(INCORPORATING VALLEY AND HARESTONE WARDS)

Minutes of the meeting of Caterham Valley Parish Council Planning Committee held at Caterham Valley Library, Stafford Road, Caterham CR3 6JG, on Wednesday 18th February 2026 at 6:30pm

Cllr Tony Pearce – Chair
Cllr Robin Spencer
Mr Neil Farrance

Mrs M Gibbins - Clerk & RFO

M I N U T E S

1. **Apologies for absence:**
Cllrs Jenny Gaffney and Annette Evans and Mr Peter Brent

2. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest:** *To receive any disclosure by members of personal pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interests, and whether the member regards the interest to be prejudicial under the terms of the new Code of Conduct. Anyone with a prejudicial interest must, unless an exception applies, or a dispensation has been issued, withdraw from the meeting.* There were none declared.

3. **Public session:** There were 12 members of the public in attendance in respect of application TA/2025/1529. The Chairman thanked the residents for attending the meeting and for raising their concerns.

4. **To consider and make comment on the following Planning Applications:**

4.1 TA/2025/1529
Material change of use from class C3 dwelling house to class C2 children's home.
4 Weald Way, Caterham CR3 6EG *Case Officer: Errol Reid*
Comment: The Parish Council makes the following comments to his application.

- **Caterham Valley Parish Council appreciate the need for children's homes. However, the application documents appear to have a reliance on generalised statements rather than site-specific evidence. This is not an appropriate location for this facility, or for the children who would reside there.**
- **The Planning Statement says**
'Whilst a material change of use to a C2 is proposed, in terms of the character, nature and general intensity of the use of the building, this would not change beyond a manner not unlike a traditional large family. The building is a very large property, suitably able to accommodate the number of proposed residents.'
While the property may be able to accommodate the number of residents and staff, the use is out of character with surrounding properties. A C2 children's home with 24-hour staffing represents a material intensification compared with a single C3 household. Continuous staff presence, shift changes, and professional visits exceed the activity levels of a typical family home.

The application also does not adequately demonstrate the proposed site is suitable for a C2 or sufficient financial investment to comply with legal requirements.

- **The site does not provide sufficient bathroom facilities or privacy for children moving through puberty to adulthood. Two communal toilets and one bathroom for C2 use is woefully inadequate. Vulnerable children should not share bathroom and toilet facilities with staff and visitors.**

The property has no provision for physical disabilities for residents or visitors including a disabled toilet.

- **The applicant's documentation states that the property is close to public transport and only a 15-minute walk to Caterham town centre (the nearest point to access public transport). Parish Councillors have walked this route, at pace, and it took 33 minutes, so this is certainly not true.**
- **Every facility the children and staff would need – doctors, dentist and shops are a minimum of 1.8miles. Weald Way is far too dangerous for children to walk the distance. The first half of the road has no pavement, no street lighting and a 60mph speed limit. There is a lot of traffic on this road at school time due to the close proximity of Caterham School. Returning from the town centre in the evening, particularly when it is dark, Weald Way is steep with no pavement and sharp bends on a fast road.**
- **The applicant claims that residential amenity noise and activity will remain at domestic levels, yet these are children with potentially complex needs and who have emotional / behavioural difficulties, SEMH needs, or complex social challenges. One assumes this is why they cannot live in their own homes and residential care is required. This proposal will therefore impact neighbouring amenity.**
- **The potential for increased comings and goings, both morning and evening (professionals – social workers, therapists, education providers), family contact, transport to school along with the possibility of call-outs or crisis interventions would lead to the potential for increased noise and disturbance. There is no detailed management plan provided to demonstrate how disturbances will be prevented or mitigated. Existing parking may be insufficient, leading to overspill parking on a residential street. Increased vehicle movements may affect safety and character of Weald Way.**
- **We understand that the children who would reside at this facility are vulnerable and need supervision. Are the children to be allowed out without supervision, bearing in mind Weald Way could be dangerous to navigate. There does not appear to be an assessment of proximity to schools, services, or public transport for staff and residents. How are they to get to school, meet friends, after school activities, visit the GP or dentist, get to the shops. etc. They certainly should not walk. This is a rural road with no bus facility. Winter weather makes the road more difficult to navigate. It can be an inaccessible location, and cars will be needed to accommodate this proposal. Many properties of this nature are close to amenities with good transport links to the surrounding area with buses and trains within easy reach. From other websites it appears the purpose of these properties is to improve the social and educational outcomes for young people, promoting young people's welfare and development. In this location they will certainly be more isolated.**
- **Neighbours' comments suggest this property is already in C2 use, which would make the application retrospective. They comment on the bad language and noise disruption from the property. If granted permission, proper checks from relevant authorities, along with the planning permission should be implemented before the proposal commences.**
- **Neighbours' comments need to be given due consideration, many of which are similar to Parish Council concerns.**

Caterham Valley Parish Council requests that this application be refused.

4.2 TA/2025/1416
Lawful Development Certificate (proposed) Erection Of Rear Dormer Extension
192 Godstone Road, Caterham CR3 6RD *Case Officer: Grant Rogers*
Comment: The Councillors leave to TDC Officers.

4.3 TA/2026/78
Conversion of existing single garage to habitable living/playroom and disabled wet room. (Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed))
48 Harestone Valley Road, Caterham CR3 6HD *Case Officer: Grant Rogers*
Comment: The Parish Councillors leave to TDC Officers.

Meeting closed at 19:05

The next planning meeting will be held at 6:30pm on Wednesday 11th March 2026