

[REDACTED]

From: Helen Broughton (Clerk to Chaldon Village Council)
<clerk@chaldonvillagecouncil.org.uk>
Sent: 10 September 2025 11:04
To: Statutory
Subject: Re: Planning Application Reference 2025/771
Attachments: DS Report - MA.docx

Dear Planning Department,

Please disregard the attachment in the previous email. This is our formal objection to 2025/771.

Thank you

Kind regards
Chaldon Village Council

From: Helen Broughton (Clerk to Chaldon Village Council)
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 9:21 AM
To: statutory@tandridge.gov.uk <statutory@tandridge.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Application Reference 2025/771

Dear Planning Department,

Please find attached an objection to planning application 2025/771 - **Land At Mount Avenue, Chaldon, CR3 5BB** from Chaldon Village Council.

Kind regards
Chaldon Village Council

CHALDON VILLAGE COUNCIL

-- September 2025

Dear Sirs

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Planning Application Reference 2025/771

Applicant – Sigma Homes

Site Address – Land at Mount Avenue, Chaldon, CR3 5BB

Description of Development – Outline planning application for the erection of up to 30 dwellings (including 50% affordable) including provision of vehicular and pedestrian access, landscaping (incorporating SuDS) and other associated infrastructure provision. All matters reserved except scale, layout and access.

Chaldon Village Council raises Strong Objections to this planning application and urges Tandridge District Council to reject these proposals and REFUSE to grant planning permission for the reasons that are set out in this letter.

1. The Proposals

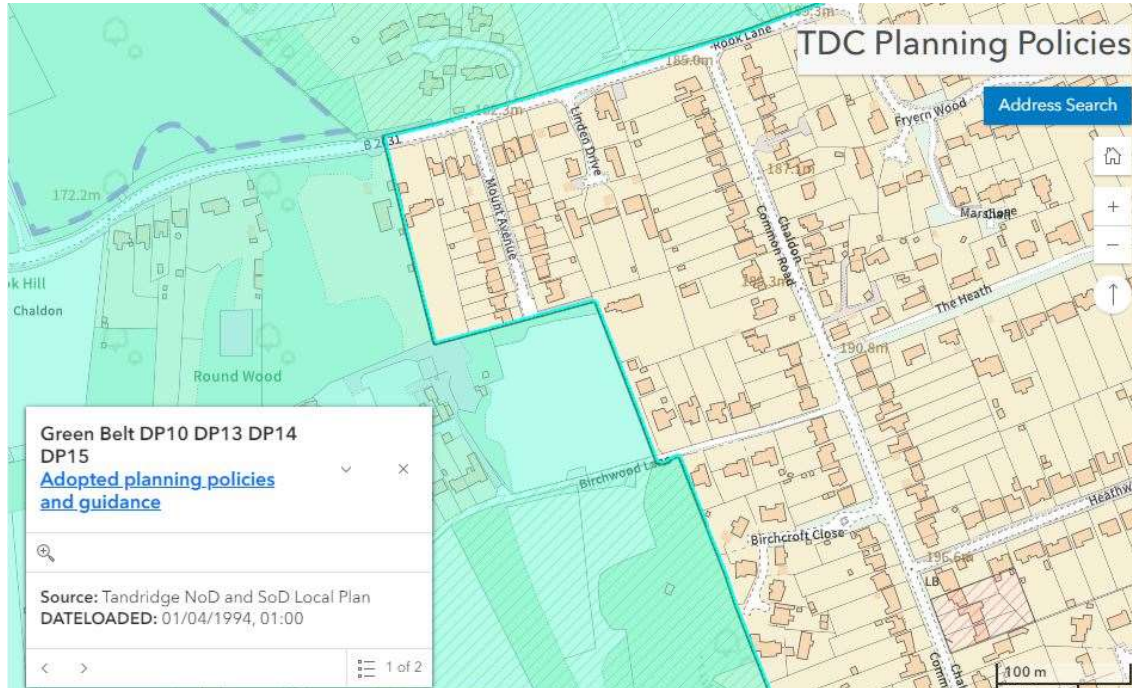
This outline planning application seeks to promote the development of an undeveloped parcel of land to the south of the existing residential development at Mount Avenue, Chaldon. The land is presently in agricultural use, being used primarily for grazing purposes.

The application seeks to secure vehicular and pedestrian access to the site by the extension of the existing public highway at Mount Avenue into the site, and also by a pedestrian link from Birchwood Lane which lies to the south of the site. All vehicular access to/from the development will be via Mount Avenue.

The proposed site layout shows 30 dwellings, comprising 15 Open Market dwellings (four two-bedroom properties, ten three-bedroom properties and one four-bedroom property) and 15 Affordable dwellings (four one-bedroom flats, five two-bedroom properties, five three-bedroom properties and one four-bedroom property).

2. The Site and its Green Belt Designation

In the adopted Tandridge District Core Strategy (2008) and the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014-2029 (2014) and the made (adopted) Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan (2021), the site is presently within the designated Metropolitan Green Belt, as it extends over this part of Tandridge District, and this is shown on the following extract from the adopted Policies Map (2009).



