

## **CATERHAM VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE CHURCH WALK APPLICATION TA/2019/145**

Last year Ropemaker exhibited their proposed plans for the Church Walk Shopping Centre. The developer says that over 800 people attended. Responses to the exhibition expressed a number of major concerns regarding the overdevelopment of the town, the lack of parking facilities and the lack of infrastructure. While Caterham Valley Parish Council supports the regeneration of the town, we are very disappointed and very concerned to note that Ropemaker have completely ignored the concerns of the residents and this Parish Council in their current application. We still have many concerns related to height, density, lack of parking and lack of infrastructure.

Listening to comments from residents at the exhibition, the developer has still been unable to answer many of the legitimate concerns of those attending and the Parish Council echoes those concerns.

While the developer claims that the proposed development will be for young professionals, surely it is discriminatory to other potential tenants of the apartments.

The new draft Tandridge Local Plan refers to the Caterham Masterplan in relation to density figures. However, it should be noted that there are no density figures quoted in the Caterham Masterplan SPD.

The low percentage of affordable flats will not help our local community, and will also mean that there may be 4 adults sharing a 2 bedroom flat, making it likely in this area, that car ownership will be higher, not lower, as the developer is trying to convince us.

The developers state that this is the first type of development of this scale in a town of the size of Caterham and that Caterham has limited employment opportunities. This type of development to date has been built in areas that have had access to good transport links accompanied by significant retail development, including major department stores. We do not have the transport links of London, Epsom, Guildford or Crawley and similar places that have been used as a comparison to Caterham. We are an experiment that could fail horribly.

We would also suggest that, given the size and complexity of this application, the time limit for people to respond is too short. There should be details of the plan with a model on view at the local library or at the empty shop in Church Walk. People that do not have access to the internet otherwise have to go to the Tandridge Council offices in Oxted during office hours. To absorb fully this application would likely take a full day or a few visits.

Caterham Valley Parish Council believes that Caterham needs some major investment. However, we do not believe that this proposed development, in its current form, is the best option for the following reasons:

### **PARKING / TRANSPORT**

- It is for 178 units (all rented) with 178 parking spaces, which is completely inadequate car parking for the number of units. The overflow car parking into the local roads will exacerbate the problems that residents are already experiencing and which have regularly been raised by this Council and others in response to planning applications and previous consultations. Adequate parking that meets TDC's parking standard of 1.5 spaces unallocated or 2 spaces allocated is essential. The parking allocation should remain unallocated and not be changed at a later date to allocated. This allows for optimum residential use of the spaces.
- The proposal for car parking falls below the Tandridge parking standards. Based on an assessment of the future uses (and existing Morrisons) the future car parking requirement for the development would be 770 parking spaces. This is based on the following requirements from the parking standards:

- Morrisons - 285 spaces
- Retail space (A1 Assumed) - 158 spaces
- Cinema - 60 spaces
- Residential - 267 spaces

The proposal, with a total of 655 spaces, is therefore 115 spaces under the required spaces for the town.

- It should also be noted that the parking provision within the Centre cannot be viewed in isolation and reference must be given to the original planning application granted in the late 1980's for the site. The Valley Hotel and a town centre car park occupied the site. The replacement multi-storey car park was to replace the town centre car parking that was lost and as such the under provision will not only impact the viability of the centre, but also impact the wider town.
- It was documented in the 2011 census that 49% of the population in the area use their car to get to work. Travelling in any direction aside from London, except by car, is not easy. You cannot easily go to Oxted, Redhill or Sutton and, without a car. Bluewater is out of the question. Trains are overcrowded (the 06.35 Caterham to Victoria train is reportedly already one of the four most crowded in Surrey and routinely exceeds its passenger capacity; it has been known to carry 270 more passengers than the official number) and buses do not meet the needs of many local people, especially in the evening. Therefore, a car is essential for many homes and many have more than one car. It is an admirable ambition to limit car use but this will also not happen overnight.
- The general car ownership in Caterham Valley Parish area is 1.3 cars per dwelling. Whilst the transport report references the Surrey guidelines for town centre locations, and their acceptance of a reduction in the maximum parking requirements, it must be noted that a number of the major towns in Surrey have great North, South, East, West transport links. Such links are missing from Caterham. Therefore, to ensure a thriving retail offer, parking provision must be provided at the current Tandridge Parking Standard, which takes account of the car ownership in excess of 1.3 per dwelling in Caterham Valley. It should be noted that this number is depressed by the prevalence of retirement homes.
- The TDC draft Local Plan, in point 8.1 of the Issue and Opportunities section, says 'Our resident population is highly skilled, but over 70% commute to work outside of our District, meaning we have notably low self-containment, where residents work within the district in which they live'.
- The assessment of the accommodation and its proximity to public transport does not consider the Tandridge Economic Proposition Report (2018) which detailed that the location that most people from Tandridge travel out to for employment is neighbouring Reigate and Banstead. The transport assessment highlights only two bus services that serve this journey (the 357 and the 400) and these are hourly and run during the day only with a more limited service at the weekend.
- The net outflow of traffic from Caterham is to
  1. Reigate/Redhill/Banstead
  2. Croydon
  3. Westminster
  4. Crawley
  5. Mid-Sussex
  6. Sevenoaks
  7. Sutton
  8. Bromley
  9. Mole Valley

