

**A statement from Capel Parish Council (CPC)  
regarding the development brief for Godwins Nursery, Beare Green.**

- CPC has been in discussion with planning and housing officers at Mole Valley District Council regarding a development brief for the development of Godwins Nursery, Beare Green.
- The landowner has been to tender.
- The chosen developer is Crest and CPC has met with the developer.
- A local housing association will be responsible for the affordable housing components.
- The developer is fully committed to public consultation and will be responsible for information regarding the development going to every household in Beare Green.
- There will be a Public Exhibition in February / March 2012.
- The briefing document which follows was formally adopted at the general meeting of CPC on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011; hard copies are available from the parish clerk for £2.00 each.

**CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**A DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**  
**FOR**  
**GODWINS NURSERY, BEARE GREEN**

**APPROVED and ADOPTED BY**  
**CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DECEMBER 2011**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

**Preface:**

This brief has been prepared by Capel Parish Council in consultation with the landowner and in discussion with planning and housing officers at Mole Valley District Council.

**Contents:**

1. Introduction
2. Planning Brief Objectives
3. Appraisal of the site and surroundings
4. Development Strategy
5. Design Guidance
6. Planning Agreements
7. Implementation

## **Introduction**

The Development Brief is not intended to prescribe the exact form of development but rather to identify a development framework and number of key issues which the development must address. In particular, it is intended to provide guidance on access, circulation, form of development, landscaping, open/amenity spaces, design, materials and sustainability.

## **Development Brief**

The Development Brief has been prepared by the Parish Council. The Parish Council recognises that it will be for Mole Valley District Council to determine the proposals when the application is submitted for planning permission.

## **Planning Policy**

1.2 On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 Mole Valley District Council (the Council) adopted its Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPP). The Council as a result either saved, deleted or replaced policies contained in the Mole Valley Local Plan 2000.

1.3 Specific to Beare Green former Policy RUD1 (Infilling in Green Belt Villages) the Policy was saved but replaced with Core Strategy Policies CS1 and CS2 re-designating those settlement of which one is Beare Green.

In relation to Policies CS1 and CS2 special circumstances prevail justifying the redevelopment of this 'brownfield' site within the Green Belt. The Parish Council considers that its redevelopment will not compromise any of the five Green Belt's safeguarding objectives.

In due course, an allocation of the site for housing is likely to result in a revision of the extant Green Belt Boundary in this part of Beare Green. This boundary modification will be supported by the Parish Council who will make recommendations in this regard to the District in relation to its Land Allocations DPD.

The very special circumstances which now prevail are:-

- (i) the delay in delivering housing through the LDF which is likely to be at least 2 years;
- (ii) the site lies adjacent to the defined village settlement boundary;
- (iii) it lies within a framework of residential development;
- (iv) it is in a highly sustainable location;
- (v) it will deliver much needed affordable and market housing;
- (vi) its prevailing character is of a redundant garden centre and two residential properties;

- (vii) its development will not compromise any landscape in conservation designations i.e. A.O.N.B.

1.4 Policy CS2 'Housing Provision and Location' states in relation to Beare Green that ***“Infilling and limited residential development (including redevelopment) will be permitted.....”*** The constraint imposed by the former Policy ENV2 (Development Policy for the Green Belt Outside Villages) is not a saved policy following the consideration of the LDF Core Strategy.

In policy terms while a small scale development would be acceptable outside the settlement boundary for affordable housing in consideration of Green Belt objectives the Parish Council does not consider that the principles of the Green Belt would be compromised. Re-development of Godwins Nursery should therefore be considered as being appropriate given that:-

- (i) 40% of the housing scheme will be for the provision of affordable housing;
- (ii) The significant shortfall in both market and affordable housing provision which prevails within the Mole Valley District.

1.5 In relation to future housing in the village the L.D.F. also states that proposed development should be ***“at an appropriate scale in relation to the size and character of the village.”*** This approach is consistent with saved Policy RUD4 and Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy which also refers to the need for all new development to respect and enhance the character of the area in which it is proposed. The following tests which include:-

- (i) taking into account the setting, form and layout of the village;
- (ii) developing land that is already surrounded, in part, by existing buildings;

- (iii) does not result in land that makes a significant contribution to the rural character of the village;
- (iv) it takes into account the local style of buildings;
- (v) that traffic generated is compatible with the environment of the village and can be accommodated on the surrounding road network.