Extract from Tandridge District Council – Policies Map (2009)

Contrary to the Applicant's Planning Statement, which suggests at paragraph 2.3, that "*the development area is contained on three sides by residential dwellings*", it is in fact not "contained" by residential development on three sides, but is bounded in part on its eastern and northern boundaries by residential properties, with some residential properties situated along Birchwood Lane to the south. The fact that the site is bounded by mature hedgerows and trees (comprising 118 individual trees, 11 tree groups and 3 mature hedgerows) does not constitute 'containment' in the context of the role that the site plays within the wider Green Belt, as clearly shown on the extract from the District Council's Policies Map above, and is no justification to release the site from the Green Belt. It is the case that many parcels of land within and around Chaldon are bounded by trees and hedgerows, which reflects the area's soils and geology.

The Green Belt designation extends over all surrounding land to the west and south of the site, and there is no containment of the site by existing developments.

Within the District Council's "Tandridge Green Belt Assessment" (2015), which forms part of the evidence base for the Council's now withdrawn new Local Plan "Our Local Plan 2033", the site forms part of Green Belt Parcel GBA 010 (as shown below) which includes all designated Green Belt land within and around the village of Chaldon.

D.11 GBA 010



The Green Belt Assessment at Appendix D (pages 313-320) contains a full detailed assessment of the land with Parcel 010 against the four national policy purposes of Green Belt designation that are relevant to this parcel, and this detailed assessment is reproduced at Annex 1 to this letter. The four purposes are numbered 1-4 in this Green Belt Assessment, but are listed as a)-d) in national policy. (The fifth purpose of Green Belt designation – Purpose 5 or e) which is *"To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land"* - is not relevant to this specific assessment). For ease of reference, the conclusions of the assessment of Parcel 010 are set out below, with our emphasis of key points:

Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Conclusion on Purpose 1

D.11.9 The north-western section of this parcel sits adjacent to the built-up area of Caterham. **The Green Belt in this area, including the Golf Course, plays a strong role in preventing Caterham from expanding westward.** The boundary between the urban area and the Green Belt is also generally well defined with a clear separation between town and country.

**Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
What settlements/towns are within the parcel?**

Conclusion on Purpose 2

D.11.15 The parcel acts as a buffer between Chaldon and Caterham. However, the trees and woodland between the two settlements act as screening that is an additional buffer to the two settlements merging. **As such, the parcel plays a considerable role in meeting this purpose.**

**Purpose 3: to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
What are the characteristics and features of the area?**

Conclusion on Purpose 3

D.11.22 The parcel is not free from development, containing the settlement of Chaldon in its centre, as well as agricultural buildings and other scattered residential development. Even though there are some concentrations of dwellings along Doctors Lane and south along Hilltop Lane that are quite prominent, most of the development in the parcel is generally in keeping with its rural setting. **Generally, development that exists does not have an encroaching effect and the parcel is considered to serve this purpose.**

Purpose 4: to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Conclusion on Purpose 4

D.11.26 As the Caterham Barracks Conservation Area is within the urban area, the parcel does not complement the setting. **However, the Green Belt in this parcel complements the setting of the Chaldon Conservation Area and therefore serves this purpose effectively.** As such this area has been identified as an area for further investigation (this area is labelled 011 on the map in Appendix F).

Conclusion: How effectively does Parcel 010 serve the purposes of the Green Belt?

D.11.27 **This parcel effectively serves a number of the Green Belt purposes. The north-east part of the parcel helps prevent Caterham from sprawling westwards and enveloping the neighbouring settlement of**

Chaldon. Whilst the parcel is not development free, the character of Chaldon means that such development does not generally have a negative impact on the open countryside. The Green Belt designation plays an important role in preserving the setting of the existing Conservation Areas and listed buildings and as such has been identified as an area for further investigation (this area is labelled 011 on the map in Appendix F)."

This Green Belt Assessment, although dating from 2015, remains as the most recent comprehensive assessment of the Green Belt in Tandridge (in contrast to the Applicant's 'Green Belt Analysis'). Importantly, the assessment of Parcel 010, as set out in full at Annex 1, confirms that the designated Green Belt land around Chaldon, which includes the Application site, meets Purposes 1, 2 and 3 and complements Purpose 4. In particular, the assessment notes that "*the policies applicable to Chaldon recognised that it has a unique character and identity, which should be maintained*". (Given that these purposes of Green Belt designation are set at a national level and apply to all areas of Green Belt in England, there is no requirement for Green Belt to serve all of the five purposes, and the local interpretation and consideration of how these purposes apply at a local level is essential, and in the case of this development proposal is of critical importance).

The Applicant seeks to argue (at paragraphs 6.28 and 6.29 of the Planning Statement) that the Green Belt Assessment is of "*little relevant*" (sic). This is plainly not the case, as it constitutes the Council's primary Green Belt evidence base document that was prepared for the now withdrawn Local Plan, and which continues to carry some weight until such time as a further Green Belt Review is undertaken. In that context, it should be noted that the Local Plan Inspector's recommendation to the Council that the Local Plan be withdrawn stemmed primarily from a significant change in circumstances regarding the funding and delivery of the proposed highways infrastructure improvements to serve the Plan's proposals for the South Godstone Garden Village, with consequential delays to the Local Plan Examination process. The withdrawal of that Plan was not due to any shortcomings with the Council's Green Belt Assessment, and thus it cannot be said to be of 'little relevance'.

It is Chaldon Village Council's case that the site comprises an important part of the long-established, designated Green Belt within the Chaldon area, and that it continues to fulfil the purposes for its designation as highlighted above.

