

CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

1. Site Details

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

CR3NPCAT 053 Church Hill View Church Hill Caterham

- b. Where is the site located?

Site is situated between Church Hill and Harestone Valley Road in Caterham. The site includes Church Hill View Park and Pelham House on Harestone Valley Road

- c. What is the site description?

The site is a woodland park area located about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up and below Church Hill which then stretches steeply down to a level area on Harestone Valley road on which Pelham House is built. Pelham House is 12 Unit Elderly Care Home on two storeys owned by TDC with landscaped gardens and parking at front and small landscaped area at rear before the tree covered land rises steeply up to Church Hill View.

The top part of the site forms a large part of the eastern side of Character Area A Church Hill whilst the rest of the site lies in Character Area C Western Slopes in the Harestone Valley Character Assessment.

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

On south side side of Church Hill View and down to Harestone Valley Road is Jacob's Ladder a steep stepped public footpath. Beyond this is Mountside with 18 flats in two blocks.

To the south of Church Hill View is Church Hill Cottage and below to the south of the site are 4 houses formed in the gardens and grounds of Chestnuts with access from Harestone Valley Road and which form a boundary to Pelham House.

On the other side. at the Harestone Valley Road level, are more detached residential houses with garages behind.

Approximately 0.70 hectares of the site forming Chuch Hill View and the steep slope running down are part of the mature tree belt that separates Caterham Valley from Caterham on the Hill.

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e. What is the site area (hectares)?

0.99 hectares

f. What is the existing land use?

The top part of the site forms a green Open Space Park and wood on steeply sloping land.

Below off Harestone Valley Road the use is as a residential care home with parking and gardens.

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

Tandridge District Council

h. What is the site's planning history?

i.

There is no planning history from 2000 and only the approval of the Care Home before this date. The site is included in Harestone Valley Character Assessment and Design Guidance.

j. 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?

The top part of the site is shown in HVCA as open space with views through and across Valley and as part of the view from the opposite side of the Valley to the important landmark of St Mary's Church.

Below this the steeply sloping part of the site is shown in Area C as wooded backdrop. The area in front of Pelham house is described as open, grassed and slightly sloping garden.

CSP 1,2,3,4,7,8, 11,12,13,14,15,17,18,19 and 21.

DP 1,5,7,8,9,18 and 19.

Harestone Valley Character Assessment (HVCA)

Harestone Valley Design guidance (HVDG)

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- k. 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?

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Policy guidance.

- l. 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?

Harestone Valley Character Assessment
Harestone Valley Design Guidance.
Supplementary Planning Document Parking.
Emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

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

Features in HELAA.

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?

Not as far as we are aware. Demolition of Pelham House would require details on disposal of materials.

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

No but Church Hill has very heavy traffic going up hill causing both noise and air pollution

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

Not as far as we are aware

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- 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?

It is quite likely that the flat curving terrace at the top (with the seats) is an earlier version of the Church Hill roadway, before the present route. It is definitely artificial so could be considered an archaeological feature.

An Archaeological survey should be made before any start to development is made

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

There would be serious traffic issues mitigating against any road or drive access from Church Hill.

Harestone Valley Road is very busy at certain times of the day and the site is adjacent to the junction with Colbourn Avenue. Issues would be dependent on nature of development and number of units.

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

There are Restrictive Covenants on the top piece of land but these are not detailed in Title register.

3. Onsite considerations

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

Present access to the site is from Harestone Valley Road by two driveways at either end. It is unlikely that access would be available from Church Hill.

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

The site is accessible and the Town centre is close by.

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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?

The main physical constraint is the topography with its very steep slope and mature trees .

We are not aware of any power lines or other services affecting the site.

- 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.?

Site contains a very large number of mature trees including Yews, Beech and Oak together with wild natural areas of wood. It forms a natural open space in the area important as habitat for all forms of animal species in the area. Serious issue on the Valley sides that removal of trees and woodland soils for development would worsen flash flooding down the steep slopes

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

Only if people fall down the steep slopes.

