

## CHALDON PROPOSED LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Name	Location	Reference: Chaldon parish Council Reference CH001 (Local Plan ref: CAT 042)
Land east of Roffes Lane	Chaldon Parish	
<b>Description</b>		
<p>12.73 ha of unimproved grassland, bordered by Roffes Lane, a sports field, a public footpath and a quiet minor road. It is presently used as rough grazing pasture for horses. There are a number of unofficial tracks and paths across the field from many years of public use, although the land is privately owned. Previous history as a golf course.</p> <p>The field is bordered by Playing Fields to the west, residential roads to the SE (White Hill, Oakwood Place and Stonehouse Gardens) and more residential road to the north (Sunny Rise, Wood Lane and Heath Road). Roffes Lane runs along the west border and Willey Lane to South West.</p>		
<b>Landowner</b>	STEPHEN THOMAS BROWN and JANET ELIZABETH GOODWIN care of Withy King LLP (reference: PJF.78658/1 PJF), 34 Regent Circus, Swindon SN1 1PY and of peter.foskett@withyking.co.uk. Option on site to: Berkeley Strategic Land Limited of Berkeley House, 19 Portsmouth Road, Cobham, Surrey KT11 1JG	
<b>Planning Permission?</b>	No	
<b>Can all community benefit from LGS</b>	Yes. Chaldon's rural character is of overwhelming importance to its residents, and having a much-loved field that borders the village's most urban area declared an LGS would acknowledge this special environment. Dog-walkers, families with small children, and wildlife-watchers all enjoy this field. The field is readily accessible	

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	<p>and within walking distance of homes in the urban settlement of Caterham-on-the Hill.</p> <p>The proximity of Roffes Lane and the tarmacked footpath to Queens Park offer disabled residents an opportunity to enjoy the scenery, tranquillity and wildlife in the field.</p>
<b>Does the land already benefit from protection?</b>	<p>Green belt. However, the recreational, historical and ecological importance of this field warrants additional designation as a LGS.</p> <p>It is also within the Surrey Hills Area of Great Landscape Value, but this category may be abolished in a forthcoming Natural England review, and thus does not afford the site assured protection. CSP 20 and 21</p> <p>Potential Site for Nature Conservation Importance CSP 17 DP 19</p>
<b>Is the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?</b>	<p>The field is directly across Roffes Lane from the junctions with The Heath and Heathway, two of Chaldon's most residential roads. It is also within five minutes' walk of densely-populated Chaldon Common Road, and easily accessed from Rook Lane. Sunny Rise, another residential street, backs onto the field from the western side, and a public footpath connects it with Stanstead Road.</p>
<b>Is the green space local in character and is not an extensive tract of land?</b>	<p>Yes. The field is a distinct region between Chaldon's 'triangle' district and western Caterham.</p>
<b>Is it demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance because of:</b>	
<b>Beauty</b>	<p>Included in the Surrey Hills Area of Great Landscape Value, the buffer zone of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>
<b>Historic</b>	<p>This piece of land was part of the Manor of Caterham and remained in Caterham Parish until 2000 when the boundary between Chaldon and Caterham was moved to the east of Roffes Lane. Until 1540 the land was probably owned by Waltham Abbey but after the dissolution of the monasteries the abbot's manor passed through several ownerships.</p>

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	<p>The Rowed family owned many of the local estates including Caterham Court and the land is shown clearly on Caterham's earliest map, the Rowed Map of 1736. During the 18th century the estates passed to Thomas Clark as Lord of the Manor of Caterham. The shape of the fields, known as Heathfields, can still be seen on present day maps. The fields were probably used for arable crops such as wheat, oats and barley.</p> <p>By 1837 the lordship of the manor had passed to Charles Day. The 1837 Tithe Map for Caterham shows Lot 239 as New Field and Lot 240 as Heathfield. Both were owned by Charles Day and tenanted by William Stanford who grew arable crops.</p> <p>In 1882 the area escaped a wild scheme to extend the railway from Coulsdon through to an isolated spot on Willey Heath (near the reservoir on Stanstead Road).</p> <p>By 1901 the fields were on the market as part of the final 72 acres of the Caterham Court Park Estate and again in 1904 as part of the sale of the main house and gardens. They were described as having important frontage to Stanstead Road, Willey Road and Holliday Bottom (Roffes Lane). In both years the land was promoted as being suitable for development.</p> <p>Certainly a local man, Hugh Mitchell, bought most of the land in 1926 to construct a golf course. This had its heyday in the 1930s but suffered decline during WW2. Between 1946 and 1950 various schemes were proposed for housing but all were firmly refused by Caterham &amp; Warlingham Urban District Council. In 1951 the Golf Course was put up for auction with the Council reserving 6.45 acres as a compulsory acquisition for allotments. Caterham School bought 8.25 acres to extend their playing fields.</p> <p>The remainder went into private ownership as it is today. Since WW2 the fields have always been used as a thoroughfare and for quiet recreation. They remain an historic reminder of the Caterham Court Estate, providing glimpses of the isolation of Willey Heath and Caterham Common and an important buffer between the built up areas of Caterham and Chaldon.</p>
<b>Recreational Value</b>	<p>The field is known locally as the 'sledging field'; this activity is popular in winter. It is also extremely popular with local dog-walkers, who have been using it for at least 60 years. Some families bring small children to play</p>