National Green Belt Policy

The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 7 February 2025, which includes a minor update to the version

published on 12 December 2024. Accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published on 27 February 2025.

The NPPF (2025) introduced the concept of 'Grey Belt' and changes to what is considered appropriate development. 'Grey Belt' is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as follows:

"For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'Grey Belt' is defined as:
▪ *land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.*"

The NPPF confirms (at paragraph 155) that the development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where all of the following apply:

"▪ *a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
▪ *b. There is demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
▪ *c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and*
▪ *d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156 – 157 below.*"

Therefore, land which is 'Grey Belt' is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt subject to meeting the other requirements set out at paragraph 155.

Paragraph 156 states that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed on sites in the Green Belt subject to a planning application, the following contributions ('Golden Rules') should be made:

"▪ *a. affordable housing which reflects either:*
 (i) development plan policies produced in accordance with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework; or
 (ii) until such policies are in place, the policy set out in paragraph 157 below;
▪ *b. necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and*
▪ *c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through on-site provision or through access to offsite spaces.*"

Paragraph 157 notes that before development plan policies for affordable housing are updated in line with the NPPF, the affordable housing contribution required to satisfy the 'Golden Rules', is 15% above the highest existing affordable housing requirement which would otherwise apply to the development, subject to a cap of 50%. Paragraph 158 notes that a development which complies with the Golden Rules should be given significant weight in favour of the grant of permission. However, it is the Village Council's view that before the 'Golden Rules' are taken into consideration, the case must be made for this Green Belt site to be developed. The Village Council does not consider that the Applicant has made such a case, and that this application has been put forward without sufficient justification.

The PPG states that in the assessment of Green Belt land to identify 'Grey Belt' land, where 'Grey Belt' is identified, it does not automatically follow that it should be allocated for development, released from the Green Belt or for development proposals to be approved in all circumstances. The contribution that Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes is one consideration in making decisions about Green Belt land. Such decisions should also be informed by an overall application of the relevant policies in the NPPF. It sets out a guide to the assessment of the contributions that land makes to the purposes of the Green Belt, under three categories of Strong, Moderate and Weak or None.

Crucially, the PPG goes on to state that an assessment of Green Belt will (alongside other considerations) inform the determination of applications which involve reaching a judgement as to whether proposals utilise 'Grey Belt' land and whether development of the site would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the plan area.

Where 'Grey Belt' sites are not identified in existing plans or Green Belt assessments, it is expected that authorities should consider evidence, in light of this guidance, on:

- whether the site strongly contributes to the Green Belt purposes a, b or d; and
- whether the application of policies to areas and assets of particular importance identified in footnote 7 to the NPPF (other than Green Belt) provide a strong reason to restrict development; and
- whether development of the site would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the plan area, as set out in national policy and this guidance.

It is the Village Council's case in these representations that the site does not constitute 'Grey Belt' land, and that if this proposal is approved, the development of the site will unquestionably fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt area that lies to the west of the Chaldon,

and which is shown on the extract from the District Council's Policies Map above. The site constitutes an integral part of that wider Green Belt area, and if the proposed piecemeal development of this site is approved, it will serve as an unfortunate precedent for further speculative development proposals on other parcels of land that lie at the edge of Chaldon, with the consequent unplanned erosion of the wider Green Belt area, in contrast to a plan-led approach to meeting the District's housing needs. It is for the emerging new Tandridge Local Plan to determine how and where such needs will be met, after a full and detailed Green Belt Review, a rigorous site-selection process and an accompanying Sustainability Appraisal. None of these requirements are met by this speculative application.

It is a fundamental part of the Applicant's case that *"the proposed development is appropriate development in the Green Belt, in accordance with Paragraphs 154 and 155-158"* of the NPPF (as summarised above) and that the site meets the definition of 'Grey Belt' (see paragraphs 6.14 and 6.25 of the Planning Statement). This assertion is based upon an accompanying Green Belt Analysis document (prepared by LVIA), which concludes as follows:

"7.0 Conclusion

7.1.1 What this review of the purposes of Green Belt for the site shows, is that the site represents a generally weakly functioning part of the Green Belt which does not contribute towards the main function of keeping land permanently open. It is a generally enclosed site and is experienced by few receptors.

7.1.2 In these regards, the site comprises a Weak/None functioning part of the Green Belt when assessed against the five purposes as set out in the NPPF.

7.1.3 The proposed use of the site for residential development would only be experienced from a very limited geographic extent, as it would be strongly contained by the existing settlement fringe elements and the dense landscape features that sit around the site boundaries and in the local landscape.

7.1.4 Overall, the site performs as a Weak/None functioning part of the Green Belt and does not contribute to the fundamental aim of Green Belt; preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The current site boundaries and local landscape features mean that the site is strongly enclosed and not experienced outside of a very limited geographic extent.

7.1.5 The site plays a limited or no role in fulfilling the core purposes of the Green Belt. It does not significantly prevent urban sprawl due to its containment by existing dwellings and Birchwood Road, nor does it contribute to the merging of settlements, given the clear separation provided by natural and built features. Additionally, the site's proximity to urban development means it does not safeguard the countryside from encroachment in a meaningful way. As such, its development would not undermine the fundamental purposes of the Green Belt,

particularly when compared to other, more open and rural parcels within the wider Green Belt.

