

Helen Broughton Clerk to the Council  
65 Court Road  
Caterham Surrey CR3 5RH

Tel: 01883 708310

Email: [clerk@caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk)

Website: [www.caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.caterhamhillparishcouncil.co.uk)



---

## Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held at the Westway Centre, Chaldon Road at 2.00pm on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Present:** Cllr Geoff Duck (Chair), Cllr G Dennis, Cllr M Grasso

**In attendance:** Mrs H Broughton (Clerk)

**PL23/46**      **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Derek Carpenter, Cllr Vicky Robinson, Cllr Leena Sowambur.

**PL23/47**      **Declarations of interest:** There were no declarations of interest arising from the agenda.

**PL23/48**      **Public Forum:** There were no members of the public.

**PL23/49**      **Planning applications**  
To approve responses to application 2023/878 - Kenley Aerodrome, Victor Beamish Avenue, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5FX

It was agreed to request that Cllrs Botten and Robinson seek the advice from a senior planning officer as to whether the outline planning application process is legitimate. It would also be requested that the Neighbourhood Plan planning consultant's advice be obtained.

**Objection:**

The Parish Council understands that application 2023/878 - Kenley Aerodrome, Victor Beamish Avenue, is in the form of an outline application, and comment on access only, as stated.

On this basis the Parish Council reserves its position, without prejudice, in terms of being able to examine and make further statutory comment upon the matters of detail, which in our view are precluded from consideration at this stage. Instead, all matters except access (eg layout, appearance, scale and landscaping) must form part of a subsequent, separate stage of reserved matters planning under a Detailed application, should the Outline be approved.

The Parish Council does not view the approval of outline planning as a legitimate procedural step, unless it remains within the parameters stated, and members were taken aback by the decision regarding 5 Queens Park Road.

The overall suitability for development has not been established. This is a highly complex site, and several material issues must be considered first:

The site was originally proposed for removal from the Green Belt in the draft Tandridge Local Plan, since judged unsound by the Inspector. It therefore remains designated Green Belt land and residential development is by definition harmful unless very special overriding circumstances can be demonstrated. If not, development remains in principle inappropriate.

The site forms a principal part of one of the best-preserved Battle of Britain airfields nationally. The airfield contains listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and is a Conservation Area, responsibility for which is shared with LB Croydon. The Inspector regarded the information submitted by Tandridge for the heritage implications of development as inadequate and needing further analytical work.

Both the South London Downs National Nature Reserve and a candidate area for extending the Surrey Hills AONB are now adjacent to the site (but were not when this site was being evaluated in the draft Local Plan). Visual openness is a defining characteristic of both these designations, as it is for the Green Belt and the Conservation Area (including views to and from the airfield). The setting of the nationally important heritage assets is also defined as the visual envelope within which their historic significance may be understood and appreciated by the public. How would that be affected by a surrounding residential development?

The site cannot be considered in isolation. There are potential cumulative environmental effects in respect of the adjoining permitted residential development around the listed Officers Mess. This includes a block of flats overlooking the historic airfield. The risk is that the airfield ends up ringed with over-dense development on the Tandridge side, to the detriment of those authorities responsible for the remainder. They include LB Croydon, City of London, Historic England and Natural England. So far TDC has approached development in an entirely piecemeal way, with no evidence of strategic thinking over the future of the airfield. Where for example is a Tandridge Planning Brief (agreed with local stakeholders) setting out the design parameters any scheme must address?

All these considerations affect the first principle of whether further residential development is appropriate here. They are thus ideally suited to an Outline application, so that the developer need not commit to the cost of a fully supported application before the basic principle has been tested. The government Planning Portal makes clear that Outline applications are to be used to gain an understanding as to whether the nature of a development is acceptable. Accordingly an Outline application need only be supported in the first instance by a location and site plan. If

the general principle is acceptable (with regard to broader issues such as those set out above) then the detailed design comes later as reserved matters.

The Parish Council objects strongly to the application as it is currently presented, on the grounds that the Planning Authority has acted improperly to an extent that invalidates it. The District Council is preventing the Parish Council from fulfilling its statutory role in two key respects:

1. Despite the application being submitted for access only (with consideration of all other matters deferred to a subsequent Detailed application) TDC has validated what is in reality a Full planning application, complete with the full suite of documents that would normally support a major scheme. They include detailed drawings and reports covering all material aspects of the scheme - layout, density, heights, parking, tenure mix, bedrooms per dwelling etc.

If the application is determined its current form the matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (as defined in the detailed reports and drawings) will by implication also be agreed in principle, despite being outside the scope of the Outline. The subsequent Detailed application is rendered meaningless. For example, in a similar case in Queens Park Road an Outline application was submitted for access and layout only, but supported by fully detailed drawings covering height, massing, roofscape, elevations etc. When this went before Tandridge Planning Committee, local Councillors were prevented from raising their legitimate concerns about those issues because they were stated to be outside the scope of the Outline. The application was granted, complete with a condition requiring the development to be built in accordance with the detailed drawings submitted – a fait accompli that denied the Parish Council a fair hearing on behalf of our residents. We are concerned that the District Council appears to be acting once again in the same manner, in our view an abuse of the Outline planning process.

2. The District Council has disregarded a key element of the National Planning Policy Framework to the detriment of the Parish Council. NPPF is not intended to be optional for Planning Authorities.

Section 12 of NPPF 2023 (achieving well designed places) sets out a process of local dialogue and participation in development design before applications are finalised. It is intended to encourage consensus and early recognition of local priorities, thus making the planning process less adversarial. The Parish Council has stood ready to engage in that process proactively and constructively with developers, yet despite these NPPF requirements having been in place for a decade TDC has consistently failed to implement them.

Para 129: design guides should be based on effective community engagement and reflect local aspirations for development in their area.

Para 132: early discussion between applicants, the LPA and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the

community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked upon more favourably than those that cannot.

There has been no such engagement. It is scarcely credible that the Parish Council has been denied even advance knowledge of a major scheme (let alone consultation) until a fully detailed application appears on the TDC portal. The exclusion of local knowledge and priorities has characterised Tandridge Planning for far too long and this is but the latest egregious example.

**PL23/50** To agree to request that the District Council review processes following a successful appeal application **PP/M3645/W/22/3311144: 5 Queens Park Road, CR3 5RB.**

It was agreed to ask Cllr Robinson to extend an invitation to the Head of Planning at the District Council to attend a full parish council meeting or Neighbourhood Plan meeting to discuss improving the working relationship between the Parish and District Council.

**PL23/51** To note the date of the next meeting as Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Cllr Grasso gave her apologies.

The meeting closed at 2.20pm