

CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

1. Site Details

- a. What is the site's name/reference?

CR3NPCAT022 Essendene Park

- b. Where is the site located?

Green Belt within Caterham on the Hill

- c. What is the site description?

Essendene Woods, pasture and meadow land abutting those woods, as Green Belt. Essendene Woods provides an arboreal landscape to Caterham Valley and provides a sylvan boundary between the densely developed areas of Caterham Valley and the areas west of Whyteleaf Road, Caterham on the Hill (see Planning Inspectorate Report cited below)

- d. What are the adjoining uses to the site?

North open land to the south of Burntwood Lane, south open land to the north of Furrows Place, west residential gardens, east residential gardens

- e. What is the site area (hectares)?

7.1ha

- f. What is the existing land use?

Essendene Woods, pasture and meadow land abutting those woods, as Green Belt. Essendene Woods provides an arboreal landscape to Caterham Valley and provides a sylvan boundary between the densely developed areas of Caterham Valley and the areas west of Whyteleaf Road, Caterham on the Hill

Equestrian facility

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g. Who is/are the owner(s) of the site?

Various

Land Registry Title to land within Essendene Woods: The Woods are bordered by residential properties to the east (Stafford Road and Milton Road), Burntwood Lane to the north, Whyteleafe Road to the west and Waller Lane to the south. Land Registry Titles for some of these properties show parts of Green Belt/Essendene Wood land within their curtilages and not held separately.

It is understood the Title to a parcel of land to the northwest in the corner bordered by properties in Whyteleafe Road and Burntwood Lane, where Essendene House once stood, is held by someone from the Croydon area.

h. What is the site's planning history?

TDC and Planning Inspectorate Policy for Essendene Woods and surrounding properties: It is a matter of record that Planning Applications to build in rear gardens, on land abutting to or within Essendene Woods have been resisted as they did not fit within TDC strategic area plans. 2 of these are cited below. The reasons for the refusals remain applicable today.

(1) August 2008: Planning Application TA 2008/1952: proposed new dwelling in rear garden of Number 30 and application submitted on behalf of No. 30's owner. On 18.07.2008: TDC Officer's decision to refuse permission to construct chalet style 3 bed dwelling with detached garage, associated parking area and access from Furrows Place on grounds "this proposed back land development is totally inappropriate. The 3 bed dwelling would be far too large for the site and would lead to loss of amenity for neighbouring houses. Should permission be granted the Council requests that a porous hard standing surface be used in order to alleviate drainage* problems."

(2) On 09.02.2010 the decision of Planning Inspectorate on Appeal reference APP/M3645/A/09/2112787: 42 Whyteleafe Road upheld TDC decision to refuse Planning Permission for application TA/2009/0656 (see TDC web site). The Inspectorate confirmed TDC's position that such building development compromised the street scene, the rural landscape and the sylvan boundary between urban areas of Caterham to the east and to the west of Whyteleafe Road.

(3) TDC/2008/1747 Retention of 40mx20m sand school for equestrian use. – Approved with conditions. The main issue of this application was whether the proposal amounted to inappropriate development of the Green Belt. It was decided that there was no undue harm. A condition restricting its use to private recreational purposes was imposed.

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i. Desk top research & planning policy considerations:

1. Any relevant planning policies
2. Is the site allocated for particular use in the Local Plan?
3. Do any Local Plan designations apply to the site? For example:
Greenbelt / Public Open Space / Strategic open space / Village confines / extent of settlement
Conservation Area / Protected wildlife or habitat / Landscape character area
4. Do any other designations apply? e.g. National Park/AONB/Village Green / Local Green Space
5. Are there any emerging local planning documents with relevant policies or designations?

1. This site is in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The site is therefore unavailable for development unless and until it is released from the Green Belt as part of a review of TDC's Local Plan Core Strategy. Currently apply -RE1 RE2, RE6, RE8, RE9, RE10, RE11.

2. Greenbelt

3. Greenbelt

4. Not at present

5. Tandridge Local Plan Part adopted at Full Council July 2014 DP10

j. Are there national policy considerations that are relevant to the site? Are there policies, or is there evidence related to the regional strategy that is relevant to the site?

NPPF Section 8 Promoting healthy communities

NPPF Section 9 Protecting Green Belt land. Of the 5 purposes of GB there is a special relevance in

- a. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas
- b. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another Caterham Hill and Caterham Valley
- c. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

k. Does the site feature in or are there relevant policies in other local planning documents e.g. supplementary planning document, Village Design Statement, Conservation Area Appraisal?