7.1.6 The revisions to the NPPF introduced the concept of the "Grey Belt," which refers to areas within the Green Belt that are already influenced by urban infrastructure and contribute less to the Green Belt's primary purposes. The site fits well within this "Grey Belt" designation. Its development would be consistent with the emerging policy direction, which recognises the need for flexibility to accommodate sustainable growth in areas where the contribution to Green Belt objectives is minimal. The strong physical boundaries and the site's proximity to existing residential development make it a logical candidate for development under the Grey Belt criteria.

7.2 Section Conclusions:

7.2.1 In conclusion, the site forms a limited impact on openness, has a minimal role in fulfilling Green Belt purposes, and aligns with the emerging "Grey Belt" concept. The site's specific characteristics, strong physical boundaries, and proximity to existing residential dwellings make it a logical parcel of land to consider for development of this nature. By adhering to both the current and emerging planning policy frameworks, development can be achieved in a way that respects the overarching aims of the Green Belt."

Chaldon Village Council strongly disagree with the conclusions of the 'Green Belt Analysis' prepared on behalf of the Applicant. This report falls very far short of constituting a full Green Belt Assessment of the area in which the site is situated, in sharp contrast to the District Council's Green Belt Assessment which considered the site in its wider context, namely as part of Parcel 010 (as described above and at Annex 1). The site's relationship to its wider surroundings is barely considered in the Applicant's report, and it is flawed for that reason.

The Village Council do not accept the statements in the report's conclusion that "Overall, the site performs as a Weak/None functioning part of the Green Belt and does not contribute to the fundamental aim of Green Belt" and also that "The site plays a limited or no role in fulfilling the core purposes of the Green Belt." These are not objective assessments made in the absence of a detailed Green Belt Assessment of the wider area in which the site sits. It is the Village Council's case that the site continues to fulfil Purposes 1, 2, 3 and 4 (or a), b), c) and d) as set out in the NPPF at paragraph 143) for the site's designation within the Green Belt and that none of the criteria for the site's consideration as a 'Grey Belt' site are satisfied.

Furthermore, the Village Council strongly believes that, if this site is considered as a 'Grey Belt' site, then it would fundamentally undermine the purposes (when taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across

the area of the plan, and clearly most significantly in the areas around Chaldon but also at similar locations within Tandridge. It would establish a precedent which could lead to the incremental loss of similar parcels of Green Belt land close to the edge of the settlement, and with a progressive and detrimental increase in patterns of unsustainable development across the District.

3. Sustainability

Chaldon is not a sustainable location for development of the scale being proposed by this application. There are few local amenities and services, apart from the St. Peter and St. Paul's Church of England Primary School and a Village Hall, and the closest shops and most other services are in Caterham Town Centre some 2.3 kilometres to the east or Caterham on the Hill about 1.7 kilometres to the east. The nearest railway station is at Caterham Town Centre. There is a limited local bus service (Service 411) every two hours linking Chaldon with Reigate and Warlingham via Caterham. There is no bus service on Saturdays and Sundays.

The adopted Tandridge Core Strategy DPD (2009) states at paragraph 6.1 that:

"6.1 In line with the South East Plan this strategy proposes that the majority of development will take place within the existing built up areas of Caterham, Warlingham, Whyteleafe, Oxted and Hurst Green by seeking to make best use of previously developed land (brown field) within those areas. Development within the villages may be permitted to meet local needs. The strategy therefore acknowledges the importance of the Green Belt as a way of keeping land open and preventing the outward spread of London and existing built-up areas from coalescing. No changes are currently proposed to the boundaries of the Green Belt. The strategy requires that the majority of new development is provided in locations that minimise the need to travel, in particular the need to travel by car. The strategy will be delivered by directing (in general) new development to the existing built-up areas where there is a greater range of services and access to relatively better public transport."

Policy CSP1 (Location of Development) states, inter alia, that:

"In order to promote sustainable patterns of travel and in order to make the best use of previously developed land, development will take place within the existing built-up areas of the District (the Category 1 settlements listed below) and be located where there is a choice of mode of transport available and where the distance to travel to services is minimised subject to the third paragraph of this policy. There will be no village expansion by amending the boundaries of either the Larger Rural

Settlements or Green Belt Settlements. All the settlement boundaries will be reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD and the accompanying Proposals Map. Development appropriate to the needs of rural communities will be permitted in the Larger Rural Settlements and Green Belt Settlements (the Category 2 settlements listed below) through infilling and on sites allocated for affordable housing."

Within the adopted Core Strategy, Chaldon is classified as a 'Green Belt Settlement' but importantly not as a "Defined Village in the Green Belt".

Paragraph 6.17 states:

"6.17 The Green Belt settlements are washed over by the Green Belt but have a defined boundary within which infilling and small-scale redevelopment can be permitted. The settlements to be included within this classification and their exact boundaries will be decided in the Site Allocations DPD. Housing to meet local needs may be proposed. Redevelopment and infilling will be required to be to a high standard of design and will be expected to protect the character of the settlement or part of it. Where there are Conservation Areas within the villages development will need to be of a particular quality as it will be required to preserve and enhance the area."

