

**CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL
BEARE GREEN, CAPEL AND COLDHARBOUR**

**Mrs Janet Russell
Clerk to the Council**

**Capel Parish Office
55a The Street
Capel
Surrey RH5 5LD**

Email: capelpc@btconnect.com

Tel: 01306 712447

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By email: planning@molevalley.gov.uk

Planning Department
Mole Valley District Council
Pippbrook
DORKING
Surrey RH4 1SJ

For the attention of Mr Aiden Gardner

Dear Mr Gardner

**Planning Application - MO/2017/2199 – CPC/18/004
Hill House Farm, Misbrooks Green Road, Capel RH5 4QQ**

This is one of four planning applications relating to this site. This application is for the change of use of part of a field for educational and recreational fixed tent camping.

The Parish Council considered this application along with the three other applications for the same property. Each application is considered separately but the four applications inter-relate central to this planning application, MO/2017/2199.

The landscape/landscape environment was the subject of a detailed analysis by landscape consultants CSA. This study informed the Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan (2017). The conclusion of the Capel Sensitivity Appraisal (April 2017) found that in overall sensitivity terms the area was in the 'Moderate – High' category.

In 'Landscape Policy' terms the area falls in the Green Belt, NPPF Chapter 9 Protecting Green Belt land, the Mole Valley Core Strategy Goal 1 and Policy CS13 Landscape Character (LP Saved Policy ENV4).

Policy CS14 states that ***“All new development must respect and enhance the character of the area.”***

The site is currently agricultural in use and nature and consists of an undulating rising landscape.

The most prominent views of the site are from the south/south east, and in particular elevated land south of Capel from public footpath vantage points which affords extensive views to the north/north east with the backdrop of the Surrey Hills beyond.

The landscape effect of the development is therefore that the proposed development would introduce new incongruous features and structures.

In landscape terms the development would therefore conflict with Policy CS13 and ENV22 of the Mole Valley Local Plan, the former requiring that new development must respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape character of the area.

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF indicates that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt would contribute inappropriate development. The proposal does not conform with the exceptions outlined in Paragraph 89.

Paragraph 87 of the Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (which do not exist).

The road (lane) is typified by the prevailing character of elevated land (banking) rising steeply from this narrow lane with a high hedgerow beyond. It forms a 'key' definition on the approach towards Capel village from the north east.

Apart from access for vehicles enabling access to schools, local workplaces, medical facilities and shops, paths (and bridleways) users of bicycles and horses must be 'protected.'

The removal of the hedgerow and any alteration to its prevailing character would create and result in untold visual harm, adverse impact upon nature conservation and must be resisted.

Any development which would compromise the prevailing traffic safety consideration must be resisted. Visibility at the junction of Misbrooks Green Road is already poor with heavy commercial use along the road between Newdigate and Beare Green.

The only alternative route is via Vicarage Lane into the centre of Capel village. The narrowness of Vicarage Lane together with limitations along The Street make this alternative untenable.

The proposed development does not constitute agricultural development, the mitigation therefore set out in MVLP Policy RUD 14 cannot therefore apply.

Likewise, the criteria detailed in Policy RUD17 – Farm Diversification does not apply. While the re-use of the farmhouse buildings (Application 2197) could apply (RUD19) on its own as part of the overall strategy is non-compliant.

The proposal is wholly speculative and has little or no regard to the environment of Capel Parish.

Finally, there are significant third-party objections to this proposal.

The Parish Council therefore strongly recommends that this planning application is refused.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Russell
Clerk to the Council