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6 Summary
Harestone lies in Tandridge District, immediately to the south of Caterham Town Centre. It is made up of suburban and semi rural development stretching across both sides of a valley. It is defined by its distinct character and by the fact that it is surrounded by countryside on three sides.

Tandridge District Core Strategy policy CSP18: Character and Design, requires that:
“new development must be of a high standard of design that reflects and respects the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness.”

CSP19: Density, requires density for an area such as Harestone to be within the range of 30-55 dwellings per hectare:
“unless the design solution for such a density would conflict with the local character and distinctiveness of an area”.

National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) emphasise the importance of new development contributing towards the character and quality of an area. In particular, PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, states that:
“Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be acceptable.”

PPS3: Housing, also states that design quality is assessed to the extent to which the proposed development:
“creates, or enhances, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings...”

This document has been prepared by Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design and Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd, working together with Tandridge District Council and Caterham Valley Parish Council. It provides an assessment of the character of Harestone, setting out the key characteristics that contribute positively towards its distinctive character and identifying the potential opportunities and threats that may be presented by development proposals or other physical changes.

It considers a broad range of influences, based on the English Heritage methodology for Conservation Area Appraisals, such as:
- Historical development of the area;
- Siting and topography;
- Landscape setting;
- Townscape and built form;
- Vegetation and hard landscape; and
- Boundary treatments and typical street scenes.

Design quality and in particular character has not always been a priority for national planning policy and guidance. Some examples of development in Harestone will have been approved and built under previous policy frameworks which placed much less emphasis on the importance of context and character than there is today. Such examples may not contribute positively to the character of the area, although they may be of high quality in themselves. Where appropriate, both positive and negative examples are highlighted to illustrate key aspects of local character.

This character assessment seeks to establish what makes Harestone distinctive and provides an evidence base for the special residential character of the place. It forms the evidence base for the Harestone Design Guidance which is intended to be used as a tool to inform the design of proposals, by developers, architects, designers, planners, highway engineers and the local community, and to help ensure that future development or other change is not only high in quality, but also appropriate in character to the existing environment and context.

Some of the character areas extend beyond the Harestone Valley Policy Area boundary, however they are included within the assessment because they contribute to the character and setting of the area as a whole.
Caterham Valley developed as a result of the railway that came in 1856 and major changes in the management of the Manor of Caterham, which encouraged development. Beforehand, historic maps show no development in the area.¹

The town of Caterham was still a small village in 1837, centred on the tiny St Lawrence’s Church (1095 AD), the rectory and Caterham Court (demolished between 1914 and 1933). Because of its important contribution to the character of Harestone, this area has been included in Character Area A of the Harestone Valley, although historically this small group was separated from the Harestone Valley by the steepness of Church Hill. St Mary’s Church, opposite, was built in 1886. The spire at St Mary’s (126 feet high) is now one of the principal landmarks in views from Harestone Valley. The immediate open setting of both churches, as seen in 1897, survives today.

The topography and woodland pattern on the steepest slopes clearly shaped the development of Harestone Valley from the Victorian period on. In the 1897 map the ribbon of woodland on the steep east facing slopes (surviving between Stanstead Road and Harestone Valley Road) is clearly visible, continuing across Church Hill to follow the railway line northwards.

Harestone Valley Road, Harestone Hill and Tupwood Lane were laid out first during the 19th century and are shown lined with trees, although not continuously, in 1897. Woodland abutted the south side of Stanstead Road. Some of the original large Victorian / Edwardian houses remain and continue to add character to the area.

The more modern higher density housing east of Harestone Valley Road and south of Colburn Avenue, and the site of the former Marie Curie Hospice, occupy the partly wooded and well treed grounds of Harestone (1870 AD). Tree cover from the late 19th and early 20th century still survives in this area within the grounds of the hospice and along the rear boundaries of the gardens.

In the 19th century small copses and woodland belts were a feature of the land between Tupwood Lane and Harestone Hill, south of Grange Road. Many of these survive as tree lines running from south-west to north-east along rear garden boundaries or as tree groups in gardens.

¹ ‘The Houses of Caterham Valley 1868-1939’, Peter Saaler, 1982
Designations

The Harestone Valley study area is surrounded on three sides by landscapes designated for their natural beauty and landscape value. To the east, separated from the study area by the town centre and the A22, lies a ridgeline at 210m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) forming part of the wooded hillsides and open pasture of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The AONB is visible from many locations on the western hillside (Character Areas* A and B) and forms a backcloth to the tree-covered Harestone Valley.

South and west of the study area lie tracts of Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The steep wooded sides of Oldpark Wood (rising to Gravelly Hill) are a prominent feature of Harestone Valley, enclosing the valley at its southern end. The Surrey Hills AGLV Review 2007 found that this area shared the characteristics of the AONB.

West of the ridgeline in Character Area* B the AGLV falls away to the west. Here the AGLV was formerly occupied by a golf course but now comprising recreation grounds and open fields bounded by lines of trees. This area has little influence on the character of Harestone Valley.

A pocket of AGLV lies between the A22 and Godstone Road to the east of Character Area* K. This steep sided west facing slope, an open area of pasture enclosed by tree cover, forms a backcloth to the town.