Whilst the policies in the adopted Core Strategy are now of limited weight due to the age of the plan, it is the case that Chaldon's position in the Council's settlement hierarchy has not changed, nor has been proposed to change.

Policies DP10 and DP13 in the Tandridge Local Plan 2014-2029 Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014) applies to settlements such as Chaldon, which are not categorised as 'Defined Villages in the Green Belt', and these Policies state:

"Policy DP10: Green Belt

A. The extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Green Belt boundaries be altered and this would be through a review of the Core Strategy and/or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

B. Within the Green Belt, planning permission for any inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, will normally be refused. Proposals involving inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted where very special circumstances exist, to the extent that other considerations clearly outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm."

"Policy DP13: Buildings in the Green Belt

Unless very special circumstances can be clearly demonstrated, the Council will regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, subject to other Development Plan policies, exceptions to this are as follows:

New Buildings & Facilities

- A. The construction of new non-residential buildings directly related to agriculture or forestry, or new residential dwellings for agricultural workers in accordance with policy DP15.*
- B. The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.*
- C. Limited infill development within the Defined Villages in accordance with policy DP12.*
- D. Limited affordable housing to meet local community needs, either in accordance with policy DP12 (within the Defined Villages) or policy CSP5 (rural exceptions).*

Extension & Alteration

- E. The extension or alteration of buildings within the Green Belt (outside the Defined Villages), where the proposal does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building as it existed at 1 July 1948 (for non-residential buildings) or 31 December 1968 (for residential dwellings), or if constructed after the relevant date, as it was built originally.*

Replacement

- F. The replacement of buildings within the Green Belt (outside the Defined Villages), where the proposed new building:*
 - 1. Is in the same use as the building it is replacing;*
 - 2. Is not materially larger than the building it is replacing; and*
 - 3. Is sited on or close to the position of the building it is replacing, except where an alternative siting within the curtilage demonstrably improves the openness of the Green Belt.*

Infill, partial or complete redevelopment

- G. The limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed (brownfield) sites in the Green Belt (outside the Defined Villages), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), where the proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development. Re-use*
- H. The re-use of buildings within the Green Belt (outside the Defined Villages) for industrial, commercial, community or residential purposes, where:*

1. *The proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
2. *The buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, are structurally sound and capable of re-use without major alterations, adaptations or reconstruction;*
3. *The proposed use can be wholly or substantially contained within the building identified for re-use; and*
4. *The proposal is not likely to result in the need to construct additional agricultural buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the building to be re-used is no longer suitable for an agricultural use.*

I. Any other form of development as listed under paragraph 90 of the NPPF."

Paragraph 12.8 clarifies the status of Chaldon in the context of these two Policies, and states:

"12.8 All other villages located in the Green Belt, including those previously defined as 'Green Belt Settlements' that are not listed, are not considered sustainable locations for even limited development. These villages will therefore no longer be suitable for infilling (or redevelopment) and general Green Belt policy will apply."

The proposals for the development of this site are therefore in conflict with Policies DP10 and DP13 and the Village Council considers that planning permission should be refused in view of this clear conflict. The policies contained in the Tandridge Local Plan 2014-2029 Part 2: Detailed Policies continue to be used by the District Council for development management purposes for the period extending to 2029, until such time as they are replaced by a new Local Plan.

The Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2033

The Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2033 was made (adopted) by Tandridge District Council on 24 June 2021 and therefore carries significant weight in the determination of this planning application, as it comprises the most recent statutory development plan for the designated neighbourhood area which includes Chaldon.

At paragraph 2.4, it describes Chaldon as follows:

"2.4. CHALDON - Chaldon, also 'on-the-hill', is an ancient, rural settlement within the Green Belt bounded on the south side by the Pilgrims' Way, and abutting the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Public footpaths link a valued landscape and ecologically important areas with tracts of ancient woodland. The village straddles Rook Lane, an important local East-West route (between Caterham and the A23 radial road); other roads are narrow country lanes. In scattered locations are one public house, a large golf course, a village hall, an

infant school, and the church with a 13th C mural (depicting souls being sent to heaven or hell). There are no shops, few services and limited public transport."

The Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the strategic policies contained in the adopted Tandridge Core Strategy. It does not allocate additional sites for development, beyond the sites already identified in the plan at Figure 4.1 – 'Housing Site Availability in the Neighbourhood Plan Area 2015-2026'. Instead, an early review of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken to take into account the policies of the new Local Plan when it is adopted and its implications for future housing delivery in the area. The review of the plan has commenced, and the Submission Draft Review Plan was submitted to Tandridge District Council.

The key policies in the Neighbourhood Plan that should be taken into account in the determination of this application are Policies CCW1 and CCW4.

Policy CCW1 (Housing Requirement: During the period 2015 to 2026) states that proposals will be supported as identified in Figure 4.1. Figure 4.1 does not list or otherwise identify this site as a potential residential development site.

Policy CCW 4 (Character of Development) states that development is expected to preserve and enhance the character area in which it is located (as shown in Figure 5.1). Development proposals in the defined Character Areas will be supported which:

- i) exhibit design reflecting local context, character and vernacular of the area;
- ii) demonstrably enhance the quality of the built form through innovation in design;
- iii) make a positive contribution to the character area when viewed from the main highway approaches into the settlements; i
- iv) do not have a significantly detrimental impact on local views as set out in Policy CCW10; and
- v) contribute to the conservation and enhancement of designated and non-designated heritage assets and respect their significance and context.

