and therefore sound.

The proposal would also result in the loss of high-quality agricultural land, mature orchards, wildlife habitat and valuable green buffer land surrounding Canterbury. These orchards and fields are rich in biodiversity, support protected and endangered bird species, and provide an important natural landscape setting for the city. The area also offers panoramic views towards Canterbury Cathedral and forms part of the rural character and historic setting of the Cathedral World Heritage Site.

The loss of dark starry skies, increased light pollution from roads, sports facilities and associated infrastructure, and the urbanisation of this elevated landscape would permanently damage the character of the area and the wellbeing of existing residents.

Importantly, many residents feel the consultation process itself has failed to properly engage large parts of the local community, with awareness being driven largely through local volunteer groups rather than the council itself. There also appears to be insufficient transparency regarding how residents' previous objections and concerns have been assessed or addressed.

I strongly urge Canterbury City Council and the Planning Inspector to reconsider this allocation and give proper weight to:

- * Existing traffic congestion and inadequate road infrastructure

- * Impacts on emergency services, healthcare access and nearby schools
- * Air pollution, construction impacts and public health concerns
- * The loss of irreplaceable green space, orchards and high-quality agricultural land
- * Biodiversity loss and harm to protected wildlife habitats
- * Unresolved water supply, sewage and wastewater infrastructure concerns
- * Harm to the landscape setting of Canterbury and the Cathedral World Heritage Site
- * The cumulative environmental and wellbeing impacts on existing residents
- * Concerns regarding the soundness and deliverability of the proposal

This proposal would fundamentally and permanently alter the character of the area and significantly reduce the quality of life for existing residents.

I respectfully ask that the Merton Park allocation and nearby plans be removed from the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs Sacha Goring
Local Resident