

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

BEARE GREEN, CAPEL AND COLDHARBOUR

Mrs Janet Russell
Clerk to the Council

Email: clerk@capelparishcouncil.org.uk
Tel: 01306 712447

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

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Email:
Councillor.cookseym@molevalley.gov.uk

Councillor Margaret Cooksey
Cabinet Member for Planning
Mole Valley District Council
Planning Department
Pippbrook,
Dorking
Surrey RH4 1SJ

Dear Councillor Cooksey

Future Mole Valley – Consultation on Draft Local Plan

Capel Parish Council (CPC) is submitting herewith its representations for consideration by your Cabinet on 14 January 2020 in relation to the draft proposal detailed in the emerging Mole Valley Local Plan.

You will be aware of the importance CPC attaches to the planning process having achieved adoption of its Neighbourhood Plan following the referendum in December 2017.

The sites which are referred to in this submission include those already forming part of the extant Mole Valley Local Plan. Reference to Neighbourhood Development Plans is made in draft policy S1(2).

Set out below is our summary and recommendation to your Local Plan Cabinet. CPC seeks modifications and amendments to the proposal in Capel Parish for Beare Green and the village of Capel.

BEARE GREEN

i. Site Reference SA05: Land South of Beare Green.

The recommendation of CPC is that the site is deleted from the draft plan.

There is no prospect of consolidating this site into the village, it compromises the integrity of Beare Green and fails to have regard to the advice of Government in relation to Green Belt Policy. It will have an adverse impact upon Surrey Hills AONB, the transport infrastructure and the prevailing local environment including impact from flooding.

ii. Site SA06: Land at Breakspear Farm

CPC fully supports the proposed allocation of this site for housing, open space, play provision and parking. The Parish Council endorses the exclusion of the area designed for housing from the Green Belt and safeguarding of land designated as open space to remain within the Green Belt. This site was promoted by the Parish Council

Capel

iii. Site SA24: Land at Brook Cottage, Wolves Hill.

CPC objects to the inclusion of the site with a draft allocation for 46 dwellings.

It compromises the integrity of the village which has a predominately linear format with its core elements being strung along the length of The Street. Capel sits within a rolling agricultural landscape. The village lies in a wide valley with open countryside rising either side of The Street. The tightly developed village core relates positively to the surroundings.

South of Vicarage Lane the land includes 50ha of managed nature reserve which includes the 36ha Dairy House Nature Reserve. The land is recognised for its nature conservation importance. The adverse impact of developing Brook Cottage is expanded upon in the report. This impact needs to be considered in combination with Site SA25 which is supported by CPC having regard to the impact of approximately 83 dwellings, a projected population in the order of 250 and between 250 and 300 vehicles and peak hour movements.

The linear Street is narrow and compromised by 'on street parking'. This will create an untenable situation.

It is the recommendation of CPC that Brook Cottage site is deleted.

iv. Site SA25: Old Kiln Farm, Coles Lane

CPC endorsed the proposed mixed-use allocation, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) The inclusion of up to five starter employment units to re-establish sustainable employment development in the village.
- (b) To provide informal recreation space to incorporate play provision.
- (c) To ensure the housing proposed comprises starter homes and affordable provision of mixed tenure.

v. Site SA26: Capel House Farm, The Street, Capel

CPC supports the allocation of the site for housing. We recommend that provision should be to a level ensuring compliance with the proposed affordable housing criteria.

vi. Site SA27: Redland House, 62 The Street, Capel

CPC supports the allocation of the Redland site, but commends having regard to the relationship with housing fronting onto The Street, the site capacity should be limited to four dwellings. This will reduce capacity and will also have regard to vehicular access considerations.

vii. Supplementary Site

Land at "Hurst", Vicarage Lane, Capel.

This rectangular site lines close to the central core of Capel village, albeit part of the land being in the Green Belt.

The site comprises a single land (now derelict) detached house which has not been occupied for some 25 years.

It is in a sustainable location and makes no contribution to the purpose of the Green Belt.

The allocation of this site for housing would provide six to eight dwellings.

Policies

This submission has had regard to the draft policies contained within the plan, in particular Policy S1, S2 (location); S5 (Rural Areas); H2 (Affordable Provision); H4 (Minimum Densities and Character); EN1 (Green Belt); EN2 (Countryside beyond the Green Belt); EN8 (Landscape Character) and INF2 (Flood Risk).

These policy considerations will be expanded upon in due course in our formal response to the draft Local Plan consultation.