1.6 Policy CS3 'Balancing Housing Provision' is also to be applied having regard, in particular, to the provision of housing in terms of:-

- (i) tenure, size and type of dwelling;
- (ii) the provision of two and three bedroom dwellings suitable for all sectors of the community

1.7 In relation to affordable housing the requirement shall be for 40% (Policy CS4). Provision shall be made for rented accommodation and shared ownership to a ratio of 3:1 unless the shared ownership criterion limits staircasing up to a maximum of 80%. In such circumstances the rented/shared ownership shall be divided equally. While it is recognised by the Parish Council that in Policy terms an equal split of rented and shared accommodation should apply, the position taken by the Parish is the importance it attaches to shared ownership remaining available in perpetuity.

1.8 Since the Core Strategy Inquiry and the adoption of its Strategic Policy, the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2011) has been published for consultation, the proposal being to replace extant National Policy. It is anticipated following consultations the NPPF will become part of the planning framework in March 2012.

- 1.9 The emphasis of the draft NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 1.10 The intended removal of the “***brownfield land***” first target and the move away from presumptive designation of land towards a concept of developable land to where local areas decide the most suitable location for housing growth based upon local circumstances is now a material consideration. Capel Parish Council supports the re-development of Godwins Nursery as an appropriate site for new housing comprising between 30-40 dwellings.
- 1.11 The site boundary is illustrated on Plan GN1 which accompanies the Development Brief and comprises an area of approximately 1ha (2.46 acres).  
Having regard to its overall character while the Parish Council consider its ‘brownfield’ element is generally contained within the Nursery site, Wren Cottage and Little Breakspear, the balance of the land (the garden to Little Breakspear) is part of the residential curtilage of that property. Its redevelopment is not only appropriate but will maximise the delivery of new housing.

### **Consultation**

- 1.12 The Parish Council is committed to Pre-application discussions as well as involving the community as a pre-requisite to the submission of a planning application to ensure that the proposals respond to the Development Brief.

## 2. Planning Brief Objectives

### Development Aims

2.1 The purpose of the Brief is to provide a framework for guiding and co-ordinating the design and development of Godwins Nursery. The principle aim is to ensure that development results in an appropriate and 'natural' extension to the village.

2.2 The following objectives are important to delivering the overall aim:-

- the creating of a high quality environment that is an asset to the area, clearly forming part of Beare Green Village;
- a development with a distinct sense of identity and place, which nevertheless, respects the character of Beare Green and the surrounding landscape;
- a secure environment having regard to the principles of ***“Designing out Crime;”***
- a form of development which respects the traditions of the area;
- a development which provides a range and choice of dwellings and promotes social integration;
- the visual improvement of the settlement edge to allow a sympathetic integration of built form and the wider landscape;
- a permeable layout which encourages pedestrian and cycle movement restricting vehicle speeds;
- legibility, adaptability and density.

## Sustainability

2.3 One of the clear aims of the draft NPPF is to deliver sustainable development. With a clear statement emphasising a “***presumption in favour of sustainable development***” the Development Brief has regard to that planning objective, in particular:-

- planning positivity for new development;
- to encourage approval of the proposals without delay;
- to engage the community;
- to ensure that the development is of good design.

2.4 The proposals should encourage the use of energy efficient materials and construction techniques together with provision for recycling.

2.5 The aim will be to secure a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

### 3. **Appraisal of Site and Surroundings**

#### **Site description and context**

- 3.1 The site occupies a total area of 0.995 hectares (2.46 acres). It comprises two dwellings, 'Wren Cottage' and 'Little Breakspear,' Nursery Buildings, storage sheds/workshops, glasshouses and plant display areas above hard standings.
- 3.2 The northern portion of the site associated with the bungalow known as 'Little Breakspear' is laid out substantially to lawn with mature trees and hedgerows delineating the north-east and north-west boundaries of the site.
- 3.3 To the south-east the boundary is defined by a treelined hedgerow with a steep embankment beyond falling away in a cutting to the Horsham-Dorking/London main railway line.
- 3.4 The south-west boundary is formed by the Old Horsham Road together with a series of buildings in residential and commercial use. These include 'Breakspear Farm and Cottage,' 'Long Barn,' 'Ivy Cottage' and 'Walnut Cottage.'

