CATERHAM VALLEY AND HILL
TOWN DESIGN STATEMENT

A community vision for the next 20 years

MARCH 2017
The Caterham Town Design Statement captures Caterham community’s vision of how local people would like their Valley and Hill town centres to evolve over the next 20 years.

It was created through extensive public consultation between March 2015 and March 2017.

It comes from the premise that stewarding, creating and maintaining a pleasant, vibrant townscape with a strong infrastructure will have a positive impact on those who live, work, relax in and visit Caterham.

The statement primarily captures ‘what’ people of Caterham want (with some suggestions of ‘how’ this may be achieved).

It is a broad brushstroke vision and, as such, does not offer detailed solutions and specifications.

It is a non-statutory document to be used as guidance in the wider planning process alongside other planning documents.

Below is a summary of the ‘Community Vision’ for Caterham:

ACCESS AND PARKING: Getting into and around Caterham’s town centres, roads, buildings, pavements, crossings and public areas is stress-free, safe, affordable and enjoyable by day and night for people of all ages, whatever their mode of transport or mobility status. Parking stresses are alleviated. (see p35 for details)

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY: Caterham’s proximity to, and excellent transport links with Gatwick, London and the M25 offer a wide variety of business the benefits of big-city connections combined with the tranquility and affordability of a small town. Business, retail and leisure premises offer affordable rents and rates and provide well-serviced accommodation for businesses of all sizes. (see p39 for details)

DEVELOPMENT: Development and redevelopment have re-energised Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres, providing diverse mixed-use buildings for retail, business, leisure and culture, public sector and residential. Character buildings have been retained, preserved and enhanced; complemented by good quality, contemporary design for new buildings. (see p43 for details)

LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS: Caterham’s Surrey Hills setting, natural charm, history and heritage are considered by all to be central to the town’s appeal, economic viability and success and are placed at the heart of town centre planning. (see p46 for details)

LEISURE AND CULTURE: Caterham Valley and Hill centres are vibrant day and evening social destinations, attracting visitors and residents of all ages with a range of cultural and recreational leisure pursuits. A full calendar of activities and events in attractive public spaces enriches the ‘experiences’ of residents and visitors. Digital technology provides information to help people enjoy all that Caterham has to offer. (see p49 for details)

PUBLIC SECTOR: Caterham has accessible, inclusive modern public services, responsive and tailored to meet the diverse needs of communities and individuals of all ages and abilities. (see p53 for details)

PUBLIC SPACES: Caterham has attractive public spaces within and close to its Hill and Valley Centres. These act as social hubs for residents and visitors and provide the setting for cultural events and festivities. Developments incorporate public spaces and there is a shift towards pedestrianisation in both Valley and Hill centres. (see p55 for details)

RETAIL: Caterham Hill and Valley are diverse and appealing retail destinations, enjoyed by visitors and residents alike for their vibrant mix of larger stores and small independent specialist shops and cafes. (see p57 for details)

STREETSCAPE: Caterham Valley and Hill centres have unique and pleasing streetscapes that enhance their identity and make them vibrant and pleasant places to live, work, relax and visit. (see p59 for details)
Several buildings were considered by the consultation group to be particularly valuable assets to Caterham (either for form/function/both). The Town Design statement advises that these buildings receive particular ‘stewardship’ to ensure their valuable form or function is enhanced/preserved within future planning schemes. Overleaf are the recommended outcomes for each of the buildings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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CATERHAM HILL AND VALLEY CENTRES

CATERHAM VALLEY

ROSE AND YOUNG SITE An attractive high quality redevelopment as soon as possible is key to improving the Valley offering. Due weight should be given to how it can best improve the wider economy, streetscape and parking.

QUADRANT HOUSE Re-develop into architecturally appealing mixed-use premises that encourage a variety of smaller retail and business enterprise uses. Resist conversion to residential in order to support the economic and social sustainability of the town centre.

TIMBER HILL POLICE STATION AND ST JOHNS AMBULANCE Retain existing uses within the town but consider the best location for them. Resist wholesale conversion to residential. Re-purpose as a vibrant multi-use asset to draw people to the park. e.g. cafe, specialist independent retail, craft workshops, live/work, visitors’ community advice, click and collect centre etc.

TIMBER HILL RECREATIONAL PARK The entire park should be preserved, enhanced and promoted as an exemplar of the social, economic and environmental benefits of urban green space. There is the potential for additional uses that would improve the overall visitor and shopping proposition for the town. Careful design and landscaping is paramount, avoiding hard standing and permanent new buildings. Provide public toilets to serve the park.

CHURCH WALK, MORRISONS SUPERMARKET, CAR PARK AND CHURCH WALK SERVICE AREA A The layout of the entire site and access to the rest of the town could be significantly improved - in stages but working to a coherent plan. Better flow through, to resources such as Soper Hall and the independent shops on Godstone Road would benefit everyone. Invert more variety - mixed use is to be encouraged, perhaps by a pedestrian ‘lanes’ area for small specialist shops. With careful design there could be better opportunities for shops from the smallest to the largest. There is also a need for a public marketplace e.g. in what is now the western service area. The upper car park deck could also be used in this way e.g. on a Sunday.

WAITROSE SUPERMARKET, CAR PARK AND SERVICE AREA Preserve anchor retail function by enabling the site to be re-designed to meet modern needs regarding supermarket shopping, parking and deliveries. This should include the implications of increased home delivery and internet click and collect.

CATERHAM STATION Update station and car park, maintaining historic facade. Re-purpose car park to provide more flexible/adaptable and future-friendly parking solutions. Include in any new town centre scheme, taking account of traffic flows. Establish whether more ambitious proposals for decking over are feasible (e.g. access from Stafford Road).
WE NEED TO LOOK AFTER PARTICULAR BUILDINGS OR SITES. THEY ARE IMPORTANT FOR OUR TOWN, WHETHER IT’S BECAUSE OF HOW THEY LOOK, OR THE ROLE THEY PLAY IN TOWN LIFE.
INTRODUCTION

What is the Town Centre Design Statement?
The town design statement describes Caterham community’s vision of how they would like their Valley and Hill town centres to evolve over the next 20 years. We believe that stewarding, creating and maintaining a pleasant, vibrant townscape with a strong infrastructure will have a positive impact on present and future generations who live, work, relax in and visit Caterham.

Who Created the Town Design Statement?
This first edition of Caterham Town Centre Design Statement was developed collaboratively by the town’s community between March 2015 and March 2017. Around 500 residents and businesses spent over 650 hours creating the Statement. It will continue to evolve and be updated by the community into the future. (see p61 ‘CONSULTATION’ for further details.)

About Caterham:
Caterham is a small town set amid attractive wooded hills and key areas of green belt in the north east corner of Surrey in Tandridge District, near to the North Downs. Caterham is close to London, Gatwick Airport and the M25. It has two main centres separated by a steep hill, each with its own distinctive character: Caterham on the Hill, with its strong leisure offer, ‘village feel’ and ancient church on the High Street, is the original medieval settlement. Caterham Valley - dating from the arrival of the railway in 1856, has a culture and retail focus. The town has a military heritage, the former Guards Barracks and RAF Kenley Battle of Britain airfield being close by. Caterham’s two centres have seen 150 years of increasing development and are surrounded by residential areas of varying density. The current population of c. 22,000 is split c 60% in Caterham-on-the-Hill and 40% in Caterham Valley with numbers increasing to 40,000, within 10 minutes drive and 250,000 within 20 minutes.

Why does Caterham need a Town Centre Design Statement?
To suggest ways in which Caterham adapts and thrives in fast changing times to become an attractive, resilient, self-sufficient, vibrant town that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

What does The Town Centre Design Statement address?
The Town Design Statement captures the community’s overview of what should be considered when planning decisions are made. It suggests ways in which Caterham could address key challenges high on the list of concerns from local residents and businesses.

Critical assets:
Identify, protect, improve and preserve architectural and functional assets that are in danger of being lost through planning decisions.