Topography

The local topography is key to the character of Harestone Valley. The town sits on the cusp of the steeper sided valleys closer to the escarpment of the North Downs and the gentler slopes of the dip side. To the north-west steep slopes drop down within Character Areas* A and B from a narrow plateau and the gentler slopes in Caterham-on-the-Hill. To the south-west Character Area* B sits on the northern extreme of a ridgeline of higher ground leading from the escarpment to the south-west. Similarly Character Areas* L and H sit on the northern extreme of a ridgeline of higher ground leading from the escarpment to the south-east. Character Areas* C to G sit within the steep slopes of the dry valley which extends southwards, forking as it moves away from the town centre. Character Areas* K and J sit within the narrow long north-south dry valley which contains the main transport infrastructure and cuts through the escarpment at Junction 6 of the M25/A22.

The resulting landform is dramatic, and rather atypical of chalk downland, and best appreciated from the upper slopes of the study area. At the highest point Character Area* I sits at 215m AOD, not much lower than the highest points of the AONB (Stanstead Road is at 195m AOD). At its lowest, Character Areas* D and L sit at 130m AOD, typical of the surrounding valleys. The sense of a change in elevation is heightened by the mature tree cover which adds 15 to 20m to the hilltop skyline.

The local topography is also important in separating Harestone Valley from the rest of the built form in Caterham, north of the station, and Caterham-on-the-Hill.

Figure 4: Aerial image of Harestone (taken 2008)

* Please refer to page 9 for character area plan
Important visual landmarks within the setting

The field surveys identified both the predominance of the spire to St Mary’s Church and the surrounding tree cover in so many views from Harestone Valley and their important contribution to the character of the area. It is therefore recommended that the church and its grounds be included in the policy area in order to protect the character of Harestone Valley.

St John’s Church sits adjacent to Character Area G of the study area. This church is prominent in views from the centre of the town and acts as a gateway landmark to the study area.

The highest points on Church Hill, where the tree cover permits, enable dramatic long distance views of the open downland hilltop (236m AOD) above Winders Hill to the south-east.

Vegetation

The dominant vegetation cover is of mature trees and woodland much of which occurs within the study area itself. The space between buildings has allowed trees to be retained. Larger blocks of woodland are found within the landscape setting south of Harestone Valley at the top of Harestone Hill, in Oldpark Wood and up towards White Hill. These woodlands characterise and enclose the southern approaches to the Harestone Valley, where a marked change from a rural to urban character is typical as at Stanstead Road and Tupwood Lane.

Belts of trees are a feature of the eastern setting to the study area, on the boundary with the AONB. These belts may enclose open fields on the upper slopes or the built form east of Godstone Road.

The above vegetation is important in maintaining the distinctive character of the study area – framing the built form within Harestone Valley, separating this from the adjacent built form and reinforcing the settlement edge and the contrast between the rural hinterland and the settlement.

Elsewhere the surrounding landscape is characterised by small fields enclosed within belts of trees. These are smaller and more enclosed to the west and south, with scattered settlements and small estates outside of Harestone Valley. The result is in a gentler transition from the remoter rural landscape of the Downs into the study area with a mix of open fields and settlement abutting the study area boundary. To the east the landscape opens up with larger arable fields and linear woodland belts running north-south with the lie of the land, in the AONB. The A22 forms a barrier to the AONB and due to the topography and tree cover, this open landscape has less influence on the character of Harestone Valley, although there are some long views into the AONB.

The open space and wooded areas are significant for biodiversity, in particular providing wild life corridors. Greenspace is also important in helping to absorb surface water run-off. Many trees within the area are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
4 Structure

- The structure clearly reflects topography with main roads lined with formally arranged development frontages on ridges or in the valley bottom.
- A regular plot pattern and rhythms of development is predominant in the area.
- On the slopes between the main roads development takes the form of informally arranged culs-de-sac. These are predominantly developed on the eastern valley sides.
- The steeper slopes to the west of the valley (a) have kept this side of the valley tree free of development, preserving a dense tree cover and clear division between development in the valley bottom and that on the ridge. The only exception is Dunedin Drive (b).
- Typically houses are wide fronted with their frontage running parallel to the road and are consistently set back. The exception to this is Dunedin Drive where buildings step up a steep hill in an oblique, but consistent manner.
- The consistent rhythm and larger massing of blocks of flats and remaining large Victorian / Edwardian houses on Harestone Valley Road is clearly identifiable (c).
- The town centre (d) is located to the north of Harestone Valley and is characterised by a denser development form and buildings with large footprints.
- Harestone Valley is surrounded by countryside on three sides which gives it a distinctive setting and character.
- Figure 10 shows the main pedestrian and vehicular routes through the area.
5 Character Areas

Area A - Church Hill
Area B - Stanstead Road
Area C - Western Valley Slopes
Area D - Valley and Eastern Valley Slopes
Area E - Dunedin Drive
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Figure 11: Character area plan
Some of the character areas extend beyond the Harestone Valley Policy Area boundary, however they are included within the assessment because they contribute to the character and setting of the area as a whole (for example Area I - East Tupwood Lane).
5 Character Areas

A - Church Hill

Location and Setting

This character area is formed around Church Hill, the main link between Caterham-on-the-Hill and Caterham Valley. It has a strategic role in terms of vehicular movement and is very busy at most times. As a result of heavy traffic and narrow pavements it does not provide a very pleasant pedestrian environment. However, it is very distinct in character due to its steeply sloping topography and dense vegetation.

The area sits on the steep slopes of the western valley side rising to the plateau (195m OD).

It is separated from Caterham-on-the-Hill by open recreational space at Queen’s Park; by the cemetery attached to St Mary’s and St. Lawrence’s churches; and by an open field south of Caterham Dene Hospital. It is also separated from Caterham town centre by the steep wooded hillside above the railway line.