Figure 5.1 is reproduced below, and shows that the application site is situated within the Rural Fringe Character Area (CA1) of the Neighbourhood Area. The accompanying 'Caterham, Chaldon & Whyteleafe Design Guidance and Codes Final Report (June 2024)' (at Section 2.3) contains the detailed design guidance for new developments within the Rural Fringe. It notes that the existing character of this area is "*of low density with nucleated or isolated developments enveloped within a woodland setting*", that "*Development is generally nestled within the wooded landscape on the hillsides creating a sense of remoteness and providing a rural setting and character*" and that "*Within Chaldon along the more isolated rural lanes houses are set back further from the road behind large, well vegetated front gardens with a mixture of hedges, brick walls or fences. Density*

development is lower and these houses have larger well vegetated back gardens often surrounded by hedgerows or woodland." These characteristics are all very evident in the areas close to this application site, and it is the Village Council's view that the proposed development is not only entirely out of character with the Rural Fringe in which the site is situated but would also introduce a concentration and density of urban development that is entirely inappropriate within the Rural Fringe Character Area.

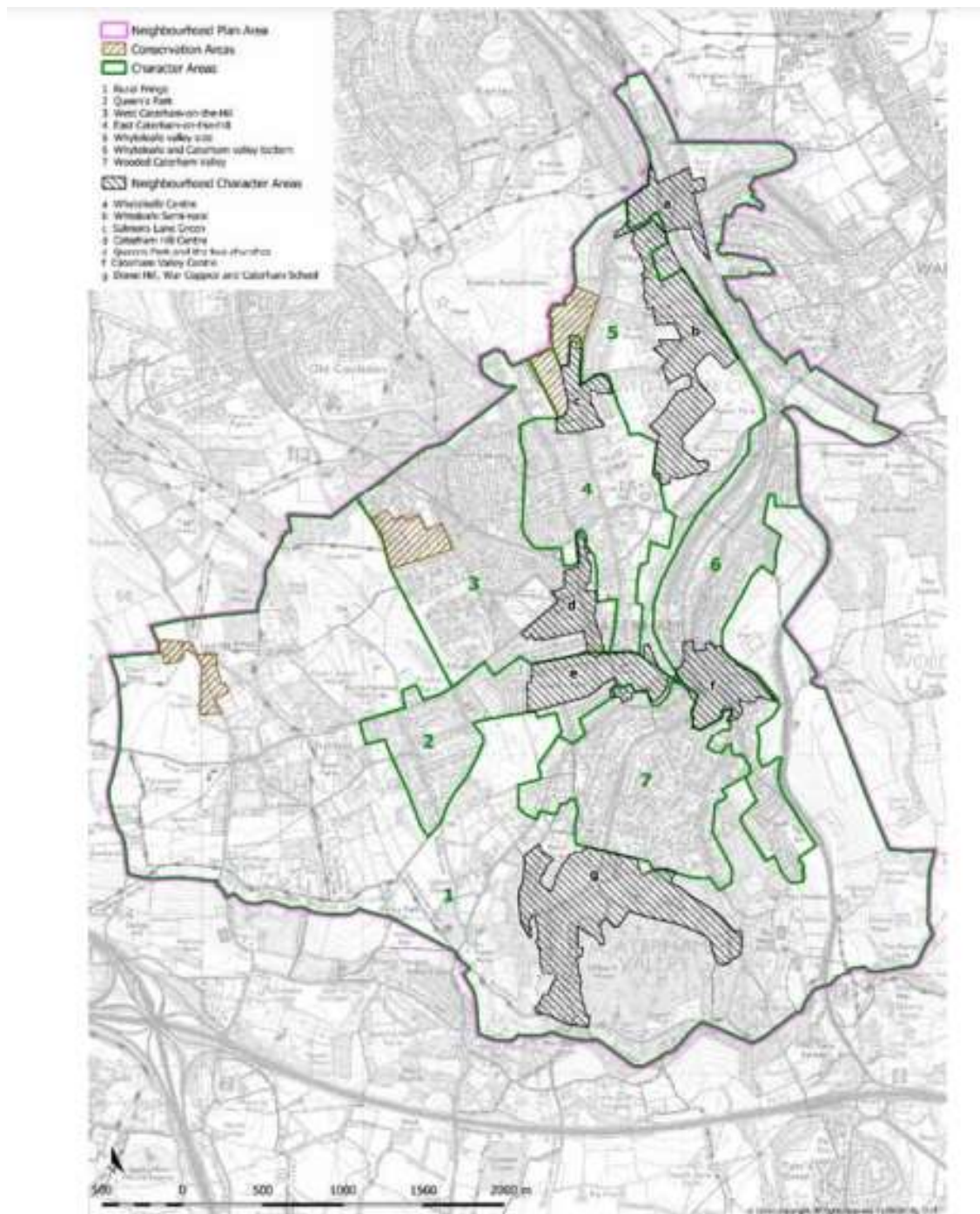


Figure 5.1: Character areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area

Traffic Generation

It is unlikely that Surrey County Council will raise a technical highway objection to the proposed access to the site from Mount Avenue. However, the Applicant's Transport Statement confirms that the projected Trip Generation from the development will result in a significant increase in vehicle trips, predominantly

by car, along Mount Avenue, with the peak periods being at 0800-0900 hrs. and at 1700-1800 hrs. There are only very limited trips projected for walking and cycling, and the proposals do not contain any significant elements in order to encourage Active Travel, apart from the proposed pedestrian link from the site to Birchwood Lane. It is the case that the increased traffic generation arising from this development will have adverse impacts upon the residential amenities presently enjoyed by residents of the existing dwellings in Mount Avenue.