Parking and traffic:
Alleviate congestion, address commuter parking issues and improve access to, within and between Caterham’s Hill and Valley Centres.

Development purpose:
There are concerns that Caterham has been overdeveloped for residential use. New brownfield sites and Permitted Development for residential use have put pressure on public services, parking and infrastructure whilst failing to provide corresponding benefits to the community. There is a need for more mixed purpose development and business premises fit for 21st Century enterprise.

Hill and Valley centres:
Rejuvenate, celebrate and link Caterham’s two centres into well-designed, attractive, viable, resilient places and spaces. Retaining the individuality of the separate Valley and Hill centres, whilst ensuring they become more connected and mutually supportive.

Development quality:
Ad hoc and poor quality development over recent decades has led to shabby streetscapes and increased density in Caterham’s built environment. Future development needs to be carefully planned to combine the best of the new, enhancing Caterham’s character and heritage and driving up design standards.

Image: Transform local and external perceptions of Caterham as a town that punches below its weight to one whose appearance and success is in keeping with its enviable Surrey setting and proximity to London.
What it is:

- A vision – capturing the collective wisdom of residents and businesses, defining the place we want to live, work and relax in.
- A statement – of community involvement in Caterham - the extent to which local people value their town and are committed to its future success.
- A marker – ensuring the community are active participants in the planning and design process, not passive recipients of proposals made by others.
- An agenda – that sets out local priorities and the challenges to be overcome in achieving them.
- A spotlight – focusing on key town centre sites and development issues, with the aim of informing and assisting decision makers.
- A debate – accessible and thought-provoking, for EVERYONE to engage with and contribute ideas to.

What it isn’t:

- A set of ready-made solutions – achievable in the short term and ready to go.
- Customised, these agreed objectives are an important first step towards a longer-term view.
- Detailed planning policies or design guidance – these elements are the responsibility of the new Neighbourhood Plan and Masterplan.
- An unchanging view, set in stone – change is inevitable, and some can be certain of the future challenges and opportunities. A willingness to adapt and change priorities in the light of experience will be important.

Retail, leisure and business offer:

To compete with neighbouring towns, Caterham needs good lease and business incentives and suitable premises to attract retail, leisure and commercial enterprise, increase local employment and reduce reliance on commuting. An existing calendar of town centre ‘experiences’, will extend appeal beyond shopping, eating and traditional leisure.

Infrastructure: Upgrading drainage systems in Hill and Valley will eliminate town centre flooding.

Particular topics featured throughout the document include improved access for retail and commuter parking, general circulation, improved retail, leisure and overall look and diversity of both Hill and Valley centres. These are high on the list of suggestions from local residents and businesses.

Design Statement covers:

- Critical Assets
- Access and Parking
- Business and Economy
- Development
- Landscape
- Heritage
- Historic Buildings
- Leisure and Culture
- Public Sector
- Public Spaces
- Retail
- Streetscape

*see appendix for more detail on how these themes were identified.
How does it work with other plans?
The Town Design Statement is one of four active planning documents intended to help guide the future of Caterham. The other three plans deal with detailed and specific aspects of Caterham development, such as buildings, business and economy, whereas the Town Design Statement provides broad visionary guidance from a community perspective.

Tandridge District Council’s Masterplan considers integrated development opportunities for the Valley and Hill centres, rather than piecemeal planning applications. The Neighbourhood Plan prepared by the Parish Councils and the community will be used to help achieve this and meet local needs. See www.cr3forum.co.uk

The Business Improvement District for the Valley looks at aspects of retail and economy.

Town Design Statement (this document) supports the Masterplan, Neighbourhood Plan and Business Improvement District by providing a grassroots, community-led vision as part of the brief for the Masterplan. It is a non-statutory input to decision making.

Tandridge is revising a district wide plan, which includes housing, the economy, services, green belt and green spaces. Both Town Design Statement and Neighbourhood Plan as community led exercises, will inform that plan from a more local perspective.

HAVE YOUR SAY
Active local participation is fundamental to Caterham’s new approach to town planning.

What are your concerns and priorities for the future of Caterham?

You can see this plan, plus links to the others and express your own views at www.towndesign.net

TOWN DESIGN STATEMENT
Community vision of the town’s look and feel

The Town Centre Design Statement will be taken into account by the three other plans currently being developed for the area as well as the Valley’s new Business Improvement District initiative.

CATERHAM TOWN CENTRE DESIGN STATEMENT

Neighbourhood Plan
Further defines the planning policies for the CR3 area* only
* the community group formed by the parish councils of Caterham Valley, Hill, Whyteleafe and Chaldon

THE CR3 FORUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Commissions April 2017, with 90%+ businesses in favour. £500,000 (equivalent to 2% of business rates), delivering specific improvements, funded by Caterham Valley businesses over five years.

THE MASTERPLAN

Covers development in Caterham Valley centre in more detail
GUIDING THEMES

Imaginative approach: Caterham’s strengths and opportunities far outnumber its challenges. The Town Centre Design Statement resolves to ‘make the best of what we have’ and, wherever possible, turn perceived problems on their head and use them as advantages and points of difference. There is much latent potential within the town and this needs to be used creatively.

Look ahead: We are in a time of social, economic and environmental change. Whether that is for the better or worse in Caterham depends on how successful we are in anticipating and planning ahead. Predictions around society, culture, population, environment, sustainability and technology e.g. increasing longevity, longer retirement, changing family structures, automation, driverless cars, online retail etc. will have an immeasurable impact on future town centre needs in the long term. In the future pressure will build to attain greater sustainability economically, socially and environmentally. Recognise and plan for these changes, taking a hypothetical view, where appropriate, of how wider societal changes could potentially impact on Caterham’s Town Centres.

Work together: Encourage collaborative working so that the new Neighbourhood Plan, Masterplan and Business Improvement District are better understood and brought together for the good of Caterham. The cornerstone of effective place-making is a partnership of local interests and local Councils, decisive intervention, single-minded pursuit of statutory powers, commercial influence and investment opportunities to uphold priorities for the town.

Communicate Caterham’s offer: Develop a distinctive identity for the town, ensuring that assets and benefits are recognised by residents and prospective visitors/investors. Success depends on the community, businesses and the council uniting around a strong sense of what makes the town unique, and communicating this powerfully and persuasively to attract inward investment and visitors to the town.

Think widely: Be wary of unrealistic grand visions, whilst taking an area wide approach that encompasses the economic, social and environmental needs for the future success of the Valley and Hill centres. For instance, combining key commercial sites and coordinating cultural, leisure and public service offers. (The Masterplan moves away from unplanned piecemeal development.)

Think infrastructure: Ensure development considers provision of vital supporting services in a more enlightened and integrated way to ensure they no longer suffer from sheer volume of development, an ad-hoc approach and the fragmentation of responsibility.

Ask people: Encourage local people to participate in the design process from inception, before decisions are made and planning applications submitted. This can make the planning process more efficient, reveal some fresh ideas and prevent anger and disillusionment.

Keep the vision fresh: The Town Centre Design Statement represents the best expression of the community’s vision at the present point in time. It cannot be future proof and will need to evolve as our own perceptions change, along with external influences such as government policy. It will be regularly updated by a community panel that will liaise with the Council and its representatives, who are primarily responsible for translating ideas into action.
THE VISION: The assets that are integral to the town (the buildings, green spaces, vacant sites and educational, cultural, leisure and community facilities that do or could work together to promote economic growth and social wellbeing) are identified and protected. It is understood by all stakeholders that their success or failure would have a lasting impact on the town.

CRITICAL ASSETS

This criticality may be because of the wider contribution that assets make to townscape and streetscape (including the regeneration potential offered by derelict or obsolete buildings). It may be because of critical uses that must be safeguarded, for example the provision of public services or facilities.

The following assets are considered critical to the future of the two main retail and commercial centres by contributors to this Town Design consultation process. Other assets that strongly support the overall sustainability of Caterham, without necessarily being within the two centres, are also mentioned.