This steep wooded hillside continues into and across the character area, either side of Church Hill. Long views exist into open countryside from the cemetery on the north side of St Mary’s church and long distance panoramic view from Church Hill and housing on St. Mary’s Mount to the hilltops of the AONB. Views out from the open space on Church Hill to Harestone Hill are important. The area as a whole is visible from the AONB and contributes to its setting.

There are a number of other views across Caterham Valley, in particular from Church Hill open space and from St Mary’s Mount.

The spire of St. Mary’s Church is a prominent landmark in views from many locations in Harestone Valley and from Manor Avenue and the High Street.

The roof tops of the new development in St. Mary’s Mount are also prominent in many views from Harestone Valley. The colour and slope of the roofs, and their enclosure within a dense tree cover, create a not unattractive complement to views of the spire above the development.

Landscape character

- Character area A includes the important surviving core of historic Caterham village;
- Heavily influenced by its steep contours and as a result steep winding tree lined roads;
- Heavy tree cover throughout;
- Woodland with open space occupied by housing on terraces or grassy glades on the steeper eastern slopes;
- Important area of informal wooded open space with terraced grassed glades south-west of Church Hill;
- Historic woodland cover;
- Important brick wall enclosed grassed grounds to St Lawrence’s Church; and
- Gardens are not a strong feature of this area; the undeveloped private grounds of the churches, the St. Mary’s Mount and The Hill developments are key to maintaining the wooded and tree covered character of the area.

Townscape

- From Church Hill hardly any development is visible, as a result of dense vegetation and the topography. To the south of Church Hill, where the slope falls away buildings are set well below road level and to the north well above it;
- The junction of Stanstead Road and Church Hill is particularly distinctive. The combination of old boundary walls, high hedges, a small incidental space and mature trees create a strong sense of place. In particular the elevated footway adds positively to the distinctiveness; and
- St. Mary’s Church, consecrated in 1866, contributes significantly to the character and is a highly visible landmark for Caterham Valley as a whole.
Built form

- The predominant building typology is linear blocks running parallel to the contours. Although buildings are well screened from the road, this particular typology does not allow for development that is very well integrated into the topography; and
- Development on St Mary’s Mount is more broken up in form and creates a better integration with the topography when viewed from the distance.

Vegetation and hard landscape

- Predominantly mature tree cover including Horse Chestnut, Beech and Ash;
- Several mature Yews reflecting, with the Beech, a typical chalk downland woodland mix;
- Well managed younger screen and semi-ornamental planting in association with new development at St. Mary’s Mount contributes to landscape character;
- Informal areas of natural grassland add to semi-rural character of the open spaces;
- Well maintained hedges define the upper parts of Church Hill; and
- A railed raised path is a feature of the junction between Church Hill and Stanstead Road, complemented by the small area of open space with two trees opposite.

Boundary Treatment

- Brick walls of varying height to front boundaries;
- In particular old boundary walls add to the character of the area.
- Metal railings on Church Hill; and
- Dense vegetation or high hedges.

Opportunities and threats

- Jacobs Ladder and the open space at the top of Church Hill provide an important route and vantage point, however both are overgrown and there is an opportunity to provide a better link and more views out;
- There is a threat of the erosion of boundary planting due to accessibility requirements, i.e. required level access - buildings located at road level become highly visible;
- Potential threat of loss of high level footway due to possible future highway improvements; and
- There is a threat of visually intrusive roof forms if development is not sited carefully in relation to the contours.

For additional generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
B - Stanstead Road

Location and Setting
This area is formed around Stanstead Road, including the adjacent culs-de-sac and the upper end of Harestone Lane. Stanstead Road is located on a ridge with land falling away to the south east. The developments to the east of Stanstead Road are at the top of a steeper slope and many of them have views above the wooded area and across the valley. The area sits on the plateau edge and upper slopes on the western side of the valley, rising to high point at the southern end 210m AOD. The land drops steeply away to the east, covered with woodland in Character Area C and beyond the study boundary. From the road glimpsed views exist between some of the properties and open views exist from the culs-de-sac. The tree cover and some of the houses nestling in the cover are prominent in views from Harestone Hill and can be seen from the AONB to the east. The tree covered skyline is also prominent in views from the open areas of Harestone Valley around Caterham School and on the edge of the Area of Greater Landscape Value (AGLV) Oldpark Wood. There are also many views out from the area across the valley to Harestone Hill, with both the wooded hills and open tops of the AONB visible in the far distance (for example Woodside Close). The AGLV abuts the area at its southern end and the immediate northern setting includes the open countryside of fields enclosed by tree lines on slopes falling away from the area. A line of trees along the rear boundary of the gardens separates the built form from open countryside and the AGLV.

The southern approach to the area along Stanstead Road is heavily wooded with many mature trees around the few large properties. Overall this has a strongly rural character which contrasts with the suburban form of Character Area B. However the high tree cover and front boundary hedges along the entrance to Character Area B brings characteristics of the rural hinterland into the area, softening the contrast and enhancing the area.

Landscape character
- The rear gardens do not make a significant contribution to the streetscene within Character Area B but tree lines and mature large shrubs on rear garden boundaries, tree groups in larger plots, and lining Harestone Lane are very important in maintaining the wooded appearance of the hillside;
- The area has a softer outer edge to the west on to open countryside with houses set close to the road and long rear gardens;
- The alignment of the historic Harestone Lane remains through a cul-de-sac and local footpath leading from Stanstead Road to Harestone Valley Road;
- This footpath is still bounded by a hedgerow with hedgerow trees;
- The southern boundary of Stanstead Road is lined with mature trees and hedgerows contributing to the wooded appearance of the character area; and
- Garden frontages to the northern boundary to Stanstead Road are more open and fragmented, although good section still contain mature trees and hedges. These are important in tying the two sides of the road together into a strong common character.

