Draft Allocation HSG06 Land off Salmons Way West

Response to the Tandridge Local Plan Inspector’s question regarding the loss of recreation ground to the south of the site in relation to paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012

During the session regarding housing allocations in Caterham, the Inspector asked the Council to consider the proposed housing allocation, HSG06, in the light of paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states that:

Existing open space sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements, or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss

Assessment

The land to the south part of draft allocation HSG06 is used by the OneSchool Global Campus (the OneSchool) as an informal playing pitch. The land is used for this purpose by virtue of its proximity to the campus. The land is not a community or recreation asset and is not used on a wider basis by the local community or any sports organisations.

The land is not identified in any of the Council’s Open space, sports and recreation facilities assessments. The site does not form part of an informal or formal network of sports and recreation facilities identified by the Council in its planning policy evidence base.

The site is not listed by the Council as a recreation ground available to hire or offering a wider community use.

The extent to which the paragraph is therefore applicable given the very narrow usage of the playing pitch, and the fact that it has not been identified in any assessment of recreational and sports facilities, is in itself limited.

Notwithstanding the limited relevance of paragraph 74 in the case of this site, consideration has been given to its criteria in response to the Inspector’s question. Therefore, with reference to the first criterion of paragraph 74, the site has not been assessed as to its contribution to the overall provision of sports facilities in the district. The Council has confirmed that the site does not form part of their recreation strategy. It does not provide a community facility and is accessible only to the OneSchool.

The draft allocation of HSG06 also requires a contribution at criterion VIII for a contribution to a multi-use games area, in common with allocations HSG08, HSG20 and policy TLP2B ‘Caterham Town and Local Centre’. Thus, the proposed development will contribute to the delivery of a multi-use games area in Caterham which will provide a community benefit, delivering better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable town centre location.

Furthermore, it is the intention of the OneSchool to provide a purpose-built sports facility on the site in order to improve the sports facilities for the school. The proposed sports facility would provide significantly improved sports facilities for the school. This is particularly given that the existing provision comprises informal hardstanding with no associated facilities.

The proposed development and required contribution to a Multi-use games area, will therefore also ensure that the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 is satisfied. Allied to this is the aspiration of the OneSchool to deliver a purpose-built sports facility in due course.
The third criterion is not satisfied. However, the wording of paragraph 74 does not require all three criteria to be met. Rather the wording means that only one of the criteria needs to be met for the requirement of the paragraph to be met in relation to existing open space, sports and recreational buildings.

Summary

- The land to the south part of allocation HSG06 is used as an informal playing pitch by OneSchool.
- The land is not accessible to the wider community or to any sports clubs or groups.
- The land is not identified in any of the Council’s assessment relating to existing provision of sports facilities or the wider need in the District.
- The pitch is not identified by the Council for hire or as a community facility.
- It is the aspiration of the OneSchool to build a sports facility in proximity to the campus in due course.
- In common with several allocations of sites in Caterham and the policy relating to development in the town centre, the draft allocation requires a contribution to a multi-use games area. This will result in a better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- The relevant criteria of paragraph 74 are therefore satisfied.