ROSE AND YOUNG SITE

Located at the far end of the main thoroughfare of Croydon Road

Derelict and unloved for over 20 years

Rival planning applications now granted for a Premier Inn hotel or a mixed-use retail and residential scheme

Tandridge District Council is progressing a Compulsory Purchase Order

Why this site is critical:

- Symbolic importance of redevelopment to kick start rejuvenation
- Visually prominent gateway site for the Valley centre
- Location would allow a striking landmark building of high architectural quality
- Strategic importance as a key component of a possible new town centre
- Hotel use would bring more variety and custom to the town, drawing footfall to the neglected northern end

Ideal outcome:

An attractive high quality redevelopment as soon as possible is key to improving the Valley offering. Due weight should be given to how it can best improve the wider economy, streetscape and parking.
QUADRANT HOUSE

A large prominent site along the main Croydon Road frontage
Mixed use premises that include small business and professional services units
An unattractive and out of date 1960’s building
Premises do not meet modern retail and business needs
Conversion of office space to residential has been sought via permitted development rights

Why this site is critical:
- A large obsolete building that offers significant regeneration potential to the town
- Opportunity for more varied quality architecture along an extensive frontage that includes Rose and Young. Together they could transform the Valley centre
- Strategic importance as a key component of a possible new town centre
- Crucial to retain mixed use (especially small business and start up premises) within the town centre, in order to avoid a monoculture of large retail and residential blocks

Ideal outcome: Re-develop into architecturally appealing mixed-use premises that encourage a variety of smaller retail and business enterprise uses. Resist conversion to residential in order to support the economic and social sustainability of the town centre.

TIMBER HILL POLICE STATION AND ST JOHNS AMBULANCE

Close to the main shopping thoroughfare, in an attractive location beside Timber Hill Park
A functional modern building housing two important public services
Threatened with closure and conversion to residential which would increase pressure on town infrastructure

Why this site is critical:
- Retaining Police Community Support Officer role (PCSO) and first aid response to support public confidence and safety in a busy urban area
- Retaining non-residential town centre assets in order to avoid a monoculture, especially of retirement flats
- The potential for a much-needed mixed use and marketplace venue in a central location adjoining the green oasis of the park

Recommended outcome: Retain existing uses within the town but consider the best location for them. Resist wholesale conversion to residential. Re-purpose as a vibrant multi-use asset to draw people to the park e.g. cafe, specialist independent retail, craft workshops, live/ work, visitor/community advice, click and collect etc.
TIMBER HILL RECREATIONAL PARK
Attractive green space and children’s playground enhanced by the
surrounding Victorian character streetscape together creating an
oasis within the town centre
Gifted under covenant to the people of Caterham by the Asprey
family for use as a public park
Has been considered for development in the emerging Local Plan and
its future is now being reviewed under the Masterplan

Why this site is critical:
• The jewel in the crown for the Valley – a rare community open space
  close to the town centre
• Potential to enhance the town experience e.g. benches, cafeteria to
  provide an oasis of calm for visitors, shoppers and workers. Could
  also be the venue for one-off air theatre, music and market events
• Associated Victorian character streetscape enhances the park
  conservation area

Recommended outcome: The entire park should be preserved,
enhanced and promoted as an exemplar of the social, economic and
environmental benefits of urban green space. There is the potential for
additional uses that would improve the overall visitor and shopping
proposition for the town. Careful design and landscaping is paramount,
avoiding hard standing and permanent new buildings. Introduce public
toilets to serve the park.

CHURCH WALK, MORRISON’S
SUPERMARKET, CAR PARK AND
SERVICE AREA A OF CHURCH WALK
Together these resources create the retail centre of gravity for the
Valley drawing shoppers in.

Some aspects (e.g. the service areas) do not make best use of the site
potential
There is little pedestrian connectivity through to other parts of
the town

Why this site is critical:
• A large site forming a key part of the current retail focus of
  Caterham Valley and pivotal to any future regeneration.
• The functions of supermarket, shopping precinct and car parking
  are essential for the success of Caterham. However it needs to be
  more of a multi-function retail hub rather than a supermarket and
  its add-ons
• Strategic importance as a key component of a possible new town
centre

Recommended outcome: The layout of the entire site and access
to the rest of the town could be significantly improved - in stages but
working to a coherent plan. Better flow through, to resources such as
Soper Hall and the independent shops on Godstone Road would benefit
everyone. Inject more variety - mixed use is to be encouraged, perhaps
by a pedestrian ‘lanes’ area for small specialist shops. With careful
design there could be better opportunities for shops from the smallest
to the largest. There is also a need for a public marketplace e.g. in what
is now the western service area. The upper car park deck could also be
used in this way e.g. on a Sunday.
CATERHAM IS IN DANGER OF CHANGING FOR THE WORSE, IT’S GETTING LESS FRIENDLY AND VILLAGE-LIKE, IF THAT HAPPENS, WE MIGHT AS WELL BE LIVING IN LONDON

WAITROSE SUPERMARKET, CAR PARK AND SERVICE AREA

Why this site is critical:
• A large and important anchor retail site, but the building is out of date with poor car parking access
• Critical mass with Morrisons, drawing shoppers into the town centre
• Strategic importance as a key component of a possible new town centre
• Needs to be planned jointly with Rose and Young and Quadrant House because of the parking and delivery issues along the service road – and because of the major combined contribution they could make to the town
• Opportunity to be considered jointly with the station site
• Opportunities for re-configuration or redevelopment to create a modern supermarket and help alleviate parking congestion
• Integration with overall town wide retail, business and commuter parking initiatives

Recommended outcome: Preserve anchor retail function by enabling the site to be re-designed to meet modern needs regarding supermarket shopping, parking and deliveries. This should include the implications of increased home delivery and internet click and collect.
CATERHAM STATION

A public transport hub central to the fortunes of Hill and Valley and now used by commuters from further afield following extension of the Oyster zone.

Although more people wish to work locally, the volume of commuting has increased. A footfall of 1.2 million journeys was recorded at the station during in 2015/16. The 06:35 train to London Victoria was judged to be the sixth most overcrowded service in England and Wales.

Use of the Victorian station exceeds its design capacity. It shares its car park with Waitrose.

Why this site is critical:

- Important to have a modern station that can cope with increasing demand, including better solutions for passenger drop off and pick up.
- Historic character façade but otherwise a large site with considerable potential.
- Strategic importance as a key component of a possible new town centre.
- May be combined with opportunities for adjacent Waitrose.
- Solving increased commuter parking critical to the viability of the town.
- Topography suggests that decking over might be an option. The space released above could be used for public open space and perhaps a covered pedestrianised area with retail, business, and residential components, integrated with the Waitrose site.
- Links from platform level to the old post office opposite the station via a tunnel. An opportunity for any future Station Rd development to use for improved pedestrian access.

Recommended outcome: Update station and car park, maintaining historic façade. Re-purpose car park to provide more flexible/adaptable and future-friendly parking solutions. Include in any new town centre scheme, taking account of traffic flows. Establish whether the more ambitious proposals for decking over are still feasible (e.g. access from Stafford Road).

SOPER HALL

One of the principal character buildings in the Valley centre.

Group heritage value with the Congregational Church and East Surrey Museum.

Run by the community, for the community.

Why this site is critical:

- Symbolic heritage building that enhances the Valley centre.
- Important mixed commercial and community centre with public functions.
- Potential to combine with Church Walk service area A for events and market space.

Recommended outcome: Preserve and enhance the building for wider community uses, possibly in conjunction with service area A. Any alterations should be in keeping with its historic character and integrity.

CATERHAM VALLEY LIBRARY

Well used and a valued cultural resource that makes the Valley centre much more than a shopping parade.

Why this site is critical:

Group heritage value with the Congregational Church and East Surrey Museum.

