

From: James Goring [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 May 2026 16:47
To: Consultations
Subject: Local Plan (2042/43) Regulation 19 (March 2026) Objection

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To Whom It May Concern,

I wish to register my strong objection to the proposed Merton Park allocation within the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation. In my view, this proposal is fundamentally unsound, unsupported by adequate infrastructure evidence, and clearly not in the best interests of existing residents or the long-term well-being of Canterbury.

My family and I purchased our home on [REDACTED] only last year, choosing this area specifically because of its unique balance of accessible countryside, orchards, open landscapes and green space surrounding Wincheap and South Canterbury. These spaces are not vacant or neglected land waiting to be built on; they are heavily used and deeply valued by local people for recreation, exercise, mental wellbeing and access to nature.

As parents of two children and owners of a dog, these fields and orchards form part of our everyday lives. They provide safe walking routes, opportunities for outdoor activity, and an increasingly rare sense of openness close to the city. The permanent loss of this landscape would represent a severe decline in quality of life for existing residents and future generations alike.

The proposal appears wholly disproportionate to the capacity of the surrounding road network and existing infrastructure. Traffic congestion across Wincheap, South Canterbury Road, Hollow Lane, Stuppington Lane, Ethelbert Road and surrounding routes is already severe at peak times and regularly experiences lengthy delays. Introducing a development of this scale would inevitably generate substantial additional traffic movements, resulting in worsening congestion, increased journey times, greater air pollution and significantly heightened road safety risks.

Many of the surrounding roads are narrow, constrained and already difficult for buses, delivery vehicles and emergency services to navigate safely. Additional traffic pressure raises serious concerns regarding access for ambulances and emergency responders, particularly given the proximity to Canterbury's hospital and nearby healthcare facilities. Delays to emergency vehicles are not a theoretical concern; they are a foreseeable consequence of overloading an already strained road network.

The impact on healthcare services and hospital access could be considerable. NHS staff, carers, patients and visitors already experience delays travelling through this part of Canterbury, particularly during peak hours. Increased congestion and years of

disruptive construction activity would only worsen these problems. Heavy construction traffic, dust, vibration and noise also risk negatively affecting nearby healthcare environments and patient wellbeing.

Local schools would similarly be affected. Roads surrounding 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 are already heavily congested during school drop-off and collection periods. Additional traffic would create further safety concerns for children, parents and staff. Many pupils currently walk through the surrounding fields and green spaces to travel safely to and from school, and these routes would either disappear entirely or become significantly more dangerous due to increased traffic and construction activity.

Claims that traffic impacts can be offset through increased public transport use or park-and-ride provision appear unrealistic and unsupported by existing travel behaviour. Public transport services in the area are already limited, expensive and impractical for many residents. Many people rely on private vehicles due to work commitments, disability, caring responsibilities or school transport requirements. The proposal appears to rely heavily on assumptions around walking, cycling and public transport uptake that do not reflect the realities faced by many residents and families.

I am also deeply concerned about the environmental and public health implications of the proposal, both during construction and after completion. My child suffers from asthma, making the prospect of years of construction dust, diesel emissions, airborne pollutants and noise particularly alarming. Air quality within the Wincheap area is already problematic, and it is difficult to see how introducing substantial additional traffic and prolonged construction activity would not significantly worsen conditions.

The proposal fails to provide convincing evidence that pollution levels, construction impacts and long-term environmental harm can be adequately mitigated. This is especially concerning in an area surrounded by schools, healthcare facilities and family housing. Poor air quality is a recognised public health issue with serious long-term consequences, particularly for children and vulnerable residents. It is unacceptable to pursue development that risks worsening these conditions without robust and credible safeguards.

There also appears to be a lack of clarity regarding how construction traffic would be managed over what could be many years of disruption. Existing residential roads would inevitably bear the burden of heavy construction vehicles, resulting in noise, vibration, safety risks and substantial harm to residents' daily lives. This would create an unacceptable living environment for nearby communities for an extended period.

In addition, there remain serious unresolved concerns regarding water supply, sewage capacity and wastewater infrastructure. Existing infrastructure across Kent is already under significant strain, and there appears to be insufficient certainty that adequate capacity exists to support development on this scale. Without clear, deliverable and fully

funded infrastructure solutions, the allocation cannot reasonably be considered sound or deliverable.

The proposal would also result in the irreversible loss of high-quality agricultural land, mature orchards, wildlife habitats and important green buffer land surrounding Canterbury. These landscapes support biodiversity, protected bird species and valuable ecosystems while contributing significantly to the rural character and historic setting of the city. The elevated landscape also provides important views towards Canterbury Cathedral and forms part of the wider setting of the Cathedral World Heritage Site.

The urbanisation of this landscape, alongside increased lighting, roads, buildings and associated infrastructure, would permanently erode the area's rural character, tranquillity and dark skies. The cumulative impact on residents' wellbeing, environmental quality and local character would be profound and irreversible.

There are also significant concerns regarding the consultation process itself. Many residents feel awareness and engagement have relied more heavily on local volunteer groups than meaningful communication from the council. There appears to be insufficient transparency regarding how previous objections, concerns and evidence submitted by residents have been assessed or incorporated into the process.

For all of these reasons, I strongly believe the proposed Merton Park allocation is unsound, inadequately justified and contrary to the best interests of existing residents and the wider Canterbury community.

I urge Canterbury City Council and the Planning Inspector to give proper consideration to:

- Existing congestion and inadequate road infrastructure
- Road safety risks and impacts on emergency service access
- Harm to healthcare access, hospital journeys and nearby schools
- Increased pollution, construction impacts and public health concerns
- Loss of valued green space, orchards and agricultural land
- Biodiversity loss and damage to wildlife habitats
- Unresolved concerns around water, sewage and wastewater capacity
- Harm to Canterbury's landscape setting and historic character
- The cumulative impact on residents' wellbeing and quality of life
- Serious concerns regarding the soundness and deliverability of the proposal

This development would fundamentally and permanently alter the character of the area while imposing substantial environmental, traffic and infrastructure burdens on existing communities. The proposal is neither sustainable nor properly supported by the infrastructure required to make it acceptable.

I respectfully request that the Merton Park allocation and associated development proposals be removed from the Local Plan.

Yours faithfully,

James Goring

Local Resident