Objections

The Village Council raises the following Objections to this application:

- 1. The proposals are in conflict with Policy CSP1 of the adopted Tandridge Core Strategy DPD (2009).**
- 2. The proposals are in conflict with Policies DP10 and DP13 of the adopted Tandridge Local Plan 2014-2029 Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), as Chaldon is not categorised as a 'Defined Village in the Green Belt' and the application site is within the designated Green Belt.**
- 3. The application site is not considered to be 'Grey Belt' in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 148 and 155) as the development proposals constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which if permitted would fundamentally undermine the purposes (when taken together) of the remaining Green Belt in the areas around Chaldon and beyond.**
- 4. The proposals are in conflict with Policies CCW1 and CCW4 of the made Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan (2021), as the proposals seek to develop a site for residential development that is not identified for such development in the Neighbourhood Plan and which is situated within the Rural Fringe Character Area, as defined on Figure 5.1 of the plan, where the scale and type of development being proposed is wholly inappropriate to the character of that area.**
- 5. The proposals by virtue of the increased traffic generation resulting from the development will have adverse impacts through noise and disturbance upon the amenities of existing residents living in Mount Avenue, Chaldon, which would serve as the sole vehicular access to the development.**

Yours sincerely

Annex 1

Tandridge Green Belt Assessment (201) – Parcel GBA 010

"D.11.1 Parcel 010 is a large tract of Green Belt located on the western edge of Tandridge District, bordering Reigate and Banstead to the west and the London Borough of Croydon to the north. It bordered by the M25 to its south, the M23/M25 Godstone interchange at the south- west corner, the built-up area of Caterham to the north-east and neighbouring Green Belt parcels (GBA 004 and 011) to the south-east.

D.11.2 Parcel 010 contains multiple different land uses including roads, a golf course, farms and agricultural buildings. These uses are in addition the settlement of Chaldon and scattered residential development along Rook Lane and Hilltop Lane.

D.11.3 Within the north-western part lies a small amount of development that forms part of the Chaldon Conservation Area. The Church benefits from its rural countryside setting and tree coverage both within and adjacent to the Church's grounds. Nearby is a farm and associated buildings which relate to the fields in this north-western part of the parcel.

D.11.4 To the west of the Golf Course lies the northern part of the small settlement and Conservation Area of Chaldon. Low density, large, detached dwellings are typical in the settlement, which extends both north and south of Rooks Lane, with properties often having large curtilages and significant tree coverage (particularly in the central and southern part of Chaldon), giving the area a rural character.

Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

What are the characteristics of development, if any? i.e. is the development which exists; planned, ad-hoc or sporadic?

D.11.5 There are low density large dwellings related to the settlement of Chaldon in this parcel. There are some agricultural buildings, a golf course and associated buildings within the parcel. Has this changed significantly since the Green Belt was first designated?

D.11.6 The parcel has been subject to infilling over the years and therefore has changed. However, the policies applicable to Chaldon recognised that it has a

unique character and identity, which should be maintained. Is any area of the parcel physically connected to a built-up area/settlement?

D.11.7 The parcel is adjacent to the built-up settlement of Caterham on the Hill and covers the settlement of Chaldon.

Is there a strong, defensible boundary between the existing built-up area and the Green Belt, for example: main roads, built form, watercourses, etc.? Or is there another notable feature which is more effective in preventing urban sprawl i.e., a hilltop or ridgeline, or drainage ditch, etc.?

D.11.8 The built-up area of Caterham is defined by residential dwellings and Green Lane, the settlement of Chaldon does not have a settlement boundary. The woodland and topography around Chaldon and Caterham strengthen the boundary around the settlements.

Conclusion on Purpose 1

D.11.9 The north-western section of this parcel sits adjacent to the built-up area of Caterham. The Green Belt in this area, including the Golf Course, plays a strong role in preventing Caterham from expanding westward. The boundary between the urban area and the Green Belt is also generally well defined with a clear separation between town and country.

Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another What settlements/towns are within the parcel?

D.11.10 The settlement of Caterham is to the east of the parcel. The settlement of Caterham is to the east of the parcel. The settlement of Chaldon is within the parcel. Would the reduction in the gap notably compromise the separation of settlements and the overall openness of the parcel visually or physically?

D.11.11 The gap between the settlement of Chaldon and Caterham is quite wide, particularly at the end of Leazes Avenue. The topography and woodland eastwards from Chaldon to Caterham also provides separation between the settlements. Rook Lane joins the settlements of Chaldon and Caterham. However, the characters of the two settlements along this road are individual and the woodland between the two adds further separation. Does this parcel, either in part or in its entirety, act as a buffer to the merging/coalescence of 2 or more settlements?

D.11.12 This parcel acts a buffer between Chaldon and Caterham. However, this is assisted by the topography and trees within the area that act as a buffer between the two settlements. The two settlements are also very different in character and identity, and this is emphasised by the rural setting of Chaldon.

