

TDC Local Plan Review - Supplementary Response **from Caterham on the Hill Parish Council** *25th February 2016*

The Parish Council (PC) has studied the Tandridge District Council (TDC) Local Plan Review consultation report "Our Local Plan - Issues and Approaches" (December 2015). We have already submitted Summary and Detailed Responses. We are now adding a Supplementary Response, taking account of our own consultations with local residents and businesses.

There is a general view that the Local Plan Review has been prepared in too much haste. This has led to numerous errors of fact and of interpretation. These need to be rectified before the Review can acquire the necessary credibility to be carried forward. Our Detailed Response gives examples of mistakes, mainly relating to our Parish.

It is also clear that various parts of the Review have been carried out in isolation, and this has led to confusion and conflict between the results set out in different technical assessments. There is an urgent need to provide an overarching set of objectives and priorities so that residents, businesses, groups and parish councils can understand to what extent provision for housing can be made within physical and social infrastructure constraints and the aim of retention of the Green Belt.

We consider that both the Green Belt and HELAA assessments have started out with a false assumption. As a key purpose of the Green Belt is to prevent settlements from expanding or merging, the GB assessment should have had the aim of protecting those parts of the GB which enclose our existing towns and separate them from neighbouring settlements. There are passages in the GB assessment which seem to regard these parts of the GB as being less valuable than open countryside. We consider that the reverse is true: these are the GB areas of greatest value to most people. Some passages within the assessment should be deleted or rewritten; our Detailed Response gives particulars.

The HELAA assessment includes a criterion that potential housing sites which are within the GB but adjacent to settlements are "achievable" for new housing, but sites in more rural areas are "inappropriate locations". Again, this throws greater pressure onto the District's already over-stressed areas. On the various Housing Approaches in the consultation document, Approach 2b (intensified development in larger settlements) is completely inappropriate except perhaps at major public transport hubs, and Approaches 3, 4 and 5 (further large-scale development across the District) are undesirable and probably unachievable. Only Approach 2a (modest development in settlements) would meet with public support, though even with this option some sites are inappropriate. This could be coupled with Approach 6 (a major new settlement or urban extension), provided that a location could be found where the necessary infrastructure could be provided and which did not have a significant adverse impact on existing communities.

Specifically in relation to Caterham on the Hill Parish, it is clear to us from our consultations - including a public meeting attended by well over 100 people - that there is great concern locally about the level and location of new housing provision suggested in TDC's HELAA Appendix 3. There was full support at the public meeting for our earlier responses to you,

including for the comments in our Detailed Response on the individual sites within and bordering the Parish and for the continued protection of the whole of GB area GBA 004.

Those at the public meeting also expressed support for the work carried out on the CR3 Neighbourhood Plan. This genuinely local, community-led plan is now out for public consultation and will need to be taken into account as the TDC Plan Review continues.

Finally, we have received strong support for our proposal that Tandridge Council should make an early statement regarding its intentions for HELAA sites within the Parish which are owned by the Council, including Hambledon Park Open Space, Town End Car Park, Caterham Community Centre and others. There is no need for TDC to await the outcome of further stages in the Local Plan Review. We ask that a statement be made immediately on these sites by TDC as landowner in order to set at rest the concerns of the community.

TDC now needs to build a case for establishing a firm set of constraints on the volume and pace of future housing development.



Chris Botten, Chairman
Caterham on the Hill Parish Council



Hilary Turner, Chairman, Planning Committee
Caterham on the Hill Parish Council