Recommended outcome: Preserve and enhance the building for wider community uses whilst considering any wider opportunities for reconfiguring the building to improve its facilities. Consider its functionality in relation to Timber Hill and the potential for a cultural quarter on the west side of the town centre, or for inclusion in the Timber Hill site.
CATERHAM VALLEY: OTHER IMPORTANT ASSETS

HISTORIC CHARACTER FACADES, STATION AVENUE, OPPOSITE THE STATION

Why this site is important:
- Adds historic character and distinctiveness to the Valley centre
- Positive first impression of the town for visitors arriving at the station (if restored)
- Group historic streetscape value with station frontage and East Surrey Museum
- Modern buildings generally supportive and in keeping
- The unused tunnel beneath Station Avenue could be re-opened for pedestrian access between the station and the “Post Office” side

Recommended outcome: Preserve and enhance. Include in a potential Conservation Area.

HISTORIC CHARACTER FACADES, GODSTONE RD

Why this site is important:
- Architectural variety and visual appeal supporting independent shops and businesses
- Group historic streetscape value with Miller Centre and St John’s Church
- Opportunities to restore and improve e.g. shop fronts

Recommended outcome: Preserve and enhance. Include in a potential Conservation Area.

EAST SURREY MUSEUM

Why this site is important:
- Symbolic heritage building
- Visually prominent gateway site

Recommended outcome: Retain and enhance the building and its museum function. Each supports the other.

MILLER CENTRE AND ST JOHN’S CHURCH

Why this site is important:
- Historic character buildings, formally a chapel forming a heritage nucleus, together with frontages along the Godstone Road
- Valuable community resource
- Miller Centre adds to the cultural offering as an amateur theatre and arts centre

Recommended outcome: Include in a Conservation Area.

OLD TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, GODSTONE RD

Why this site is important:
- Prominent gateway site but a drab building

Ideal outcome: Replace with a much better visual landmark should the opportunity arise.
CATERHAM-ON-THE-HILL: CRITICAL ASSETS

CEDAR TREE, OLD RECTORY AND HISTORIC HIGH STREET
Cedar tree and rectory are the symbolic gateway into Caterham Hill and a community focus for the Christmas lights. The High Street is a mix of character buildings that can support viability and more recent eyesores that undermine it. Unless planning improves it could decline.

It includes the character nucleus around the King and Queen, Blacksmiths Arms and adjoining buildings, including Park Street. This is key to the ‘village feel’ but parts are becoming shabby. Needs a more supportive environment for small shops and businesses, particularly improvements to the street scene and parking.

Why this site is critical:
• The High Street creates the ‘village feel’ so important to the success of the Hill centre and its small independent shops and businesses. It is though in need of serious improvement both in restoring the surviving character buildings and adding new ones that are more in keeping
• Opportunities to add high quality architecture and mixed use that will support economic vitality e.g. petrol station
• Opportunities to smarten up the streetscape – ornamental trees, benches, pocket gardens

Recommended outcome: Preserve and enhance, adding architectural vitality and visual appeal to the streetscape. Develop mixed use to support economic viability and consider initiatives to draw in residents and visitors.

RAGLAN PRECINCT (INC. CAR PARK AND ADJACENT TDC CAR PARK)
1960’s retail and residential block that, although of doubtful visual appeal, is the focus of shopping and parking for the Hill centre. Recent investment has seen an improvement in the retail offer. The layout does not work well, particularly the two disconnected parking areas and garage block.

Why this site is critical:
• The car parking is crucial to the success of the High Street
• A large retail hub site that could be upgraded and reconfigured
• More could be made of the small public open space
• Town End is a flood risk area where infrastructure is inadequate and in urgent need of improvement

Recommended outcome: Rationalise and improve, making better use of space including the car parking and service access.

CATERHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL
An important public asset for community events but not ideally located with poor parking and limited size.

Why this site is critical:
• The function is crucial but there may be opportunities for asset swap if a large multi-event public hall could be created elsewhere in the vicinity

Recommended outcome: Retain function, but could re-locate to an alternative central site
DOUGLAS BRUNTON, RECYCLING AND HEALTH CENTRES PLUS HILLCROFT SCHOOL

A large strategic site that includes a wide range of social, educational, environmental and health services.

Douglas Brunton Day Centre is part of the Council’s emergency planning response. It was used for that purpose for residents displaced during the 2016 floods.

The school and recycling centre cause congested on-street parking along Chaldon Road, a main bus route.

Why this site is critical:

- A community hub containing many essential public services that has evolved as a series of piecemeal buildings
- A large site that may offer future opportunities for rationalising and better use of space
- A flood risk area where infrastructure is inadequate and in urgent need of improvement

Recommended outcome: Retain the essential public functions but explore opportunities to reconfigure and enhance, by considering the site as a whole.

CATERHAM ON THE HILL: OTHER IMPORTANT ASSETS:

The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the Caterham Hill main centre is considerably strengthened by a range of supporting public facilities and open spaces nearby.

These include:

- LIBRARY
- WESTWAY COMMON
- TOWNSEND PARK
- QUEENS PARK
- DENE HOSPITAL (serving Valley and Hill)
- ST LAWRENCE’S AND ST MARY’S CHURCHES

KEEPING THE BEST OF THE OLD AND CREATING ARCHITECTURALLY APPEALING NEW BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES
**THE VISION:** Getting into and around Caterham’s town centres, roads, buildings, pavements, crossings and public areas is stress-free, safe, affordable and enjoyable by day and night for people of all ages, whatever their mode of transport or mobility status. Parking stresses are alleviated.

**SMARTER APPROACH TO PARKING**

Sufficient parking provision must be an integral part of any new developments in Caterham town, Valley or Hill areas, whether residential, commercial or retail. The negative impact of non-resident commuter traffic on parking should be mitigated. Residential streets and rail station parking filled with the cars of people who are not shopping, working or living in the town reduces off-peak use by those who do wish to visit and shop in the town centre. The community would like to see a well-publicised strategy to tackle this issue. Tactics might include dynamic parking technology to optimise existing parking facilities, rather than drastically increasing them. This would encourage off-peak drivers to spend longer in the town centre. An affordable, accessible park-and-ride scheme would also play a key role in liberating the town centre from parking overload, however those doing their supermarket shopping or purchasing large items still need to park close to where they shop. In short, parking should be appropriate for use, of good quality, well-posted and easy to find, with accessible EV charging points. Centralised taxi facilities (perhaps using service roads) and efficient online booking will facilitate use of taxis and help reduce congestion.

**FUTURE PREDICTIONS:** Current (severe) issues around parking may be superseded in the long term by the continued rise in internet shopping and click and collect along with the predicted advent of driverless vehicles. These are likely to transform Caterham’s parking situation, but in the short term, parking capacity remains a barrier to Caterham Valley and Hill centres flourishing. Increased numbers of electric cars will necessitate charging points throughout the town.
It would be great if the Freedom Pass worked for us – Londoners can get to us but we can’t go there because we’re not in Greater London.

Access not parking – An important development in thinking by community leaders is the conscious shift from regarding Caterham as a town beset by congestion and parking issues, to a town planning to optimise access to its centre. Relentlessly focusing on the end objective (accessing the town centre) rather than the means (driving and parking) gives rise to a subtle but powerful change in perspective.

Linking Hill and Valley – Tying an integrated view of all the individual components, as well as the overall strategic view of Caterham’s needs for movement and parking, creates a major element of the vision for the town centre. Planning and development schemes must ensure that offers complement one another between different sectors and areas of the town. Marketing efforts should be coordinated to accentuate the different characters of Caterham-on-the-Hill and Caterham Valley in a complementary way and more ‘corridors’ between the two centres developed. Services for buses must integrate well, with the flows of people between Hill and Valley, for shopping, leisure and commuting, with effective hubs in both locations.

More pedestrianised areas – A substantial body of research into successful retail and town centres identifies pedestrianisation as a major boost whose benefits include increased safety, spend, dwell times and traffic calming. The community strongly supports research into the benefits of introducing more traffic-free, pedestrianised areas in Caterham Hill and Valley centres as a way of enhancing the retail experience, fostering an increased sense of community and promoting an enjoyable café culture.