Figure B1: Character diagram
Townscape
- The area has a consistent character;
- Plots are regular and consistent in orientation with most boundaries being perpendicular to the road. In a small area to the north of Stanstead Road, plots are angled leading to houses being at an angle, although consistently aligned with boundaries;
- A regular rhythm of development;
- Houses along the main road frontages are consistently set back creating an open and green character;
- For a small section the footpath on Stanstead Road is raised behind a treeline. This is an important feature and contributes to the character of the road;
- In the culs-de-sac and along Harestone Lane building lines and plot patterns are less consistent; and
- Generous gaps between buildings, wider gaps to the southern end of the settlement.

Vegetation and hard landscape
- Predominantly mature trees with a selection of more ornamental varieties than Character Area A – Copper Beech, Beech, Oak, Horse Chestnut and Yew are typical;
- A small ornamental stone railing, bank and planting to Woodlands survives from the 19th century on its east side as local landscape feature;
- Tree Preservation Orders cover extensive areas of woodland and tree groups;
- A small patch of shrubbery at the junction of Harestone Lane and Stanstead Road is a local feature, a survival from the 19th century landscape.

Boundary Treatment
- Predominately hedges and at the southern end of Stanstead Road mature trees enclose the road, creating an overarching sense of tree cover. Front boundary vegetation is mixed and ornamental conifers are a common feature;
- Mixed boundary treatment with brick walls are the most common; and
- Side boundaries to properties are mainly vegetated.

Built form
- Houses are predominately detached houses and vary in architecture and materials;
- Each cul-de-sac creates a sub-character area of its own, as houses tend to have been developed together and with the same architectural approach; and
- Houses are predominately 2 storeys high, with a few 1 storey ones. A three storey block of flats is the exception in the area.

Opportunities and threats
- Development along the ridge line may impact negatively on views from across the valley; and
- Due to the steeply sloping land retaining walls may be required. These and radical changes to the existing landform may impact negatively on the character of the area.

For further generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
Location and Setting

This character area is located to the west of Harestone Valley Road and encompasses the steep wooded area on the valley side and flatted development adjacent to the road.

Character Area C partly sits on the steep east facing slopes of the Harestone Valley, and partly sits on the lower slopes west of Harestone Valley Road.

The woodland and the tree cover are prominent in views from the far side of the valley and Harestone Hill.

Views from the area are limited by tree cover and the area’s lower elevation but there are views from Underwood Road, especially in winter, across to Harestone Hill.

Landscape character

- Woodland behind buildings forms an important backdrop;
- The long linear steep sided belt of woodland is a key feature of both this area and the wider Harestone Valley;
- Woodland in the character area dates back to the late 19th century or earlier;
- Roads lined with mature trees;
- Large gardens and the grounds to private houses or blocks of flats are a key feature of the area below the linear woodland, thus maintaining the appearance of an open leafy Victorian suburb.
- Deep front gardens.

Townscape

- In development terms this area is distinctively different from other character areas in Harestone, and is predominantly blocks of flats;
- Pavilion style blocks of flats located on large plots and set behind a generous front garden area. These are interspersed with large Victorian / Edwardian houses, that form an important part of the character of the area.
- Consistent building line; and
- Parking is hidden behind buildings.

Built form

- Pavilion style blocks of flats of consistent rhythm, massing and height;
- Typically 3-4 storeys; and
- Predominately light brown brick.

Vegetation and hard landscape

- Beech trees line Underwood Road;
- Hedgerows with mature trees along Harestone Valley Road;
- The surviving lines of mature trees separating each plot;
- Tree cover from the woodland extends into the rear of the gardens;
- Tree Preservation Orders cover extensive areas of woodland;
- High evergreen hedges; and
- Open grassed verges with no kerbs.
Boundary Treatment

- Mature trees in front of buildings mitigate the impact of these larger buildings, and positively contribute to the road character;
- The majority of properties are accessed via an open drive way that is not gated, creating a sense of openness and inclusiveness; and
- Rear boundaries of properties fronting onto Harestone Valley Road are lined by strong tree belts and mature planting. These are of particular importance to the wooded and covered character of Underwood Road.

Opportunity and threats

- There is a threat that landscape is lost as a result of poorly integrated car parking.

For additional generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
D - Valley and Eastern Valley Slopes

Location and Setting
This character area is the largest one and influences the character for the Harestone Valley as a whole. It extends through the whole valley and up the eastern slope towards Tupwood Lane. It therefore includes the majority of backland development within the study area. The character area can be separated into two sub-characters: development along roads and culs-de-sac infill developments.

Character Area D lies on the valley floor and lower eastern slopes of Harestone Valley.

The over arching character of this area is formed by the development on roads as this is the most visible from within the area. However, many of the roads descend into the valley floor and provide good views across to the western slopes. Similarly more open areas, as at the former Marie Curie Hospice site and centrally between Harestone Valley Road and Harestone Hill, provide good views to the western hillside and the skyline. The more open stretch of Harestone Valley Road enables views up the valley sides from the valley floor.

There is a strong contrast between this residential area and the open landscape of Caterham School grounds to the south and a belt of trees separate the area and the open landscape of Caterham School.

