

From: Darren Baldock [REDACTED]
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Darren Baldock



To the planning inspector,
The plan at Merton Park is Unsound and Legally Non-Compliant based on Transport, Brownfield, and Habitats Regulations failures and I wish to participate in the oral examination hearings.

These are the reasons why:

1. THE TRAFFIC WILL BE TOO MUCH, gridlock with the development it fails the "Duty to Cooperate" & "Effective" tests.

The Council has abandoned the original relief roads for a "bus-led" strategy. BUT, their own Draft Transport Strategy (Table 5.1) admits this will leave the A2/A28 Wincheap interchange and M2 J7 severely congested! Crucially, you do not have a signed legal agreement (Statement of Common Ground) with National Highways accepting this traffic chaos. Without this, the plan is legally non-compliant.

2. IGNORING BROWNFIELD SITES (Fails the "Justified" test)

National policy says you must exhaust brownfield land before destroying greenfield sites. The Council is sacrificing the historic green setting of Canterbury to build low-density sprawl at Merton Park, while completely ignoring the chance to regenerate the Wincheap Retail Estate, city-centre car parks, and vacant student housing into high-density, eco-friendly homes.

3. THE ECOLOGICAL TRAP (Fails "Legal Compliance" & "National Policy")

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.

Please reconsider these points above and stop Merton Park development.
Let's protect our district from unjustified gridlock and a legally flawed plan.

Yours sincerely

Darren Baldock