

# CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

## SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

### 1. Site Details

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

CR3NPCAT 052 Timber Hill Road Recreation Ground.

- b. Where is the site located?

Between Timber Hill Road and Crescent Road in Caterham Valley.

- c. What is the site description?

The site consists of open park land with internal footpaths running along eastern boundary and across the southern end. In the north-east corner is a purpose built play area with a footpath from western boundary. There are seats along the footpath and the whole site is bounded by further public footways. There are several groups of trees along the east and west boundaries with a further mixed group in the triangular section at the southern end. The site slopes steeply down from between the footpaths on eastern boundary and then down to the mainly level central area of the site. At north and south ends the land is higher than central section.

The Children's' Playground was the subject of a £65000 make over in 2015 sponsored by Parish Council, Local residents and businesses and TDC.

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

The site is set in a mainly residential area but located on the north end is Caterham Police Station and Goddard's Vets is opposite the north west corner. There is single row of restricted parking along Timber Hill Road with its other side being a single yellow line. Crescent Road has single yellow lines on both sides.

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

0.69 hectares.

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

f. What is the existing land use?

The land was given to TDC in 1900 by Mr George Edward Asprey and contains the following restrictive covenant and description of its intended use.

*The site is public green space/park with children's' playground.  
No building to be erected without the previous consent in writing of George Edward Asprey (a former owner) his heirs or assigns. Neither the land nor any part thereof is to be used for any other purpose than for a Public Pleasure Ground but the land is at all times to be kept in proper order and condition as a Public Pleasure Ground and the inhabitants of the Urban District of Caterham are to be permitted to have the use and enjoyment thereof as a Public Pleasure Ground at all reasonable times in accordance with the Public Health Act 1875 and the bye laws to be made from time to time thereunder.*

The current use fulfils this purpose and is public open space with children's' playground.

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

Tandridge District Council

h. What is the site's planning history?

There is no history of planning applications on the site. The Site is shown in HELAA register.

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?

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CSP 1 location of development.  
CSP 13 Seeks to retain existing cultural, community, recreational, sport and open space facilities.  
CSP 17 Biodiversity  
CSP 18 Respect for local character, setting and context.  
CSP 19 Densities.  
  
DP 18 Community, sports and recreational facilities

- 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?

National Planning Policy Framework  
  
Section 8. Promoting Healthy Communities Paras. 70, 73-78.  
  
National Planning Policy Guidance.

- 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?

Not as far as we are aware.

- l. 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 as CAT052.

## 2. Desktop evidence review

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

Nat as far as we are aware.

- 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.

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

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

d.

Not as far as we are aware

e. Does the site contain a valuable mineral resource?

Unlikely

f. Is the land of agricultural value / official designation of agricultural land?

No

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

No

h. Could the site contain any archaeological remains?

A large WW2 air raid shelter is situated near the police station which has Group value with other military infrastructure around the area. It should be considered for Heritage Status. Further study should be made prior to any application for development

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

Both loss of existing street parking and increased traffic on Timber Hill Road would be a problem. The exit for Timber Hill Road on Godstone Road is not suitable for significant increases in traffic movements.

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

There are restrictive covenants on the site related to its use and which preclude buildings on the site. See 1f.

### 3. Onsite considerations

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

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

At present there is no vehicle access to the site. Multiplicity of garages and drives on both Timber Hill Road and Crescent Road together with traffic would make multiple accesses to the site unsustainable.

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

Yes

### 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?

Site well below Crescent Road thereafter it is generally level leading to public footpath in Timber Hill Road.

Apart from trees and the playground there are no other physical constraints. Not aware of any services or drainage crossing 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.?

There are trees around the site and in groups at southern end.

The site forms a green space in a predominantly residential area with the natural biodiversity this attracts. Site is unlikely to be the home of protected species.

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

Not as far as we are aware.

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

There are no buildings on the site but some discussion on the continued use of adjacent Police Station.

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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

There are important views into the site from adjacent homes and the site forms an important part of the character of this part of Caterham. There is a big elevated view from Crescent Road across the town looking west, framing St John's Church.

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

Development is unlikely to affect sky line as long as it was 2 storey or below.

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

No. Although there are public footpaths around the perimeter.

FP 81 ends at southern corner of site.

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?

It is unlikely that site could be extended unless the Police Station is closed and demolished.

There are no bad neighbours although the Park is shown as crime scene on TDC information site.

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

j.

The area is predominately residential with both Victorian/Edwardian houses largely in Timber Hill Road through to more modern houses on Crescent Road. Houses are largely detached or semi-detached on two storeys and brick built.

Whilst close to the Town Centre the character of the area and site constraints are likely to require a density at the lower end of the range. The scale should match existing property and the infill nature of the site.

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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

Many of the existing houses in the area would be either overlooked or would lose the present open space view.