Landscape character
• Tree cover on Harestone Valley Road is lower than on the western valley sides or on Harestone Hill, but mature trees particularly in the remaining gardens of older properties, and along the previous boundaries of older properties and in garden areas are an important feature of this area;

• Shorter and more open front gardens along the eastern side of Harestone Valley Road and Colburn Avenue;

• Copse and tree lines are important features of the boundary between this area and Character Area I; and

• Terracing and steep banks characterise some of the large plots on the steeper lower slopes of the valley as at the former Marie Curie Hospice. However, most of the development in this area has been without the use of retaining walls and with houses set into the slopes or shallow terraces.

Townscape
• United Reformed Church, set amongst the trees, is a local landmark and the former Marie Curie Hospice main building, set in its ornamental tree and shrub grounds, is a key feature of the area;

• Along the roads the area has a consistent character, with predominately detached houses that are set out in a regular rhythm and consistent building line;

• Houses step down the hillside;

• The Church at the junction of Harestone Valley Road and Harestone Hill is a distinct landmark that creates a positive gateway into the area;

• Plots are regular and consistent in shape with building frontages parallel to the road;

• The northern end of Harestone Valley Road has a distinct sense of openness, that derives from lower boundary treatments and grassed verges between carriageway and pavements. There is a definite sense of approaching the town centre as you travel along Harestone Valley Road;

• Gaps between houses are consistent and often contain planting, such as trees and hedges;

• Important views are along Harestone Valley Road, down Loxford Road and out across the valley to the east from Tupwood Lane;

• The wooded backdrop on the east and western valley sides is an important part of the character area; Also mature and intense tree planting along property boundaries is an essential contribution to the over-arching character of the area;

• Roads vary within the area, with Harestone Valley Road being very formal, with two pavements either side and consistent alignment. The southern end of Harestone Hill is more informal, without pavements and grassed verges instead of pavements;

• There is generally limited on street car parking in the area, however there is some commuter parking near to the town centre; and

• Harestone Valley Road is level and therefore, buildings either side are sited in level with the road. In most other areas buildings on one side of the road are sited above road level to deal with the topography. Other than on Tupwood Lane it is uncharacteristic for buildings to be set lower than the road level.

Built form
• Predominately individually designed detached houses, with some groups of a similar design;

• A number of large Victorian / Edwardian houses remain in the area;

• Within each cul-de-sac houses tend to be designed in a coherent architectural style as they typically have been developed together;

• Houses are predominately mostly 2 storeys high with some 1 storey buildings on Harestone Valley Road and Tupwood Lane; and

• On Tupwood Lane houses have been designed in a particular way with the slope, so that they appear very low from the road, but step down the slope;

Vegetation and hard landscape
• Large trees are an important feature of much of Harestone Valley Road and Harestone Hill;

• Lines of trees on rear boundaries and separating plots add to the overall character and tree canopy;

• Tree Preservation Orders cover extensive areas of woodland, in particular the area around the former Marie Curie Hospice;

• More mature high evergreen hedges along Harestone Hill and parts of Harestone Valley Road;

• Lower hedges to northern stretch of Harestone Valley Road and along Colburn Road;

• Mature Horse Chestnuts; and

• Tarmac paths to each side of most roads with the exception of no pavements to the upper part of Harestone Hill which is a transition to the countryside beyond.

Boundary Treatment
• The predominant boundary treatment is hedges. However, these vary with lower hedges that are well trimmed, leading to a more open character; and higher hedges, more natural with additional shrub planting; but

• There is a greater variety of frontage treatment to the incremental development over the 20th century and into the 21st with grass verges and ornamental shrubbery being common.

Opportunity and threats
There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
Figure D4-6: Due to the topography, buildings tend to be set above road level. Tupwood Lane is an exception to this where a whole series of buildings are set below road level and allow good views to open countryside.

Figure D7: Development on Tupwood Lane

Figure D8: Large Victorian house on Harestone Hill

Figure D10: Colburn Avenue

Figure D9: Development on Harestone Valley Road

Figure D11: Development on Harestone Hill

Figure D12: Trees on Harestone Hill
**E - Dunedin Drive**

**Location and Setting**

This character area lies at the south-eastern edge of Harestone. It is a distinct pocket of development set around Dunedin Drive. The area also includes the lower end of Harestone Lane that provides access predominantly to the school. The area is characterised by the steep topography that heavily influences the development form.

To the south and west its setting is wooded with a clearly defined edge to the area, except for where it abuts the school grounds. On Harestone Lane a hedge and trees separate the school from the area, maintaining a contrast between the setting and the area.

Woodland and tree cover separate the area from Character Area C and Character Area D.

There are extensive views east from the area to Harestone Hill and along the valley southwards, because the area forms a more open area within the wooded slopes in views from Harestone Hill. Views from the valley bottom are mainly blocked by the school buildings, tree cover and housing along the valley floor.

**Landscape character**

- The area is distinguished by its steep slopes;
- Houses are set in open grassed gardens on banks; and
- Tree cover is younger and much less dense.

**Townscape**

- Due to houses being set lower than the road level and wide gaps between buildings, views exist across the valley. These further enhance the sense of openness;

**Built form**

- Dunedin Drive has a very open character as buildings are set back from the road behind grass verges or embankments, depending on whether they are located on the eastern or western side of the road;
- Building plots are consistent, but angled in relation to the road; and
- In line with the plot pattern, building frontages are also angled.