Connectivity and Permeability – The community supports a concerted effort to develop a highly permeable network with many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends to ease the movement of people and vehicles through different parts of the town, particularly town centre spaces. Caterham’s reputation for congestion detracts from its ability to compete with neighbouring shopping destinations. New schemes should be explored to encourage more journeys by foot and cycle and fewer by car as part of the effort to manage town centre parking issues. Caterham is a hilly town and one where residents could benefit from the dramatic mobility increase of battery assisted bicycles. All forms of potential transport links between Hill and Valley should be explored. Options to provide more underground parking should also be investigated as well as out-of-centre park and ride.

Future Predictions: Ideas for the future should support the introduction of driverless cars and electric vehicles as components of the town’s attractions. The Neighbourhood Plan notes an aspiration for a new Business and Technology Park, with a higher education facility able to act as a hub point for a driverless car scheme. The BID also calls for improved capacity and options for parking, to compete with neighbouring shopping destinations. New schemes should be explored to encourage more journeys by foot and cycle and fewer by car as part of the effort to manage town centre parking issues.

Capitalise on infrastructure investments – Making the most of Caterham’s enviable location is the essence of the community vision. Community groups are keen to develop a ‘when not if’ position for proposed investments in infrastructure such as a potential upgrade to the line from Caterham as part of a Thameslink project. A well-communicated strategy should be developed to take advantage of the likely benefits of any upgraded line and also to deal with the inevitable accompanying challenges relating to increased use of Caterham’s inclusion in Transport for London’s travel zone 6.
Additional runway capacity – Gatwick is one of the busiest single runway airports in the world. A second runway with a high-speed link with Heathrow would create a London twin hub. This would add weight to the need for a hotel to provide overnight accommodation for those visiting London or travelling to Gatwick.

Clear, accessible, timely access to information – The community vision is of a town centre which is ‘joined up’, well connected internally and with other parts of Caterham via attractive, well maintained and signposted roads, walkways, pedestrian zones, cycle routes, heritage trails, and affordable, frequent public transport. Parking information should be available throughout the area.

Peak time planning – As a commuter town, Caterham’s transport and parking infrastructure is under extreme pressure during peak times. Plans are needed to expand capacity during these busy times.

Support mixed-use – Avoid a town centre monoculture of large, mainstream retail/businesses plus residential. Ensure a healthy, sustainable, varied economy by retaining premises for mixed residential, business and retail use with plenty of affordable town centre options for small to medium enterprises, including ‘rent a desk’ schemes, co-working, small offices and shared work spaces. (See Neighbourhood Plan for more detail)

Support flexible working – Caterham has seen an influx of many highly skilled residents over the past two decades. Part of the vision is that a vibrant local economy is creating an environment where people are able to work flexibly from home or locally. This must be supported by widespread high-speed broadband and mobile services, flexible, dedicated working space, office-cafés and live work units throughout Caterham’s central areas.

Support for start-ups and entrepreneurs – There is popular support in the community for collaboration between community groups, local government, business groups and landlords to foster growth by creating a range of incentives for small / start-up enterprises, such as capped rents, short leases, versatile and affordable premises and first-rate technology and infrastructure.

Use Caterham’s location to attract business – It is clear that the town’s topography, wooded slopes and position as the largest settlement in a district that is almost entirely located in the Green Belt impose pressures and limitations on development. However, there is a strong feeling in the community that the combination of an idyllic Green Belt setting with proximity and links to London and Gatwick, offer a fantastic story for business. It is this narrative that needs to be developed to market the town. A stronger business economy will lift the whole town centre economy too, leading to a more vibrant place. The evidence is visible in nearby towns with a stronger business sector.
Business attracts business - A climate that attracts small start-up businesses, e.g. flexible short and long term business rates; adaptable working spaces; excellent digital connectivity will result in the town centre gaining increased footfall from an expanding working community. Thereby a thriving business community not only brings tax revenue into the local economy but supports a more diverse and stable retail community.

Increase resilience by encouraging high growth, creative media, professional services or emerging new business sectors – Caterham has lost some ‘big players’ in the local economy in the last decade, with associated conversion of space to residential use. The inevitable loss of jobs – directly and indirectly – when these large companies relocated or closed has served as a clear lesson for the town. While the health of Caterham’s economy can never be immune from larger, regional, national or even international factors, the community would like to see bold steps to encourage a mix of small, medium and large enterprises across a range of public and private sectors. Robust strategies should be developed to support and encourage businesses that can create permanent full and part time employment opportunities for local residents.

Strike a better balance between business and residential development – The combined pressure of Caterham’s Green Belt location and the housing market in the South East has meant conversion of many commercial sites to residential. The community’s commitment to a balanced town centre economy means that this trend needs to be addressed more actively. Much of Caterham’s residential growth has been at the expense of local jobs and employment. Resisting the change of use of business properties to residential dwellings has been a recurring theme in much of the public consultation on the future development of the town centre.

Unrestricted Permitted Development (PD) has already harmed employment locally. A policy and practice must be reached that addresses this critical issue. Use of similar mechanisms to Article 4, as exists at the time of writing, should be used responsibly to tailor and optimise the residential vs business vs leisure use of Town Centre space. For example Quadrant House (see CRITICAL ASSETS) is at risk of permitted development, but this site plays a vital role in ensuring there is provision for businesses of all sizes in the Valley Centre.

Prepare for R2 – Caterham’s location and excellent connections position it as an ideal overnight base for those visiting London or traveling from Gatwick and this should be promoted. Despite the 2016 decision to build London’s additional runway at Heathrow rather than Gatwick, it is possible that, in time, a second runway will be built at Gatwick Airport. This would feed the town’s hospitality industry and evening economy, together with the overall boost to the wider area’s economy.

FUTURE PREDICTIONS: High street focuses are moving increasingly towards the provision of services rather than traditional retail outlets. Retail planning for Caterham’s future should allow for a proportion of retail units to evolve into street front offices, studios, flexible work/relax zones and experience-based provision (e.g. participatory shops – design your own clothes etc).

For more detail on business and economy in Caterham (particularly the Valley centre) see the Business Improvement District plans. Links are provided at www.towndesign.net

“IT’S SAD REALLY, THE TOWN IS BEING KILLED OFF BY LACK OF REAL INVESTMENT”
DEVELOPMENT

NEW BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS

BUILDING MIX  BUILDING PURPOSE

THE VISION: Development and redevelopment have re-energised Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres, providing diverse mixed-use buildings for retail, business, leisure and culture, public sector and residential. Character buildings have been retained, preserved and enhanced, complemented by good quality, contemporary design for new buildings.

Assets in difficult ownership – High profile buildings or spaces that have been left in a state of disrepair by absent or delinquent landlords can have a disproportionately negative effect on a neighbourhood or streetscape. The Rose & Young site is a prime example and damages both streetscape and the local economy at the northern entry to the town on Croydon Road.

Improve Flood Infrastructure – Ensure that flood infrastructure is capable of meeting future demands. Ad hoc developments, combined with removal of trees on Caterham’s wooded slopes have put pressure on Caterham’s flood defenses and drainage systems, resulting in severe flooding in recent years. All new developments should be brought to committee to ensure they include adequate measures to mitigate the level of stress they place increasing stress on an already inadequate system.

Thinking ‘outside the box’ for empty units – There is strong awareness across the community of the national trend of shrinking town centre retail offers. There is a desire for more discussion about best alternative uses of town centre space in Caterham. Conversion of town centre assets to residential is often an attractive development proposition, however it often has the effect of choking some of the vitality out of the town. Closer interaction between the council, the community, landlords and developers and a willingness to consider all options, are required to fully understand how the greatest value can be derived from key town centre locations.
Caterham is a Surrey town – the quality of development in the town often belies Caterham’s position in one of the country’s most naturally beautiful and traditionally English counties, with its mix of hills and valleys. Town centre development should proactively encourage the preservation of the town’s original Victorian and Edwardian character. Where possible, development should incorporate the unique views of the wooded slopes around the town and developers must integrate greening and landscaping into plans, enhancing the town’s valued green infrastructure.

