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Sent: 18 May 2026 10:34
To: Consultations
Subject: Comments on Merton Park

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Good Morning,

I apologise on advance for this not being the most articulate of responses, but I am on maternity leave with a little baby and a toddler and I truly want to get a response in as I am passionate about keeping the land on Merton Park C10 as it is.

I object to Policy C10 (Merton Park) in the Regulation 19 Draft Canterbury District Local Plan, on the grounds that it fails the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) tests of soundness (paragraph 35). It is not positively prepared, not justified, not effective, and not consistent with national policy. The Council's very own Sustainability Appraisal in 2026 confirms significant negative impacts on the landscape, biodiversity, land use, water uses and flood risk, and heritage for C10.

As someone who has also used hospital services significantly in the last few months I also cannot comprehend how all these extra houses and families can be supported by the hospital services we have. I was in hospital induced with my son for a week because of understaffing on the labour ward in the same week the A&E was sent into overflow into Costa in Ashford. I was also on A&E for 8 hours with my baby a couple of weeks ago. How are these services going to effectively support these extra homes? In short, I don't see how it can when it only *just* serves the community as it is.

Not Positively Prepared

The plan's evidence does not show that Merton Park is necessary or deliverable within sustainable limits.

Infrastructure undeliverable: South East Water has stated that supply infrastructure will not be available until 2036, five years after the Council's target occupation date (2030/31). The Sustainability Appraisal acknowledges that cumulative effects around Canterbury will increase pressure on water resources and wastewater systems, and as we are in one of the driest counties in the country, this is a critical argument considering the droughts we have experienced in the past years.

Contradiction with climate and sustainability goals: The Sustainability Argument identifies "minor positive and significant negative effects" for climate change (SA Objective 2) and biodiversity (SA Objective 3), acknowledging greenhouse gas emissions and greenfield loss linked to Canterbury allocations such as C10.

Not Effective

Water and wastewater: Policy relies on uncommitted infrastructure; the SA notes “potential negative effects unless adequately mitigated” relating to water supply and wastewater capacity. We know the importance of trees for the environment and supporting water run off and positively preventing flooding. With the landscape of C10 the trees and agricultural will be critical to preventing flooding for the area and houses further down the hill on Heaton Road, Lime Kiln Road and beyond.

Traffic constraints unresolved: Hollow Lane and Nackington Road lack sufficient capacity; the SA acknowledges significant congestion effects across “South West Canterbury,” which includes C10. The proposed Gyratory on Wincheap to help resolve some of the traffic issues is also not going to due to the pinch point by The Maidens Head Pub and the railway bridge/Aldi roundabout. With traffic in the area already critically congested, the construction traffic and then the cars from the houses will make this impossible.

Not Consistent with National Policy

Environmental conflict: The SA records significant negative effects on biodiversity (and these findings contradict NPPF 174–177 (protecting natural assets). In the area of C10 over 50 species of birds alone have been recorded with a great number of them on the red or amber list.

I have more to say but I am sure others on my community have covered it. This plan is not at all sound.

Very best wishes

Rose Hall