**Boundary Treatment**

- Houses are set behind grassed front gardens or on top of grassed embankments; and
- Typically there are no boundary treatments in the form of hedges, walls or railings.

**Opportunity and threats**

There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
F - Town Centre Edge

Location and Setting

This character area lies to the south of the town centre. It is an area more akin to the town centre as it includes flatted development only. It is unusual for the study area as a whole. However, the distinct character of this area does not automatically suggest that it is an area of high quality character that should be preserved in the way it is.

Character Area F sits on the lower gentler slopes above the town centre to the north and is separated from Character Area H by a strong belt of trees and the open grounds of the Croudace building.

It is one of less prominent parts of Harestone Valley, although the tree cover does form the backcloth to views of the United Reformed Church from Mount Pleasant Road.

Landscape character

- Large grounds with good tree cover giving a strong sense of enclosure;
- Distinctive pattern of open grassed banks with large trees around 1960s development; and
- Buildings sit of terraced landform between Harestone Hill and Tupwood Lane.

Townscape

- The area consists of distinct groups of blocks of flats. Each of these is inward looking with the access to each block from a central space. Each of the developments, consisting of 3-7 blocks feels private;
- These are 'blocks in space' with no transition from public to private, such as front gardens; and
- Despite the more intense development form the area feels spacious due to the large areas of open space between buildings.

Built form

- Blocks of flats are from the 1960s, flat roofed and buildings with little articulation; and
- Materials are brown or yellow brick with wood panelling.

Vegetation and hard landscape

- Heavy tree cover along Harestone Hill and to a lesser extent to Tupwood Lane.

Boundary Treatment

- No boundary treatments to groundfloor units or individual blocks of flats. This gives the area a spacious character;
- To the road each of the developments is set back behind a generous area of lawn and trees;
- Frontage to Harestone Hill is defined by a brick wall and dense tree cover; and
- Tree lines define boundaries to grounds.

Opportunity and threats

There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.

Figure F2-F3: Typical development form

Figure F4: Garage courts are not a positive contribution to the character
G - Clareville Road

Location and Setting
This character area lies immediately to the south of the town centre, however it has very little relationship with it, either in use or character.

A strong tree belt separates the area from the town centre.

Landscape character
- Part walled and tree lined narrow enclosed road along Clareville Road;
- Walled frontage with mature trees to Harestone Hill; and
- Generous back gardens to older housing.

Townscape
- A small number of large detached Victorian villas set the character for this area;
- House are set in large plots with generous space in between them;
- Most of them are set on top of an embankment, making them even more prominent, but also creating privacy;
- The road is highly enclosed by vegetation and close boarded fence on one side and embankments on the other. This adds to the feel of it being a tucked away location;
- The Clares is well integrated and surrounded by a historic boundary wall; and
- The houses are very much embedded in greenery and surrounded at front and back by tall vegetation and groups of trees.

Built form
- Large detached individually designed Victorian villas.

Vegetation and hard landscape
- 50% of the Character Area is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

Boundary Treatment
- Hedges or grassed embankments and brick walls.

Opportunities and threats
- Clareville Road retains its Victorian secluded character. Proximity to the town centre makes this area potentially vulnerable to the loss of this distinctive part of Harestone Valley through redevelopment.

For additional generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
H - West Tupwood Lane

Location and Setting
The area lies to the West of Tupwood Lane and includes a series of culs-de-sac developments. These are located on the side of the valley with the land sloping steeply. From the culs-de-sac views exist across the valley.

Character Area I sits above Harestone Hill with the most southerly part on the flatter ground and the remainder on slopes falling to the west and north.

This area is one of the most prominent parts of Harestone Valley and can be seen from many views from the western side of the valley, from Church Hill and in long and panoramic views over to the east side of the valley from the south west within the Area of Great Landscape Value.

Important views exist across the valley to the western slopes and the spire of St Mary's Church set in its tree cover.

The area blends into the higher tree covered slopes of Character Area D and shares similar characteristics with Character Area I.

The tree cover in the area blends into the adjacent wooded rural setting at the southern end of Tupwood Lane. The tree cover in this area is important, because it forms the skyline in views of Harestone Hill.

A house to the immediate south of the area, on the west side of Tupwood Lane, is included in the Historic records as the Victorian home to Queen Victoria's dentist. The entrance court dates from this period. The tree covered surrounds to the house are important to the setting of the character area.

Landscape character
- A variety of plot sizes and shapes giving rise to a complex area, further complicated by the sloping landform;
- Important belts of mature trees running south-west to north-east through the area;
- Tree cover is a remnant of the Victorian and Edwardian vegetation pattern in this area;
- At the southern end there is a transition to a country lane and countryside beyond; and
- Plot frontage depths vary considerably with a variety of treatment.

Townscape
- The area is characterised by a series of culs-de-sac. Some of the original road frontage development still remains, although the coherent structure has been weakened by access into culs-de-sac;
- Houses step down the hillside;
- Each cul-de-sac forms a sub-character area of its own as each has been developed coherently adopting one architectural language;
- Common to all culs-de-sac is their sense of openness. This is partly due the sloping land allowing open views across the valley and grassed front gardens without boundary treatments; and
- The character of Tupwood Lane is distinctive due to its informal design layout of the road. However, the historic development of the area and backland development have led to a less consistent development pattern than in other areas in Harestone Valley, for example East of Tupwood Lane.

Built form
- Apart from a small area to the south all houses are detached houses, 1 or 2 storeys high;
- On single plots between the culs-de-sac large Victorian Villas remain; and
- In the south a distinct pocket of development contains 3 storey blocks of flats. This development form is uncharacteristic for the area.