No

l. Does the site feature in assessments undertaken to support the Local Plan e.g. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Sustainability Appraisal?

Yes

Site availability – not applicable as in Green Belt

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2. Desktop evidence review

- a. Is the site in flood plain / known to be affected by flooding?

No

- b. Could the land be contaminated by a former use or activity?
Would development require the remediation of contaminated land?

No

- c. Are there any nearby sources of noise of air pollution which could affect the site?

No

- d. Does the site contain a valuable mineral resource?

Unknown

- e. Is the land of agricultural value / official designation of agricultural land?

No

- f. Are there any 'Listed' buildings on or close to the site?

No

- g. Could the site contain any archaeological remains?

Unknown

- h. Are there any issues of capacity on the local road network (congestion and/or parking)?

No

- i. Are there any known legal considerations relevant to the site e.g. covenant?

Green Belt

3. Onsite considerations

- a. Access / How is the site accessed / Is it easily accessible from the highway?

Accessed by public footpath

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- b. Is the site accessible by public transport, cycling and walking?

Only from edges of site

4. Existing features

- a. Are there any physical constraints affecting the site e.g. access, slope, pylons?
Will the topography of the site constrain development e.g. steep slopes?
Are there any power lines, pipelines or other infrastructure crossing or affecting the site?

Steep wooded hillside

- b. What natural features are there e.g. any trees, hedgerows, watercourse?
Are there features of particular biodiversity value?
Could the site be home to protected species such as bats, badgers, great crested newts etc.?

Essendene Woods provide a diverse habitat for protected plant, bird and animal species. It is a matter of record that East Surrey Badger Protection Society have confirmed the presence of badgers (protected species) and their active setts throughout the Woods. The woods provide an essential protective corridor joining grazing areas for deer populations. There is a resident breeding bat population (protected species). Owls and other woodland birds, some protected species, nest and breed in the Woods. Woodland orchids and other rare plant species grow throughout the seasons under the tree canopy.

- c. Are there any health and safety constraints e.g. nearby major hazard site?

No

- d. Are there existing buildings that could be retained or converted?

No

- e. Are there important views into or out of the site?

Views across valley

- f. How might development at the site affect the skyline?

Not applicable as Green Belt

- g. Are there any public rights of way affecting the site?

Public footpath 61

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- h. Information to record about neighbouring sites and the surrounding area.

What are the neighbouring uses? (What are the existing uses and are there any development proposals?). Are any of the adjacent uses, 'bad neighbours' giving rise to noise or fumes that could impact the development?

Could the original site be expanded into neighbouring sites?

Not applicable as Green Belt. Adjoins other areas of open ground

- i. What is the local style of buildings – materials, scale, density?

West – detached houses mature plots. East semi-detached properties

- j. Could development at the site cause any issues of overlooking or loss of privacy for neighbouring uses?

Not applicable as Green Belt

- k. Physical infrastructure and local services considerations

Is the site connected to local utilities (such as water, energy supply and sewerage disposal)?

Unknown

- l. Does the site have high speed broadband connection?

No

5. Local facilities and services

- a. How close are the following local services and facilities? Where is the nearest:

School (primary & secondary) / GP practice / Pharmacy / Local shops / Post Office / Library / Play space / Sports centre and/or pitches.

Not relevant as site is Green Belt and not available for development.

However most services are within 0.5miles

- b. What is the capacity of local schools?

Not relevant as Green Belt but within area - Primary schools on the Hill, and in Chaldon and Whyteleafe are virtually at full capacity but there is room for expansion on site for some. Hillcroft Primary is enlarging its intake from 11/2 to 2 form entry. There is some capacity in Caterham Valley and again these schools could be enlarged

De Stafford has some capacity at present and there is room for expansion as has taken place in the past.

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- c. Are local services accessible by public transport, cycling and walking?

Only from edges of site

6. Community Infrastructure Levy

- a. What are the priorities for local infrastructure improvements linked to the development of this site?

Not relevant as Green Belt

Deliverability

Starting to think about whether development of the site is deliverable and viable...

7. Suitability - potential constraints on development

- a. Is there a record of local opinion towards development of the site?

Local opposition to removing site from Green Belt

8. Availability

- a. Is the land owner willing for their site to come forward for development?

