

From: Mary Anne Smith Sellen [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 May 2026 16:38
To: Consultations
Subject: Response to the Draft Canterbury Local Plan

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

--Email From External Account--

From:

Mary Anne Sellen (local resident)



An OBJECTION to Policy SS3 and Policy C10 (Merton Park)

I believe the plan for Merton Park to be both unsound and illegal for the following reasons:

Consideration of Brownfield Sites - the plan is in conflict with national policy as specified here:

- Making as much use as possible of existing suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land; (NPPF)
- Mayors and local planning authorities should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward any land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership (NPPF)
- The area proposed for development as 'Merton Park' is essential to Canterbury's historic green setting including heritage views of the Cathedral and grade 1 agricultural land and important wildlife habitats. It must not be sacrificed. The chance to regenerate brownfield land and convert existing buildings to eco-friendly homes should not be lost - for example student housing, car park areas, Wincheap industrial estate, unoccupied high street property.

Air Quality & Traffic Congestion

The increased traffic generated by Merton Park will inevitably increase congestion and air pollution. Roads in the area, such as Wincheap, already suffer from congestion while comparatively calm roads leading off the development will become plagued by traffic congestion. (Homersham, Zealand Road area etc.)

I quote the results of research by local residents:

"The Council no longer plans the original relief roads for a "bus-led" strategy. Their own

Draft Transport Strategy (Table 5.1) admits this will leave the A2/A28 Wincheap interchange and M2 J7 severely congested! Crucially, they don't have a signed legal agreement (Statement of Common Ground) with National Highways accepting this traffic chaos. Without this, the plan is legally non-compliant."

Damage to the Environment and Local Amenities

There are already water shortages, river pollution by sewage and chemicals, and loss of wildlife in the area. The Merton Park proposals will:

- Remove trees and hedgerows - the proposed mitigation cannot be anything but inadequate given the amount of new homes for this green area.
- Generate more sewage, more pollution.
- Remove beyond repair for future generations the natural beauty of the fields and orchards and the accessible green space for local residents including walkers, dogwalkers, visitors, children and teenagers and others.

I quote:

"The Stodmarsh Nature Reserve is failing due to water pollution. The Council's brand new March 2026 Habitats Regulations report (Para 5.5.22) explicitly admits they are "uncertain" if the environmental mitigation for these 1,950 homes can actually be delivered! Under UK planning law (the Waddenzee principle), you cannot legally approve a plan if you are "uncertain" about its environmental damage."

Heritage Issues

C10 takes no account of the heritage view of the Cathedral from the orchards and fields. The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Canterbury Cathedral, as defined by UNESCO is intrinsically linked to:

- Its visual prominence in the landscape
- Long-distance and approach views across open countryside
- Its historic relationship with the surrounding rural setting

Conclusion: "Policy SS3 and Policy C10 (Merton Park)".

The plan is Unsound and Legally Non-Compliant based on Transport, Brownfield, and Habitats Regulations failures.

The plan also takes no account of heritage issues, nor of local residents who will lose long-standing and much-valued access to existing green space of great natural beauty on the fringe of the city. Wildlife will suffer extreme damage however many so-called 'mitigations' are introduced.

Mary Anne Sellen