Housing and residential development – At just over four square miles, Caterham accounts for less than 4% of the area of Tandridge District, however, as the district’s largest settlement, it is home to 22,000 people, almost 25% of Tandridge’s population. Care must be taken to ensure that any development takes into consideration the combined impact of recent and proposed developments, especially as they affect town centre areas. Retaining a viable balance between residential and commercial uses for land remains a priority, including consideration of Permitted Development from business to residential use, with its attendant impact on services and economy. Infrastructure for groundwater and storm water is highlighted as an area of concern and must be taken into account either for future development or to relieve existing issues. Affordability of housing for younger homeowners and first-time buyers is also critical to the vision of retaining ‘home-grown’ talent in Caterham.

Signature Buildings – Signature buildings, whether by virtue of their location, historic value, contribution to the community/economy role, scale or architectural significance, are important assets in developing a sense of place. This makes such buildings critical assets to Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres. Consideration during development should be given to the significance of buildings. Are they ‘signature’ buildings? If so, they should be given status as such.

Green Belt – Caterham’s location within the Green Belt is one of the town’s defining characteristics. There is broad consensus in the community about the sacrosanct nature of the Green Belt concept. However, on the ground, the pressures of development density in non-Green Belt areas in and around the town (and the knock-on effect this has on infrastructure) means that a workable strategy must be developed to preserve the Green Belt and the amenity of the area. This must be viewed in a wider context than just Caterham and requires determined cooperation and compromise with neighbouring settlements.

Working in partnership to champion the vision – The cornerstone of the vision for Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres is an effective partnership across the community, local businesses and district and parish councils. The idea of place-making will often mean bold intervention to uphold the community’s vision for the town and a single-minded use of statutory powers. commercial influence / investment and community leadership.

Good Design – What should development look like? There is a need for subsequent design guidance for both Valley and Hill centres, in order to ensure future developments complement the streetscape, character and topography of the town. The Neighbourhood Plan will cover these aspects in more depth.

FUTURE PREDICTIONS: The continued rise of single person households, affordable first time homes, micro-homes should be a consideration for residential development. An ageing population will increase the need for age-adapted and retirement accommodation, and the town’s infrastructure will need to reflect the needs of these groups.
THE VISION: Caterham's Surrey Hills setting, natural charm, history and heritage are considered by all to be central to the town's appeal, economic viability and success and are placed at the heart of town centre planning.

Promote Caterham as a Green Belt Surrey Town – The community’s vision for Caterham is one where all stakeholders make a conscious effort to celebrate and promote the town’s natural charm, history and heritage. Caterham’s surrounding countryside is some of England's finest, home to several rare species. However, Caterham is not generally considered a tourist destination and is sometimes compared unfavourably to other Surrey towns. If promoted well, its historic buildings, distinctive valley setting amongst downland, wooded slopes and Green Belt location could increase its appeal as a destination for businesses considering relocation London and some leisure visitors.

Heritage characteristics of Hill / Valley – Caterham-on-the-Hill was the original Caterham settlement and a ‘village feel’ still exists in this location. It is important that this characteristic is preserved and enhanced, and that the town centre is designed to respect and reflect it. The town’s wooded valley and slopes along with view onto the Downs should be conspicuously incorporated into town centre design, with views across and along the valley framed between buildings and along streets and linked visually and spatially with urban green spaces via a linked ‘green infrastructure’.

Wider heritage attractions should be signposted from the town centre to enhance and extend the cultural offer.
- Kenley Aerodrome - With two entrances on the Caterham boundary, Kenley is one of the most complete Battle of Britain aerodromes in existence with its own heritage trail.
- Chaldon Church - Mentioned in the Doomsday Book, St Peter & St Paul’s Church is famous for its 12th century doom mural.
- The Harestone - A large puddingstone/ block of conglomerate located in the grounds of Caterham School, dating back 40 million years.

Additional heritage attractions include the Pilgrims Way, Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Viewpoint on the North Downs ridge-line.
THE VISION: Caterham Valley and Hill centres are vibrant day and evening social destinations, attracting visitors and residents of all ages with a range of cultural and recreational leisure pursuits. A full calendar of activities and events in attractive public spaces enriches the ‘experiences’ of residents and visitors. Digital technology provides information to help people enjoy all that Caterham has to offer.

**CAFS RESTAURANTS PUBS CLUBS PERFORMANCE VENUES ARTS HOBBIES SPORTS PLAY**

**Joined up leisure and culture offer** – the town’s Valley and Hill centres would benefit greatly from an overhaul of the quality, quantity and promotion of their cultural and recreational provision – essential elements of place-making. Caterham’s leisure and culture assets (such as the Caterham Festival, pubs, the Miller Centre, the Caterham Club, Soper Hall, the East Surrey Museum, St John’s Church Hall and the library), could be more ‘joined up’. Health / leisure activities and venues are predominantly based on the Hill and these should be clearly sign-posted and easily accessible from the Valley. The town’s municipal venues such as schools, should be used extensively by the public, raising their profiles in the community and providing much needed revenue.

**A great ‘experience’** – Enjoyable, life enriching and memorable experiences bring a town to life and contribute largely to a positive sense of ‘place’. The ‘feel good’ factor of Caterham’s annual festival could become just one part of a lively events calendar. Such events, presented in vibrant public spaces, will give Caterham cultural kudos as an exciting place to live, work and visit.

**Café culture and cinema** – a lively café and restaurant culture for both day and night time is inextricably bound up with the attractiveness and success of a town centre offer. Compared with other similar-sized towns, Caterham punches well below its weight in this respect. Caterham needs a long-term plan to fulfil potential of the Valley and Hill centres as vibrant destinations for eating, drinking and entertainment. Whilst the regeneration of a town centre is complex and can never be reduced to one or even a handful of factors, there is a strong sense in the community that investment in a flagship leisure destination such as a cinema and more welcoming public spaces, could be a ‘game-changer’ for Caterham.
The community would like to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the possibility of attracting such investments. As a precursor to the ultimate vision of Caterham’s own cinema, regular films could be shown in central venues to assess/demonstrate demand and popularity.

Focus on leisure walkers and cyclists – a key target audience to appeal to when developing Caterham town centre as a leisure destination is leisure walkers and cyclists. This chimes with Caterham’s heritage – in Victorian and later periods Caterham Station was the arrival point for excursionists. With today’s ever-increasing focus on health and wellbeing, Caterham’s proximity to the Surrey Hills and the Pilgrims Way is a starting point to develop facilities that will attract walkers and cyclists to Caterham, ensuring that the town again becomes a ‘must stop’ location for excursionists. Cultural and heritage ‘trails’ could make visitors aware of the town’s history. Maps, guides, apps and public signposting as well as ‘walks’ and green links would join the town centre with trails and heritage sites.

Increasing demand for leisure facilities – whether health and exercise related or for social purposes, gyms, swimming pools, exercise studios and outdoor facilities (possibly in green spaces) are valued by the community and need to be included in future thinking.

WHY CAN’T WE HAVE A CINEMA? A CINEMA WOULD BE GREAT
PUBLIC SECTOR

THE VISION: Caterham has accessible, inclusive modern public services, responsive and tailored to meet the diverse needs of communities and individuals of all ages and abilities.

A well-publicised strategy for public services – central to the community’s vision of responsive public services for Caterham is a strategy to ensure that the public services infrastructure is able to keep pace with the demands placed upon it by recent and planned development in the area. Education (to include secondary, technical and vocational), training, healthcare and social care should be the main focus of this strategy.

Innovative approach to meeting needs – the community is enthusiastic to explore new approaches to meeting growing need for public services using innovative and technologically driven approaches. Solutions discussed included:

- 24 hour walk-in health facilities aligned to doctor’s surgeries and augmented by online professional health expertise.
- Trialing of new ways of providing In-home support and monitoring systems that enable older residents to continue healthy, fulfilling lives in the community.
- Improving communication between health services, leisure/lifestyle facilities and town planners, nurturing physical and mental wellbeing and promoting healthy lifestyles for all ages.