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

It is unlikely the existing building would be retained in a new development.

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

The HVCA confirms both important views into and from the site. The site forms a backdrop of trees and green space rising up to St Mary' Church which is visible from across the Harestone Valley. The site itself has views down and across the Harestone Valley and beyond.

The lower part of the site containing Pelham House forms an important part of the varied street scene of Harestone Valley Road and contributes to views from Harestone Valley Road looking West up the slope.

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

Any development of this site from the level area of Pelham House upwards to Church Hill would affect the Sky line and the existing views and backdrop.

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

Jacob's ladder runs along the southern boundary. There are footpaths on the site but these do not appear to be designated public footpaths but as part of its use as a public open space.

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?

Neighbouring uses are predominately residential or wooded hillside.

There are no bad neighbours as far as we are aware but there might be a possibility of the site being expanded into neighbouring sites.

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

This is set out in the HVCA and HVDG.

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

Yes the steep slopes will increase overlooking both for immediate neighbours and those further away across the Valley floor.

k. Physical infrastructure and local services considerations

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

It is assumed that the site is connected in Harestone Valley Road.

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

High Speed broadband is available in Harestone Valley Road.

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.

The site is well connected to all these facilities as it is close to the town centre.

- b. What is the capacity of local schools?

Adequate at present.

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

Yes.

6. Community Infrastructure Levy

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

See Neighbourhood Plan

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?

There is no record of local opinion on this site as most would have considered it highly unlikely to be developed given its purpose and value as a public green open space and retirement accommodation.

The responses in Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire and at public consultations would suggest that not only should land like this be retained in its existing use but expanded within the community.

Given these views local opinion is very unlikely to support change of use on this site or any form of development other than to more efficiently use the lower area for its existing use.

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8. Availability

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

One can only assume since both parts of the site are owned by Tandridge District Council that it is available for development.

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

Presumably the existing occupants of Pelham House have rights/tenancies and would need to be rehoused should development be considered .

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+?

Given that access is only likely to be available from Harestone Valley Road and given the topography of the site, it is difficult to see how the HELAA can conclude that this site is developable other than on the lower relatively minor part containing Pelham House.

It is very difficult therefore to understand how a further 69 new housing units could be provided . Even if development took place on the lower section any gain in housing numbers must take into account the loss of 12 existing units. Misleadingly the HELAA suggests that all the site should be considered developable, We would suggest that due to both Planning Policy and topography less than a third could be developed and this already contains Pelham House.

The top part of the site not only provides open space and woodland but is set out in the HVCA as with both important views into and from the site and its centre section providing a wooded backdrop that is important to the retention of character in the Harestone Valley.

The upper and middle part of the site is populated by many mature trees and groups of trees that should be retained under existing and emerging planning policies.

Historically the wooded backdrop has preserved the boundary between Caterham Valley and the Hill and formed an important element in the original Harestone Valley Policy.

There is concern that removal of trees and woodland soils on the valley sides for development would worsen flash flooding down the steep slopes

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Summary Continued

Apart from its deliverability there are no realistic reasons why this site should be developed. At best redevelopment of the lower third might increase marginally the number of units available from this site. Any development would need to follow the policies set out in the HVDG and need to show a positive contribution to the character as set out in the HVCA

Given all these considerations, it is concluded that this site is only suitable for re- development on the existing level area at its base with Harestone Valley Road. Given that Pelham House is already on the site any increase in housing units is likely to fall within windfall for the purposes of Neighbourhood Plan. Delivery would only be likely in 5-10 years.

It is recommended in view of its inclusion in the HELAA that an immediate application is made for the trees on the site to be surveyed and appraised for the purpose of applying for a Tree Protection Order on either individual, groups or blanket specimens of trees on the site.

Further in respect of the Open Park and land at the top of the site, the Neighbourhood Plan should consider designating these areas as Important Green Space to the Community.