In the past an owner of part of the site requested that it be released from the Green Belt. This was refused

- b. Are there any factors which might prevent or delay development e.g. tenancies, leases?

Green Belt

9. Summary

Desktop research findings

Planning policy considerations

Onsite considerations

Infrastructure & local services

Deliverability

Over what timeframe might the site become available for development - in years, 1-5 | 6-10 | 10+?

Land in the Green Belt associated with Essendene Woods

Information provided by Madeleine Capel – resident of Chaldon and past resident of Caterham Hill

TDC Strategic Area Plans: 2014 Tandridge District Council's Area Plans identify Essendene Woods, pasture and meadow land abutting those woods, as Green Belt. Essendene Woods provides an arboreal landscape to Caterham Valley and provides a sylvan boundary between the densely developed areas of

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Caterham Valley and the areas west of Whyteleafe Road, Caterham on the Hill (see Planning Inspectorate Report cited below).

Geography and geological matters: Essendene Woods lie on an east facing steep escarpment of the North Downs. The underlying chalk is covered by thin layers of soil mixed with gravel, flint and sand. The latter provides an excellent habitat for badger setts. There are some spring lines in those areas with clay with flints etc over the chalk. Natural ground conditions create drainage problems in some areas, e.g. Furrows Place. Elsewhere, new hard surfaces from building project disturb natural ground drainage channels and water is deflected, often causing flooding elsewhere. Ground conditions in parts of the North Downs can be unstable and sink holes can appear. It is a matter of record that uncertain ground conditions in the immediate locality of Essendene Woods have caused damage to roads, public parks, and property. A landslip recently occurred to the escarpment where it continues south into Harestone Valley which has been attributed to additional new buildings in the vicinity.

Environmental features

:Essendene Woods comprise well established, mixed conifer and deciduous trees. Indigenous species are very well represented, some of which are very old, e.g., cedar to north west, many yew, oak, etc. The Essendene Woods includes some open pasture land surrounded by trees, e.g. Furrows Place meadow which is in the Green Belt, which are covered by a blanket TPO. Blanket TPOS and specific TPOs cover trees in residential-designated land, e.g. that part of the Furrows Place estate on which 30 maisonettes are sited. An avenue of mostly mature beech trees runs from the Woods' north west corner to the public footpath leading down the escarpment.

Essendene Woods provide a diverse habitat for protected plant, bird and animal species. It is a matter of record that East Surrey Badger Protection Society have confirmed the presence of badgers (protected species) and their active setts throughout the Woods. The woods provide an essential protective corridor joining grazing areas for deer populations. There is a resident breeding bat population (protected species). Owls and other woodland birds, some protected species, nest and breed in the Woods. Woodland orchids and other rare plant species grow throughout the seasons under the tree canopy.

Archaeology and Geology of the area

There is little evidence of extensive human activity in the Green Belt areas including Essendene Woods. Before the development of Caterham in the Valley, historians suggest the area was used intermittently by goat and sheep herders. Today, there is little evidence of human habitation apart from a footprint of Essendene House, used by Canadian troops in WWII and later demolished, an animal pen (possibly sheep or goat shelter), flint workings and 21st century rubbish dumping.

Reasons to preserve current status of the Green Belt in and around Essendene Woods:

It is essential that the current protection of all the land designated Green Belt around and within the Essendene Woods is maintained. For many reasons – geological conditions, environmental concerns, multiplicity of ownership, impact on the community, landscape, etc. – the Green Belt area containing Essendene Woods is unsuitable for any building possibilities. Any such violation of the current status would impact severely on local residents and on the wider communities of Caterham in the Valley and Caterham on the Hill and on those passing through the area via the A22.

The locality is part of the essential border between the urban built up areas of London and the rural areas to the south. It provides a “lung” for the communities in the more densely built areas of Caterham Valley

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and Caterham on the Hill and for those to the south living within the M25 corridor.

The decision to sustain the current Green Belt status and remove Essendene Woods from possible building is evidence based. The consequential damage on the landscape, environment and community from building activity can be seen locally, where the west facing escarpment between Wapses Lodge roundabout and Whyteleafe has incrementally been cleared of its tree cover and significant building projects have occurred or are in the process of implementation.

Maintaining Essendene Park as Green Belt is vital to

- a. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas
- b. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another Caterham Hill and Caterham Valley

Consideration should be given to seeking additional protection for this valuable green space asset

Local Green Space designation.

If the land is already protected by Green Belt Policy than consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as a Local Green Space.