Vegetation and hard landscape
- There exist large groups of trees that are important to the overall green character of Caterham. Most of the tree planting is focused along the road and in particular property boundaries;
- Tree Preservation Orders cover some parts of this area, in particular at The Copse, Woolhams and the North Downs Hospital site; and
- A mix of hedge types.

Boundary Treatment
- On Tupwood Lane, boundaries are mixed with hedges, trees, shrub planting and open frontages; and
- Mostly within the culs-de-sac there is no boundary treatment and houses are set behind grassed front gardens and embankments.

Opportunity and threats
There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
Figure H2: Tupwood Lane: At southern end of character area: the road is more open and levels out before it continues into the Green Belt and further woodlands.

Figure H 3-4: Typical house on Tupwood Lane

Figure H 5-6: Cul-de-sac: Alexanders Walk

Figure H 7: Cul-de-sac: The Copse
I- Tupwood Lane East

Location and Setting

This character area lies east of Tupwood Lane. This area is in the Green Belt.

Character Area I sits on flatter ground before the land drops steeply away to the east. These steep slopes are heavily wooded and form a backdrop to the character area.

The tree cover in the area blends into the adjacent wooded rural setting at the southern end of Tupwood Lane. The tree cover in this area forms the skyline in views of Harestone.

Landscape character

- House plots form a gentle rhythm of houses set back behind open or enclosed gardens with mature trees along Tupwood Lane;
- Trees and mature shrub or hedged boundaries divide the plots; and
- One Tree Preservation Order but tree cover within the area makes an important contribution to the character of this area.

Built form

- Individually designed detached houses of 1-2 storeys. Some Victorian villas remaining.

Vegetation and hard landscape

- Several very good specimen trees along Tupwood Lane.

Boundary Treatment

- Hedges and boundary planting, partly very natural in character or open frontages with buildings set back behind large front gardens; and
- No gates or walls.

Opportunity and threats

There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.
**J - Greenwood Gardens**

**Location and Setting**

This character area is centred around Godstone Road. Although the character area includes some other houses, its overarching character is set by the distinct 1960s housing.

This character Area lies on the much flatter lower slopes of Harestone Hill where it abuts Godstone Road. It appears separate from its immediate setting which varies in character.

Beyond Godstone Road lies open land which is tree covered and leads up to the AONB.

South of the area is White Knobs recreation ground beyond which lies the steep wooded east facing slope of Harestone Hill. Trees in the rear gardens to character area D form a important backcloth to the area, separating the two character areas and thus reinforcing the separate identities.

**Landscape character**

- This small area has a distinctive landscape character forming a setting to the surrounding houses;
- A small well maintained ‘green’ forms the centre of this development creating as sense of place and community;
- Small grassed front verges and small hedged backgardens; and
- Frontage to Godstone Road softened by wide grass area with mature trees and front hedge.

**Townscape**

- A comprehensive development with short terraces set around a central space; and
- Open and welcoming atmosphere, with open front gardens.

**Built form**

- Small, flat roofed terrace houses of 1960s design, with white timber and large windows.

**Vegetation and hard landscape**

- Collection of ornamental trees;
- Most of the area is covered by a Tree Preservation Order; and
- Good specimen Copper Beeches.

**Boundary Treatment**

- No boundary treatment other than low walls or hedges; and
- Typically open front gardens or paved area to accommodate car parking.

**Opportunities and threats**

- The character of this area would be significantly harmed if parts of it would be redeveloped.
- Also small alterations to existing dwellings such as pitched roof extensions would impact negatively.

For additional generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.

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**Figure J1: Character diagram**

**Figure J2: Central open space creates focus for development**

**Figure J3-J4: Consistent architectural language and open front gardens create a coherent and welcoming development character**

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K - Caterham Gateway

Location and Setting
This character area is formed around Godstone Road and creates the eastern gateway into Caterham.

In comparison to the other character areas this one is of little coherence. The main character driver is the road. A key aim for this area is to develop a coherent and high quality character consistent with Caterham as a whole.

Character Area H sits in the narrow valley between Harestone Hill and the hills rising to the east towards the AONB. The rising wooded hillsides on both sides, together with the built form on the slopes, enclose the area and as views into the area are limited to from the immediate hillsides (for example the eastern end of Tupwood Lane).

The prominent skyline of trees to the north-west boundary of the Croudace building is important to the setting of this character area.

Landscape character
- The landform has been heavily modified west of Godstone Road to accommodate large commercial premises;
- The frontage treatment to Godstone Road varies but it is much better defined on the eastern side;
- The Victorian villa set within mature trees opposite the end of Tupwood Lane is prominent feature in views down this road; and
- View to trees in Character Area I.

Townscape
- Development varies widely from bulky office block to small Victorian terrace houses. Recent developments vary in scale and quality;
- The office block on the corner to Tupwood Lane creates a landmark, marking the approach into Caterham, although the building is of its time and not of the highest quality;
- Housing development west of Godstone Road is typically set back behind grassed verges and some tree planting;
- Frontages to Godstone Road are narrow; and
- Building frontage (west) is fragmented and does not present a coherent approach. The east frontage is built up and enclosed by predominately housing development of varying forms and styles.

Built form
- Development ranges from 2 storey houses to 5 storey office blocks. A recent 4 storey block of flats relates in bulk and massing to the taller blocks and addresses the road in a positive manner.