Police presence – closure of the police station in Caterham Valley town centre is currently under debate (see Critical Assets section). It is considered important that this central site retains a public service function.

Enhancing communications capability - in public areas and throughout residential and commercial areas, with higher speed broadband and mobile services. This is already affecting how people use town centres yet, with patchy coverage and lower speeds, Caterham is in danger of falling behind other larger centres. Good access, speed and flexibility must be available, whether as mobile or fixed services.

THEMES

HEALTH  EDUCATION AND TRAINING  SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES  COMMUNICATIONS  EMERGENCY SERVICES
THEMES

PUBLIC SPACES

CENTRAL PUBLIC ‘TOWN SQUARE’ SPACE(S) GREEN SPACES AND PARKS

THE VISION: Caterham has attractive public spaces within and close to its Hill and Valley Centres. These act as social hubs for residents and visitors and provide the setting for cultural events and festivities. Developments incorporate public spaces and there is a town centre shift towards pedestrianisation in both Valley and Hill centres.

Town Square – the community believes strongly that well-used community spaces are key to Caterham’s future success in central areas. There are numerous examples of innovative alternative uses of former retail space in town centres across the country and these models should be explored further. The notion of a ‘town square’ - a safe, accessible space that prioritises community cohesion, inclusiveness and economic growth is extremely popular. This focal point for community life would include information, communicating up to date news about the town’s leisure and culture programme and public transport. It would be a dedicated space with the capacity to host special and temporary events such as markets, pop-up shops, art displays, festivals, performances, social activities, public meetings and screenings.

Pocket parks – the creation and promotion of beautiful, safe, clean, green spaces in both Hill and Valley centres, where residents and visitors can mix, relax and be entertained is an essential feature of a lively and prosperous town nurturing happy and healthy lifestyles. The community wishes to prioritise amenity space (play areas and communal open space) in any forthcoming plan for town centre locations. These green spaces should incorporate attractive landscaping, rain cover, all-weather seating, well-maintained WCs and good lighting to enable evening, as well as daytime, use. It is suggested that a scheme to encourage community volunteering be developed to ensure that spaces are well maintained. New developments and re-developments should include/create public spaces. e.g. If Quadrant House were to be developed designs could incorporate increased public space near roundabout.
Core areas - Opportunities to progress towards upgraded pedestrian areas. Managing traffic flow should be a high priority in any town centre regeneration plans, with consideration given to the possibility of shared traffic and pedestrian use, if not complete pedestrianisation (see also ACCESS/STREETSCAPE). Obvious opportunities are present in the space between the railway and Croydon Rd, where access and general street scene could be improved. Other towns have opened up new and attractive shopping and public areas through portals/ alleyways in shopping façades.

Valley: Capitalise on the key elements near the station: On arrival at Caterham’s station there is a closed post office, an original tunnel for mail access to the station platforms under the road, and clear opportunities for linked development on the southern side, retaining and enhancing this area. It is linked via the rear of these buildings to the Morrison’s service yard, Church Walk and Soper Hall.

Hill: Core areas for protection and enhancement would extend between the two churches at the top of Church Hill, via Queens Park, The Dene Hospital, Cedar tree and its surroundings, plus the High Street and the spur including the Raglan Precinct.

THEMES

RETAIL

A balanced retail offer – If Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres are thriving and resilient the benefits will flow through the community. A sustainable, diverse and vibrant retail offer depends on a balanced mix of affordable everyday shopping, supermarkets and street markets as well as independent and high-quality shops. The community strongly supports a robust and proactive approach to ensuring that centres benefit from the widest possible variety of retailers. Regardless of architecture (with the exception of Rose & Young), Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres could be more appealing in the shorter term without needing great change. A streetscape policy, providing strong guidance on shop fronts, signage, sandwich boards and other street clutter has brought benefits elsewhere and should be encouraged as a follow on project, between retailers, BID, Masterplan and Neighbourhood Plans (see STREETSCAPE, p59).

Niche retail and overall shopping offer – Encourage new niche retail, plus Caterham’s overall consumer offer, to support experimentation and independent retailers and operators. To make this happen the Council and the community must agree on and work towards a shared vision.

Engineering the offer – The community is keen to explore ways of galvanising retail in Caterham’s Hill and Valley centres. One essential idea is to offer more affordable and short-term leases to create a range of well-maintained fixed and flexible spaces that are attractive to small start-up shops and businesses. These will increase the town centre workforce with resulting benefits for local retail outlets.

THE VISION: Caterham Hill and Valley are diverse and appealing retail destinations, enjoyed by visitors and residents alike for their vibrant mix of larger stores and small independent specialist shops and cafes.
FUTURE PREDICTION: Retailers in the town should be helped and encouraged to embrace new technology and retail models (e.g. click and collect) whilst maintaining the qualities of a traditional retail destination. As retail continues to change, only by expanding the town’s total offer will footfall be maintained or increased, both during the day and in the evening.

An extended vision - Retail and shopping are part of a complex town centre ecology. They must be complemented by attractive social and leisure facilities, public and community services and a flexible environment to encourage other businesses to locate in the town centre. Communication between all town centre retail and leisure facilities will provide a clear and enticing offer and enable joined-up promotion.

Night-time economy – This is a major area of potential growth, which is critical to expanding the town centre retail and wider leisure offer to meet the needs of future customers.

THEMES

STREETSCAPE

THE VISION: Caterham Valley and Hill centre’s have unique and pleasing streetscapes that enhance their identity and make them vibrant and pleasant places to live, work, relax and visit.

Coordinate streetscape appearance – retail shop fronts are critical to attractiveness and therefore the economic health of the town. The community is keen to see the streetscapes in Caterham’s town centre areas fulfill their potential (Godstone Road, Croydon Road, Station Avenue, Caterham-on-the-Hill High Street). A way of achieving this is to consider the evolution of a town centre identity through a clearly defined streetscape ‘brief’, ‘palette’ or set of standards (‘good practice guide’). It is important that this guidance should be followed on an entirely voluntary basis, but if adopted would encourage a harmonious and coherent appearance.

Street furniture – a more prescriptive approach may be taken when it comes to town centre assets such as signage, paving, furniture, lighting, seating etc. As well as setting the tone for the rest of the streetscape, these essential elements of the street scene contribute to the town centre having a considered and cared for appearance. Wherever possible, town centre street-scaping should highlight Caterham’s topography and frame views of the surrounding wooded hillside. The beauty of Caterham’s natural surroundings should be reflected in the retail area through greening, planting and landscaping.

Shared space – Encourage pedestrianisation or shared traffic/pedestrian use by creating attractive core areas, often with the removal of kerbs and the use of natural materials (see also ACCESS, PUBLIC SPACES and APPENDIX - 2009 proposals by Random Greenway/ABC, incl up to date street maps.)

Design – There is a need for more detailed design specification around streetscape to provide clear guidance on materials, form and function.
REDEFINING VALUE

• What kind of town do we want Caterham to be?

• What kind of intervention and influence must be exerted to realise our vision for the town?

CONSULTATION

The Town Centre Design Statement (TDCS) is the culmination of a series of consultations in and around Caterham.

Raising awareness: Part of the purpose of the Town Centre Design Statement exercise has been to raise awareness of the issues that relate to Caterham’s future as a town to live, work and visit – even if people chose not to or were unable to contribute their views directly. Other plans and initiatives are underway as mentioned. These will take longer to finalise and are also built around local needs. This Design Statement is intended to help identify those and reflect on the type of place the community wants.

Online community survey: This first step in the process (27 February to 22 March 2015) was publicised in the local press and on social media, with 917 people responding.

Community workshops: These provided more in-depth consultation. Invited by CR3 Forum, the 30 workshop participants were residents of the Caterham area, who were experienced and active in planning, development, community and business matters in the town. Three workshops took place in the Caterham area between 7 and 28 March 2015. The main focus of these sessions was to analyse and add to the results of the community survey.