- l. Physical infrastructure and local services considerations  
Is the site connected to local utilities (such as water, energy supply and sewerage disposal)?

All services are likely to be available.

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

Not at present.

### 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.

All local facilities are close by but development of the site would mean the loss of a valuable playground and open green space.

It would also lead to the loss of parking in the area.

- b. What is the capacity of local schools?

Generally there is sufficient capacity to accept small scale development.

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

Yes.

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### 6. Community Infrastructure Levy

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

Replacement of lost green space and playground facilities.

Community facilities for teenagers.

### 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?

As the site has been a public open space much appreciated by the local community, there is no record of local opinion towards development of the site.

However since the site has been included in HELAA as a developable site, this has aroused considerable opposition to its development and the draft Local Plan.

It is likely that this opposition will continue and there will be substantial objections to the loss of green open space and a local children's' playground.

The general view would appear to be amazement that TDC or its Planners would consider this a developable and available site.

### 8. Availability

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

It can only be assumed as the site is owned by TDC and they have put the site forward under the HELAA, that the site in their view is available for development.

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

Not as far as we are aware although TDC have indicated that no decision has been made by the Council about whether they wish to develop the site. The present restrictive covenants on the site may also prevent or delay any development.

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### 9. Summary

Desktop research findings

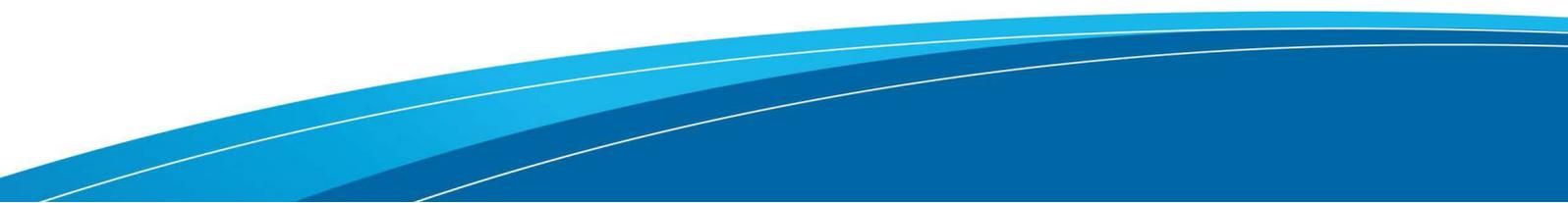
Planning policy considerations

Onsite considerations

Infrastructure & local services

Deliverability

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



## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is clear that CSP 13 is largely out of date as it relies on PPG 17 which was withdrawn on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014. This leaves in place DP18 and guidance under Section 8 of NPPF in particular paras. 73-78.

### *DP18: Community, Sports & Recreational Facilities*

*A. Proposals involving redevelopment or a change of use which would result in the loss of any premises or land currently or last used as a community facility will be permitted where: 1. There is no longer a demand for the facility, rendering it financially unviable. This should be demonstrated through an active 12 month marketing exercise, where the building or land has been offered for sale or letting on the open market at a realistic price and no reasonable offers have been refused; and 2. There are sufficient similar facilities nearby or where alternative provision can be made on another site to the same or a higher standard in terms of community benefit; or 3. The current use will be retained and enhanced by the development of part of the site.*

*B. Proposals for the provision of new community, sports and recreational facilities will be encouraged where they are sustainably located and are suitable to meet the needs of the local community, subject to other relevant Development Plan policies.*

*C. Proposals involving the loss of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land will generally be resisted and will only be found acceptable where they satisfy the requirements of paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

In the first instance TDC have not, as far as we are aware, carried out any assessment of the demand or use of Timber Hill Park nor have they ascertained whether there are similar nearby or alternative provision and it is unlikely that the present use would be retained and enhanced by future development of the site. Therefore the site would appear to be contrary to Para. A of DP18.

With regard to Para. C the NPPF Para. 74 :

74. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

**Summary Continued**

## CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It seems therefore that development of this site is also unlikely to meet these criteria as no assessment or alternatives have been put forward.

In addition to these planning criteria, there is no doubt that the loss of this open space would significantly change the character of this local area which is unlikely to be balanced by the provision of only 13 houses.

The nearest alternative local open green space is White Knobs Park but this is across a major road and over 0.5 miles away and it does not have a children's playground. Timber Hill Park is the only play area and park that is close to Caterham Town Centre.

Given the money spent on the recent make-over of the playground approved by TDC, we can only assume that this is a significant indicator of both the need and use of the Park.

Given all these reasons and the very large local objections to the loss of this green open space and children's playground, the Neighbourhood Plan would not support development of the site.

Given the vulnerability of the open space as demonstrated by TDC putting the site forward, it is also recommended that the site is put forward for designation as a local green space under NPPF paras. 77 and 78.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not consider this site to be developable outside of its present use.