Yours sincerely



Mr Chris Ball
Chairman, Capel Parish Council



Mr Paul Garber
Chairman Planning Committee

Attachments:
Objections to Site SA05 and SA24

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Core Objectives

- 1.1. To contribute towards sustainable development, new development should (and must) be directed towards previously developed land. In this regard the Green Belt, Countryside beyond the Green Belt and the landscape (AONB) are fundamental to sustainable development.
- 1.2. The priority must be in the first instance to locate new residential development within defined built-up areas with 'limited' residential development only being permitted in the villages of Capel and Beare Green.
- 1.3. 'Limited infilling in villages' has been the subject of determining the issue of which the Parish have had regard. Therefore, in relation to the sites being proposed in the two villages, in relation to the Green Belt and Countryside beyond the Green Belt, character and structure are material considerations.
- 1.4. The village of Beare Green comprises a compact area of housing albeit in parts beyond the settlement boundary within the Green Belt. However, its framework defines what contributes to acceptable development.
- 1.5. In this regard the revised NPPF identifies "three overarching objectives" being economic, social and environmental.
- 1.6. The revised NPPF refers to the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). In particular proposals (and policies) should protect areas (sites) or assets (AONB/GB) of particular importance rejecting inappropriate development proposals.
Adverse impacts should significantly outweigh benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF.

Green Belt Policy

- 1.7. With particular regard to Site SA05 (land south of Beare Green) the provision of paragraphs 134 and 135 of the revised NPPF outlines the importance to be allocated to Green Belts and their purpose; whilst the contents of paragraphs 143 and 144 highlight the presumption against inappropriate development, requiring local Planning Authorities to give sustainable weight to any harm caused to the Green Belt before setting out the threshold which is required and to be reliant on the 'very special circumstances' test.
- 1.8. Having regard to the 'tests' the proposed site at Beare Green does not meet the requirements of paragraphs 145 or 146 of the revised NPPF.
- 1.9. The changes to Planning Practice Guidance outlines assess to be taken into account when assessing the Green Belt. These include the visual impact of the development, the degree of activity such as traffic that would be generated.

Land South of Beare Green site SA05 - Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.10. The area is distinct from the settlement of Beare Green to the north by Great Turners and is adjacent to the Surrey Hills AONB. A large portion of the site is visible from the greensand ridge and the AONB to the north-west. The site is not considered well related to the settlement.
The landscape quality or sensitivity is influenced by the setting of the Surrey Hills AONB in form of landscape quality, sensitivity and visual sensitivity. It can be classified of Moderate/High (the second highest landscape designation).

1.11. Scale and Impact Site SA05 (Land South of Beare Green)

- i. The development proposed will create a wholly unrelated 'new village' with a population between 1,200 and 1,500 (450 dwellings).
- ii. It will destroy the established fabric of Beare Green east and west of the A24.
- iii. No connectivity other than by foot or cycleways to the village.
- iv. The primary access from A29 unacceptable and will compromise highways safety.
- v. Public transport links cannot be achieved.
- vi. Future of the Weald School? – future development east of A24.
- vii. Unacceptable Green Belt compromised.
- viii. The site is subject to severe environmental impact from flooding.

2. Land at Brook Cottage, Capel

CPC objects to the proposal for development comprising some 46 dwellings.

There are three underlying objections to the proposal, namely:

- i. The site lies within a rural area beyond the Green Belt and is located in an areas of significant policy constraint.
- ii. It represents a significant area of residential development in a pleasant rural area which would be seriously detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.
- iii. It would have a significant adverse impact upon protected land in the vicinity of the site (Dairy House Nature Reserve) having regard to the flora and fauna on the reserve including Great Crested Newt, Dormice, Reptiles, deer, badgers and rare plant species including 300 types of unique fungi to England recognised and identified by Kew.

Further important objectives include:

- i. There is no physical linkage from the site to a public footpath network.
- ii. The impact of 46 dwellings with a proposed population of not less than 120, in excess of 100 vehicles creates significant highway movement and result in significant detriment to the village of Capel and the surrounding environment.
- iii. This development would be detrimental to highways safety.
- iv. Visual impact – the site is located on a strongly elevated setting to the village.
- v. Dairy House Nature Reserve abuts the south boundary of the area. The pleasant pastoral fields form the setting for the village. This setting to the village must not be compromised. The nature reserve is a site of Nature Conservation Importance.

3. Impact of Brook Cottage (Site SA24) and Old Kiln Farm (Site SA25)

As described in the summary with both sites being located to the south of Capel village it is necessary to have regard to the combined population, the vehicular generation and the balance of development having regard to their locations and impact upon the character of the village.

Site SA24 will have a negative impact on the village. Old Kiln Farm (SA25) provides a balance with established development.

CPC recommends the deletion of the Brook Cottage site from the draft Local Plan.