Can you see any neighbouring settlement 'on the ground'? If not, what prevents this? i.e. too far away, visual obstruction from topography, buildings or woodlands, etc.?

D.11.13 From Rook Lane looking west, you can see some of isolated dwellings that form part of Chaldon. Chaldon is surrounded by mostly open agricultural fields and areas of woodland, however, the tree screening around the settlement means that the surrounding fields cannot be seen from many parts of the settlement and only extensively at the southern tip along Hilltop Lane where the land rises towards the hilltop and the Lane meets the North Downs Way. The trees and topography between the two settlements screen each other.

D.11.14 The golf course lies in the far north-east of the parcel and features undulating topography, areas of woodland and tree belt, as well as manmade landscapes, such as manicured fairways, greens and ponds. Whilst the tree cover on the eastern edge of the parcel does not completely prevent views of development in Caterham, it is sufficient enough to create a strong boundary between the urban area and the countryside, of which the golf course forms a part.

Conclusion on Purpose 2

D.11.15 The parcel acts as a buffer between Chaldon and Caterham. However, the trees and woodland between the two settlements act as screening that is an additional buffer to the two settlements merging. As such, the parcel plays a considerable role in meeting this purpose.

Purpose 3: to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment What are the characteristics and features of the area?

D.11.16 The parcel contains the North Downs Way, and immediately south are bands of mature trees, and long-distance views of many parts of Tandridge and Reigate and Banstead districts. Views northwards across extensive distances are also possible. Whilst urban areas can be clearly seen from this vantage point, this area feels very remote from such areas and has a strong open character.

D.11.17 Beyond the hilltop, the parcel drops steeply south towards the M25, its southern boundary. Again, this area is characterised by agricultural fields and woodlands, with some scattered buildings and narrow lanes.

D.11.18 To the south of the parcel is the M25 and the M23/M25 Godstone interchange at the south-west corner, the built-up area of Caterham to the north east and neighbouring Green Belt parcels (GBA 004 and 011) to the south east.

What type of development exists within the area? For example: agricultural buildings, industrial uses, etc.

D.11.19 The parcel contains multiple different land uses including roads, a golf course, farms and agricultural building, as well as the settlement of Chaldon.

Does the parcel contain countryside?

D.11.20 The area contains countryside as it has a lot of open fields and tree-belts. Even the dwellings within Chaldon are surrounded by trees and have a rural characteristic to them.

What is the size and scale of the development and/or visual obstructions within the parcel? i.e. woodlands, topography etc.

D.11.21 There are many large, isolated dwellings in the parcel along Rook Lane Leazes Avenue, Doctors Lane and Church Lane and Willey Broom Lane. There are some agricultural buildings and other isolated buildings scattered throughout the parcel. Most of the dwellings and buildings are fairly well screened due to the topography and woodland that screen them.

Conclusion on Purpose 3

D.11.22 The parcel is not free from development, containing the settlement of Chaldon in its centre, as well as agricultural buildings and other scattered residential development. Even though there are some concentrations of dwellings along Doctors Lane and south along Hilltop Lane that are quite prominent, most of the development in the parcel is generally in keeping with its rural setting. Generally, development that exists does not have an encroaching effect and the parcel is considered to serve this purpose.

Purpose 4: to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Are there any designated historic conservation areas within or visible from the parcel?

D.11.23 Within the parcel is the Chaldon Conservation Area, containing the Grade I Listed Church of St Paul and St Peter. The parcel is also adjacent to the Caterham Barracks Conservation Area in the east, along the Caterham urban boundary.

How would you describe the view from, within, into and out of the conservation area?

D.11.24 The views to and from the Chaldon Conservation Area are fairly screened due to the trees and topography of the area. The Caterham Barracks is fairly visible as it is situated within the urban area. How does the parcel complement the setting of the conservation area?

D.11.25 The Chaldon Conservation Area benefits from its rural location and remoteness from urban areas, which the Green Belt helps to preserve. Without the protection of the Green Belt its setting could be lost. As such this has been identified as an area for further investigation to understand the role the Green Belt plays in preserving the Conservation Area (this area is labelled 011 on the map in Appendix F). For the Caterham Barracks Conservation Area, the

Conservation Area is wholly contained within this urban area and is bordered on three sides by further development. Therefore, the Green Belt is not considered to play a role in preserving its setting as it is predominantly set within the settlement rather than the countryside.

Conclusion on Purpose 4

D.11.26 As the Caterham Barracks Conservation Area is within the urban area, the parcel does not complement the setting. However, the Green Belt in this parcel complements the setting of the Chaldon Conservation Area and therefore serves this purpose effectively. As such this area has been identified as an area for further investigation (this area is labelled 011 on the map in Appendix F).

Conclusion: How effectively does Parcel 010 serve the purposes of the Green Belt?

D.11.27 This parcel effectively serves a number of the Green Belt purposes. The north-east part of the parcel helps prevent Caterham from sprawling westwards and enveloping the neighbouring settlement of Chaldon. Whilst the parcel is not development free, the character of Chaldon means that such development does not generally have a negative impact on the open countryside. The Green Belt designation plays an important role in preserving the setting of the existing Conservation Areas and listed buildings and as such has been identified as an area for further investigation (this area is labelled 011 on the map in Appendix F)."