Vegetation and hard landscape
- Wide pavements on both sides of the road;
- Mixed fenced boundaries – often in poor condition;
- No Tree Preservation Orders but tree cover within, adjacent to and above the area makes an important contribution to the character of this area;
- Grassed banks to commercial properties with occasional groups of mature shrubs; and
- Extensive area of car parking and site access.

Boundary Treatment
- Boundary treatment varies and becomes gradually more urban towards the north. Hedges at the southern end of Godstone Road, low walls in the middle and buildings set at edge of pavements towards the north;
- Low brick walls on eastern side of Godstone Road and on western side at northern end;
- Low brick walls continue around the Croudace building and site; and
- Railings along south side of Tupwood Lane in poor condition.

Opportunity and threats
There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.

Figure K1: Victorian terrace at southern end of Godstone Road
Figure K2: 60s office development form negative landmark due to its bulk and massing
Figure K3: Residential development set back behind grassed lawn
Figure K4: Recent residential character or appropriate urban character
Figure K5: Character diagram
Figure K6: Victorian villa forms focal point when viewed from Tupwood Lane
**Location and Setting**
This character area is located adjacent to the town centre. It is closely related to the centre in terms of uses. It is a discreet development area including a small pocket of housing and larger mixed use buildings.

**Landscape character**
The landscape is characterised by the treed backdrop of the areas to the east and south. Also, the land lies higher to the east and south so that the tree skyline appears higher. Within the area a couple of distinct feature trees add to the character.

**Townscape**
- This is an inward looking development pocket that bears little relationship to the surrounding area;
- Car parking is dominant in the street scene with some on-street car parking provisions. Larger surface car parks are landscaped and well integrated.

**Built form**
- A distinct pocket of detached 2 storey houses that are located on small plots;
- Large, 3 storey mixed use buildings at the road frontage and the southern edge; and
- Predominately red brick with some light render.

**Boundary Treatment**
The area is partly commercial and there are typically no boundary treatments. Buildings are either set at pavement edge or behind front lawns and some low landscaping.
Boundaries to residential houses include low hedges and railings.

**Opportunity and threats**
There are no specific ones, for generic threats and opportunities refer to the summary at the end of the document.

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**Figure 1: Character diagram**
- Level change
- Key views
- Tree groups

**Figure 2: Mature trees provide focal points within the development**

**Figure 3: Level change to Clareville Road**

**Figure 4: Mixed use building**

**Figure 5: Residential development with trees and church in background.**
6 Summary

Character Summary

In summary, Harestone has a positive and distinctive residential character, which is a result of its topography, the siting and form of development and its strong landscape character. Its character is created primarily by:

- Landscape and planting as the dominant characteristic with the buildings being subservient to the landscape;
- In distant views from outside and across the valley, Harestone appears to be covered by a dense and uninterrupted tree cover;
- A fairly consistent development pattern along the main roads with regular plot widths and rhythm of built development, consistent building lines.
- Buildings along the main roads are mostly detached, individually designed houses of similar footprint and massing;
- In culs-de-sac development is coherent in terms of architecture, landscape and boundary treatment;
- Parking is provided on plot in a discreet form with little on-street parking.

There are local variations in character within the Harestone Valley with the development in some character areas contributing more or less strongly to the established character of the area as a whole. The assessment of two of the character areas, Caterham Gateway and Eothen Close, has concluded that they do not share the special residential character of the area as a whole and it is recommended that these parts of the area should be excluded from the policy area.

Local policy that has been in operation for around 40 years has helped to retain the character of the area, however many of the changes to Harestone have been a result of more recent national planning policy and a boom in the demand for new development in accordance with the former national Planning Policy Statement 3 ‘Housing’. As a consequence some uncharacteristic design and layout features have been introduced which have tended to dilute the distinctive character of the wider area, and individual character areas.

Threats

Threats to the character of the area may arise through proposals for development that require planning permission, but they may also come about through changes that property owners make under permitted development rights, without the need for planning permission. Threats include:

- Fragmentation of unified frontage treatment through the removal of hedgerows, hedges, shrubbery and grassed areas;
- Localised loss of tree cover which results in damage to the tree covered setting and leafy character and increased prominence of the built form;
- Loss of a well structured suburban character through the greater use of hard boundary treatment and overly prominent piers and gates;
- Loss of woodland or tree cover resulting in soil exposure and scars in the landscape;
- Uncharacteristic and poorly designed treatment of changes of level;
- Uncharacteristic planting schemes which would result in fragmentation of the streetscene and open views of large sites;
- Loss of ‘green’ gardens through the demands for more parking;
- Expansion of development into the private grounds and the loss of tree cover;
- Development at the edge of the area built at a higher density and with a more urban form, would erode the gentler traditional transition from rural to urban patterns in the Harestone Valley;
- Development that sits unsympathetically on contours has negative impact on the character and views of the area;
- Loss of Biodiversity through reduction of open space, loss of trees and the existing tree canopy;
- There is a threat of the loss of variety in the streetscene and the mixture of housing which define and make the area different, and
- Use of railings and more urban treatment to frontages which would not be in keeping with the local character.

Opportunities

- The immediate setting of St. Lawrence’s church should be retained and managed for historic landscape reasons.
- For the whole area there is the opportunity to improve the approach in particular along Godstone Road. This area has the potential to become a high quality gateway to Caterham as a whole.
- There is also the opportunity to ensure that the transition from built up area to woodland and countryside continues to be as positive as it currently is. Developments at increased density would not support this aim.

Harestone Character Assessment

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