#### **Visibility**

- 3.5 The site is well contained but can be viewed from vantage points along its road frontage, the Old Horsham Road, to the east of the site beyond the A24 from elevated land but only during those parts of the year when the treed boundary is not in full leaf.

### **Topography and Drainage**

- 3.6 The site is relatively flat with slight falls to the east and west from the centre of the site. A typical level within the site is about 90 AOD.

Levels and site drainage regime should be established by any intended developer.

### **Ground Conditions**

- 3.7 Although a substantial part of the site comprises hard standing associated with the retail nursery, the balance comprising the residential curtilage of 'Little Breakspear,' it is the responsibility of the intended developers or land owners to be satisfied with regard to any issues of contamination.

### **Vegetation**

- 3.8 There is little vegetation of significance within the body of the site other than two mature hedgerows along the boundary delineating the separation between the Nursery buildings and the residential property. The hedgerow to the northern boundary has a mature hedgerow while to the north-east the tree line boundary of mature trees is an important feature to be retained having regard, in particular, to its proximity to the A24 the carriageway lying some 75 metres to the east.

### **Beare Green Character**

- 3.9 The character of Beare Green is determined by a traditional street pattern primarily of post-war development which has occurred through the village. It displays a range of buildings and styles and a palette of materials which are not representative of traditional buildings in the area.

#### 4. **Transportation**

##### **Walking and Cycling**

- 4.1 The site is located approximately 300 metres or four minutes walk from the shop and local facilities in the village. These services include a range of shops, including a post office with the village hall being located nearby.
- 4.2 The village is served by the Weald Primary School situated to the east of the A24, which can be accessed via an existing underpass and is approximately a ten minute walk from the existing housing and facilities.

##### **Existing Rights of Way**

- 4.3 No existing Rights of Way impact upon the site.

##### **Railway**

- 4.4. Beare Green railway station (known as Holmwood Station) is located within a one minute walk from the site. There is a regular rail service to Horsham (southbound) and to Dorking, Leatherhead and onward connections to London.

##### **Bus**

- 4.5 A bus service (No.93) operates a daily service between Horsham and Dorking (except Sunday), the stop being located immediately at the site entrance. In addition to the regular bus service a Tesco shopping bus operates twice per week.

## Road

- 4.6 The A24 road by-passes Beare Green direct linkage being achieved via the ***Old Horsham Road***. The A24 is a primary link between London and the South Coast (Worthing) and facilitates easy access to the M25 at Leatherhead. Gatwick Airport being located approximately 10 km to the east combined with the public transport network Beare Green is a highly sustainable settlement.

## 5. **Design Guidance**

5.1 The draft NPPF in relation to design re-emphasises the Government's objective of the Planning System to promote key design that ensures attractive, useable and durable spaces, this being a key element and of achieving sustainable development and consistent with Policy CS14 in so far as it relates to resisting development of poor quality design.

The Parish Council in its Development Brief will, therefore, ensure that the proposed development will:-

- function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development;
- to respond to local character and to reflect the identity, as appropriate, of its local surroundings;
- to create a safe and accessible environment;
- to be visually attractive as the result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

5.2 The Parish Council does, nevertheless, recognise that Design Policies must avoid unnecessary prescriptive detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of the new development in relation to the neighbouring buildings and the local area (regards NPPF Paragraph 117).

5.3 The Parish Council also recognises that the purpose of the Design Brief is not to impose architectural styles or particular tastes.

5.4 As the site marks the northern approach to Beare Green its development offers the opportunity to create an important gateway into the village.

- 5.5 The Design Brief seeks to guide the site design process to a framework of principles all of which is considered in this brief document.