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	<p>in the field's natural environment. Local wildlife-watchers also visit to observe and photograph the field's birds, mammals and rare fungi.</p>
<p><b>Tranquillity</b></p>	<p>Despite its close proximity to Chaldon's most residential area, the field is remarkably tranquil, due in part to a fine mature and treed hedgerow where it borders Roffes Lane. It is possible to walk amongst ancient grassland and berry-rich trees and feel like it is the middle of the countryside.</p>
<p><b>Richness of Wildlife</b></p>	<p>One of the most important sites for biodiversity in Chaldon, home to numerous UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species and other species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).</p> <p>The field contains undisturbed, unimproved ancient grassland, one of the UK's most endangered habitats. Ancient grassland indicators such as large anthills built by yellow meadow ants <i>Lasius flavus</i> are especially apparent in the NW of the field. Additionally, the field includes 'waxcap grassland', a rare and globally declining ecological community containing colourful waxcap fungi. At least four species of waxcap have been recorded in the field, along with other uncommon fungi, and it is very likely that a professional mycological survey would discover more.</p> <p>According to Natural England, the UK is of international importance in conserving waxcap grasslands due to their decline elsewhere in Europe. It should be noted that it is almost impossible to recreate this ecological community, and as such, existing natural sites are of particular conservation importance.</p> <p>Other species include grass snake <i>Natrix natrix</i>, slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>, wood warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>, and bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>. There have been unconfirmed reports of adders <i>Vipera berus</i>.</p> <p>Over fifty species of birds have been documented. Migratory species such as siskins <i>Carduelis spinus</i> and redwings <i>Turdus iliacus</i> are present in winter, sometimes in large numbers. The flora includes gorse, wild rose and hawthorn. Bats are abundant; common pipistrelles <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> can easily be seen hunting in the field, and may roost in the trees near the footpath to Queens Park. The Surrey Bat Group also has records of serotine bats <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> and brown long-eared bats <i>Plecotus auritus</i> in the Roffes Lane area. The latter is a UK BAP priority species.</p>

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	<p>Surrey Moth Group undertook surveys in the field during the summer of 2016. They are still collating the final species list.</p> <p>The field is also much valued locally as a reliable site for watching and photographing more common species, such as roe deer <i>Capreolus capreolus</i>, grey squirrels <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> (including albino specimens) and foxes <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>.</p>
<b>Does it have public access?</b>	There are no formal rights of way at present, although a footpath is evident on 19 <sup>th</sup> century maps. In practice, it is used for dog-walking on a daily basis by local residents. The public has been regularly accessing the field for at least four generations, and unofficial paths have developed across it. These are clearly apparent on aerial photos from the 1950s.
<b>Does it have a public right of way?</b>	No. Although the field has been used by the public for many years. There are public footpaths along the northern and eastern boundaries that are well used.
<b>Is it located in a new development?</b>	No
<b>Is it in public ownership?</b>	No
<b>How will LGS be managed?</b>	The management will remain the responsibility of the current owners. However, it there is a strong case for listing it on the register of assets of value to the community (see below).
<b>Should it be registered as an Asset of Community Value?</b>	Consideration should be given to listing this important space as an Asset of Community Value. Despite private ownership, the field is currently well used by the local community and offers easy access to many nearby dwellings. It also links other green spaces and public footpaths.
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<p>Surrey County Council Interactive map</p> <p>The Bourne Society – Village Histories 7 Chaldon &amp; Hilltop Estate sale particulars</p> <p>Mrs E. Bonsall - Historical material</p> <p>Miss A Brand - Ecology</p> <p>Mrs C Lawless – site visit, research and documentation</p> <p>CR3 Forum re sites assessments</p>