The analysis highlighted nine distinct themes, which were refined into sections of the vision for the town centre.

Early in 2017 two further workshops were held to update the original work, against the background of more recent economic, social and wellbeing services. The views expressed by this group were unique in that many participants were ‘Caterham born and bred’ and provided a personal, longer view of Caterham town centre’s development.

Publicising the consultation: Each element of the consultation was publicised in local press, signposted on social media or featured on the CR3 Forum Town Design.Net website. During the process, the mainstream media and social media sites with Caterham-based forums have been monitored for popular views, threads and discussions that touch on the issues relating to developing this vision.

Business survey: An online survey aimed at local businesses opened on 11 May 2015. Over 200 businesses in the Caterham area were invited to add to and comment on the emerging vision that had been shaped and refined by the community workshops. 78% of the businesses who completed the survey – a mix of established Small and Medium Enterprises, start-ups, large corporates and entrepreneurs who highlighted issues of importance to the business economy. Caterham’s emerging BID (Business Improvement District) group have also been consulted and provided their input more recently.

Young people: The voice of Caterham’s young people was added through a Citizenship class workshop with Year 9 students at de Stafford School on 13 November 2015. The group of 14-15 year-olds discussed the vision for the town centre and what was most important, from their perspective, about Caterham as a place to live and spend free time. They were also asked their views on future employment opportunities in the town.

Older residents: The views of this group were sought through a large group interview at the Douglas Brunton Centre on 10 December 2015. The centre is a hub for services for older people, providing and signposting to leisure and cultural activities, social clubs and wellbeing services. The views expressed by this group were unique in that many participants were ‘Caterham born and bred’ and provided a personal, longer view of Caterham town centre’s development.

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Caterham puts Caterham’s population at 301.
The Metropolitan Asylum opens, later renamed St Lawrence.
Croydon airport completed.
Introduction of first Green Belt legislation.
Production of Caterham Seven car begins.
Caterham Barracks redevelopment begins.
Caterham Bypass opens.
Church Walk Shopping Centre opens.
Church Walk Shopping Centre opens.

CATERHAM TIMELINE

1801
1867
1866
1877
1895
1901
1928
1939
1947
1947
1990
1995
Caterham is located in the North East corner of Surrey, in the county’s Tandridge District. Its population of over 22,000 inhabitants is split fairly evenly across its two parishes, Caterham-on-the-Hill (60% of total population) and Caterham Valley (40%).

Although there is possible reference of a manor on the site of what is now Caterham in the Domesday Book and extensive records of the changes of ownership of the land from the 12th to 18th centuries, reliable records for the area as a town began with the census of 1801. The town began as a small farming settlement with a population of a few hundred in what is now Caterham-on-the-Hill.

The coming of the railways during the 1850-70s was the main reason for the growth of Caterham Valley. The Caterham Railway Company opened the station in 1856 to transport stone from nearby Godstone Quarry and passengers to London. Caterham’s setting in the Surrey hills and easy rail access to London heralded rapid growth for the town. Most significantly, two institutions for which it is best known: The Metropolitan Asylum (set up in 1867 and later called St Laurence’s) and Caterham Barracks (opened in 1877).

Major additions to the area’s infrastructure were made in the first half of the last century, including the opening of London’s first airport in Croydon in 1928, less than 10 miles from Caterham. The town’s accessibility was further enhanced by the construction of the Caterham Bypass section of the A22 in 1939. These factors contributed to strong growth in numbers of commercial offices and light manufacturing businesses in the area.
Density: Today, Caterham is the largest settlement in Tandridge District, accounting for over 25% of its population, yet squeezed into only 4% % of its total area. This is placing increasing stress on residential and business areas. 94% of Tandridge is designated as Green Belt, however there is a lower proportion of green belt and green spaces within Caterham than elsewhere in Tandridge. This constrains even more distributed growth across the district, and much of the development of the past few decades has focused on non-Green Belt areas in and around Caterham.

Town centre mix: Changes in shopping patterns, including the rise of internet shopping, click and collect and the closure of a significant number of commercial sites and offices, have tipped the balance away from a self supporting and vibrant place. However, it is widely felt that by rebalancing its offer, Caterham could provide a more attractive and lively town centre for residents, visitors, retail, leisure and business.

Caterham is well served in terms of convenience retail (food, drink etc.). It has three major supermarkets (Waitrose and Morrisons in Caterham Valley and Tesco on Caterham Hill) and other smaller shops in the Church Walk shopping centre (opened in 1990). However, the town is less well served when it comes to quality comparison shopping. There are some high street shops and independent retailers in Station Avenue, Godstone Road, and Croydon Road, the main thoroughfares in Caterham Valley’s centre, but these are generally inferior to the offer of neighbouring, larger shopping destinations such as Croydon and Reigate.

Caterham Hill’s central area, including The High Street, has no banks and faces the possible closure of its local post office.

Sustaining business: Competition from neighbouring retail centres, in addition to less favourable lease and business incentives locally than elsewhere, has put pressure on operators in Caterham, resulting in some businesses leaving the town. This is a matter for the BID, Masterplan and Neighbourhood Plans to pursue.

The town is located in close proximity to London, Gatwick and the M25 and M23 motorways and is well positioned to provide opportunities for small start-up businesses working within a thriving community. However, existing infrastructure is likely to struggle with these potential future demands placed upon the town by an expanding business community and future infrastructure will need to allow for additional stresses caused by expansion.

Development: Furthermore, development in Caterham over the past few decades has been of variable quality. The combination of significant changes to the wider economy and pressures in the housing market in the South East have meant that development schemes in Caterham have increased residential stock and the density of the built environment significantly but often without an ownership, joined-up view of the medium to long-term consequences. The result is a town that is congested, its infrastructure stretched and, in places, shabby.

There is a feeling that Caterham has been overdeveloped during the last decade and is in danger of becoming an overspill for Croydon. Whilst development is necessary there is a feeling more control is needed.

There is a widely held consensus that Caterham ‘punches below its weight’ economically and that its appearance belies its enviable Surrey setting and proximity to London. However, Caterham today has the potential to evolve into a town that is enjoyable to live and work within, set in a beautiful landscape with a unique natural environment, adjacent to the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Shabby to Smart Project Maps (2009)

In 2009 these maps were compiled by Random Greenway as part of the Shabby to Smart project, to suggest ways in which the Hill and Valley centres could be ‘smartened’. Some suggestions have since been implemented, others (to date) have not. The maps, however, are useful in showing town centre buildings and layouts.
Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the kind assistance, expertise and time invested in the Town Centre Design Statement process.

Tandridge District Council officers and councillors
Chris Windridge and members of the CR3 Forum and the Caterham Community Partnership (CCP/ABC)
Andrew Brown and the Caterham Business Partnership
The Caterham Valley Parish Council
The Caterham Hill Parish Council
Surrey County Council (Member’s Allocation; Sally Marks)
Staff and students at de Stafford School
Staff and visitors at Douglas Brunton Centre
Community and business respondents to online survey
Members of the community who contributed to TCDS workshops:
Alun Jones
Andrew Browne (BID)
Annette Evans
Bill Ridley
Carol Kelly
Cherie Callender
Chris Windridge
Dave Evans
Dick Moran
Geoff Ducr
George Dennis
Caryneth Fokes
Jackie Servant
Jenny Gaffney
Jill Caudle
Jim Burton
John Harvey
Jon Mountain
Julian Dobson
Jardin Taylor
Marc Hansen
Mary Mountain
Maren Gibbons
Mike Smith
Nick Nathanael
Pamela Congreve
Pat Cantor
Peter Kelly
Random Greeway
Richard York
Sue McGregor (BID)
Additional Thanks To
Camille Walker
Julia Church
Piers Mason

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Funding contributions:
Caterham Community Partnership (CCP/ABC)
Surrey County Council (Member’s Allocation)
Tandridge District Council