### **Layout and Design**

- 5.6 The development shall be laid out to create a cohesive and structured layout. There shall be a strong inter relationship between the housing areas to encourage pedestrian movement and reinforce the development as a whole. However, the housing should be grouped to create identifiable spaces which have a clear sense of ownership.

Materials, detailing and landscape may vary to reinforce the identity of individual spaces but must retain enough individual characteristics to ensure a cohesive appearance to the whole development.

- 5.7 The development shall have regard to the frontage along Old Horsham Road to provide continuity to the street scene but with dwellings not being constant so as to draw attention to the established variations of character avoiding drawing a tied age to the frontage.

- 5.8 Dwelling sizes and forms shall be mixed within the development to create varied and visual interest but shall comprise primarily 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. Housing shall be predominantly two-storey to reflect the dominant form of development in Beare Green.

- 5.9 To reduce car speeds and ensure the spatial quality of the development, the housing shall be laid out to create ***pinch points***.

## **Density**

5.10 The Parish Council wishes to encourage a development of between 30-40 dwellings per hectare to maximise the efficient use of the site. Its development may vary resulting in distinctive areas.

5.11 An appropriate gateway entrance into the site from the Old Horsham Road will be an important feature, while its rural edge must ensure the retention of the boundary hedge and tree features.

The purpose of this approach will be to reflect a diverse character of existing housing in Beare Green and to allow a softening of the interface between the extant settlement (the development of Godwins Nursery) and the countryside beyond. This will be achieved through the use of spatial separation between buildings and the use of planting and landscaping.

## **Affordable Housing**

5.12 The District Council and the Parish Council's are committed to providing affordable housing for people in housing need. In accordance with Policy CS3 40% of the dwellings on site shall be affordable and shall be seen as an integral part of the development adopting the same palette of materials and building form as elsewhere on the development this being consistent with the District Council/s affordable housing SDP.

5.13 The Parish Council shall require affordable housing tenure to be split 75% rent and 25% shared ownership unless the shared ownerships provision remains in perpetuity.

It is a desire of the Parish Council to ensure the retention of the shared ownership strategy that owners will only be able to staircase up to 80% of the purchase value.

Should the 80% limit be accepted then the rental/shared ownership split could be divided equally, but in the event occupiers have the ability to secure full ownership the 75% rental (i.e. 30% of the total development) should prevail.

The registered provider for the affordable housing should be one that has development partner status with the Homes and Communities Agency and have a local presence in the Mole Valley area.

The Section 106 Agreement relating to this development will seek to restrict occupation to local people in Capel Parish or to those persons who have worked in the parish for at least 3 years and can demonstrate need. While this would normally apply to rural exception sites given the importance the Parish Council attaches to the housing which is contained within a rural environment the condition should also apply to this development. Accordingly, the Local Lettings Plan is to be applied as part of the Parish Council agreement for this development. In addition, the occupation by residents or those associated with Capel Parish should be retained for subsequent occupations as part of the Letting Plan Policy.

#### **Permeability/Access to Public Transport**

- 5.14 The development shall make provision for the unstrained movement of pedestrians and cycles.

With no existing footpath along the site frontage and with the buttress wall to the railway abutting the highway the Parish Council support appropriate design measures be incorporated to provide a safe crossing to the west side of the Old Horsham Road thus enabling the soft verge to the road frontage to be retained.

The on-site pedestrian routes shall provide a clear and legible footpath route.

### **Access**

- 5.15 Access shall be provided to the site by the provision of a new T-junction from Old Horsham Road. The junction may be designed to create an entrance gateway to slow traffic as it enters the site and from the village.

### **Parking**

- 5.16 Off-street parking shall be provided through parking courts and garages which shall be discretely located to prevent them from dominating the street scene. The layout shall avoid individual frontage parking.

- 5.17 The internal road layout shall be designed to maximise road speed of 20 miles per hour. The road network shall be subservient to the built form of the development with traffic calming employed throughout.

Shared services for pedestrians and vehicles may also be provided in appropriate locations dependent upon the road hierarchy and road traffic generation.

### **Designing Out Crime**

- 5.18 The housing layout shall pay particular attention to limiting the opportunities for crime. Housing shall, wherever possible, be orientated to provide passive surveillance, overlooked circular routes, parking areas and open spaces. Where possible gardens shall interlock.

It is expected that the new development will have regard to the MVDC/SPD

***'Designing out Crime.'***

## **Materials and Detailed Features**

5.19 Facing and roof materials of the dwellings shall be selected from a traditional range of materials, characteristic for this part of Mole Valley (Capel Parish).

The palette of materials shall be limited to variations to allow contrast. Applied features will not be acceptable. Preference shall be given to the following palette of materials:-

- red and dark red brickwork;
- painted brickwork may be acceptable at given locations within the development but shall not be used for properties on the frontage to Old Horsham Road;
- a plain tile roof with simple roof tiles on prominent facades.

## **External Materials**

5.20 External materials shall be compatible with the quality of the housing. Brick walls may be used sparingly along the highways within the centre of the development to reinforce the spatial identities of the development.

5.21 The common palette of paving materials shall be adopted for the development.

## **Landscaping**

5.22 Planting shall be used to create continuity yet distinctiveness in the different spaces within the development. Preference shall be given to native species.

### **Formal Open Space**

5.23 Given the provision of the major play area at Mere Bank within the body of Beare Green for older children there will only be a requirement for a single LAP to be provided for young children within the body of the development close to where young children live and within the walking time of one minute from home. This will provide essential play opportunities for toddlers and young children in locations that are overseen by parents. Particular attention shall be given to providing this in a location where passive surveillance can be achieved.

The essential characteristics of the LAP in addition to its walking time location shall be:-

- (i) its position beside a pedestrian pathway or route that is well used:
- (ii) it is reasonably flat and well drained:
- (iii) it has an activity zone of 100 metres square:
- (iv) it shall contain play features but not equipment:
- (v) it shall be contained by a 600mm guard rail or low level fence:
- (vi) it is overlooked by nearby houses.

### **Community Facilities**

5.24 The developer will need to make a contribution towards community facilities within the area, this to be agreed in consultation with the Parish Council.

### **Design Code**

5.25 The Design Code proposed within the development scheme will ensure that the development reflects the character of the locality and creates a secure and appealing environment in which to live.

### **The Gateway Housing**

- 5.26
- higher density with short terraces and occasional semi-detached properties;
  - variation of use of materials to avoid extensive massing and monitoring but retaining design continuity;
  - short front garden areas;
  - cars to be garaged or grouped in small courtyards;
  - pedestrian priority.

5.27 The aim of the gateway housing will be to provide ***pinch points*** to definite spaces and reduce vehicle speeds into the development while the frontage housing will facilitate the continuity of the street scene.

### **Village Extension Housing (into the development)**

- 5.28
- medium density terrace and semi-detached housing;
  - individual properties to articulate the road layout;
  - single pedestrian footway;
  - traffic calming throughout the development;
  - delineated parking spaces to the terraces with off-street garages or parking grouped into small car courtyards if possible;
  - front gardens with varied boundaries;
  - key buildings used to determine visitors.

## 6. **Planning Agreements**

6.1 The District and Parish Council's will seek Legal Agreements to ensure that the principles set out in this Development Brief are delivered. The proposals will have regard to Planning Infrastructure Contributions (PIC) in accordance with the District Council's adopted Code of Practice. It is envisaged that the Legal Agreement to which the Parish Council's will be party will include the following:-

- PIC contributions;
- affordable housing provision;
- contribution towards community facilities.

## **Land Ownership**

6.2 The frontage land to Old Horsham Road is in the ownership of Capel Parish Council (see attached Plan). As it will be necessary to include this land in any formal application it will be a Parish Council requirement to be party to any agreement. Furthermore, to ensure that the approved character and design of development remains the Parish Council will seek to impose a Restrictive Covenant preventing any alteration to the design and character of the dwellings. The reason for this requirement is to ensure that any alterations that may be possible through a planning application which would impact upon the phasing and character of the development can be controlled.

## 7. **Implementation**

7.1 The land owner will determine the chosen developer who shall undertake a Public Consultation in relation to the development proposals prior to the submission of a formal Planning Application.