Only two of these areas (Croydon and Westminster) are served well by public transport. The estimates the developer has presented for travel times are extremely optimistic and the idea of using taxis in evening is not always realistic. Therefore, adequate parking with new development is paramount.

- In the TDC draft Local Plan Section 7 where it references Quality of Life, in Point 7.9 it states 'On the whole, our residents live a high quality of life with access to green open spaces. They value the countryside and proximity to London. Car ownership is higher than the English average. 48% of households have access to two or more vehicles whilst 11.8% have no car. Car ownership could of course link to individual choice and wealth, as well as necessity due to the predominant rural nature of the District'. Therefore, adequate parking with new development is paramount.
- Transport estimates appear to only reflect optimum travel times. As an example, the travel time to Gatwick is estimated at 47 – 48 minutes by train. However, outside of the optimal time, the journey time can be 75 minutes.
- Local bus and train services are woefully inadequate for any residents without a car who do not work in Croydon or London. For example, if someone works at East Surrey Hospital, which is less than a half hour car drive away, they will not be willing to trust to our bus services to get them there. It takes 43 minutes at the quickest and is very difficult to get to out of peak hours.
- The company that is contracted to manage the car park is likely to charge the residents who want car parking spaces so they will probably still park in the local roads to avoid further expense on top of rent and bills etc. This will make parking on the Croydon Road side of the town more difficult. It will also affect Harestone Hill, Grange Road and other roads in Harestone. To avoid this, we believe that there should be no charge for the residential parking.
- There is no specific allocated parking for the cinema. It will use the available space in Morrisons in the evening but there is no thought to what will happen at weekends or when children are on holiday. If the cinema has showings mornings and afternoons (as at local Everyman cinemas), it will also be used during the day. While the cinema is a popular idea, it is a high price to pay for overdevelopment of the site and the problems this will bring. This Council believes that the prospect of a cinema is being used as a 'sweetener' to local residents so that they overlook the unsuitability of the development as a whole. We understand that the developers have stated that the cost of building the cinema complex has to be covered by adding the fourth storey of residential on to this development. The residents have NEVER been given the choice to not have a cinema and not have a fourth storey of residential.
- There is no detail of any changes to the car park management scheme. Currently, time is limited to 3 hours and it is not accessible in the late evening to support the night-time economy that is wished for by Tandridge. This development needs to include appropriate car park management with parking available for longer than 3 hours. It is stated that with the expansion of the car park – an extra half level on the top of Morrisons and an extra level above the current ground floor level by Eothen Close flats – the publicly available car park space will increase from 433 to 549. Disabled parking will be included in this at 27 spaces (21 currently), and family spaces will be reduced to 14 (32 currently). In order to achieve this increase all car parking spaces, except disabled and family ones, will now be the minimum size requirement of 2.4 meters x 4.8 meters, which would only be practical if there is good lighting, no columns and there were not people carriers or vans either side of your vehicle. The smaller proportions for the car parking spaces are entirely unsuitable given the construction of the building.
- It is stated that there will be a pay and display system for parking, enabling longer term car parking in the car park, and that the car park will stay open until 23.00. It is important to maintain free parking for 3 hours as at present in order to continue to attract visitors to the town centre.

- The loss of staff car parking facilities from the back of the current shops will result in 30 to 40 cars being displaced (presumably to nearby roads) to make way for this development. Where will the staff park?
- There is no parking provision for visitors to the residential development. Under any circumstances, visitor parking should be included as part of the development. However, with a possible 480 residents in these apartments, visitor parking at TDC's current standards is essential. Otherwise yet more cars will be displaced to the surrounding already saturated areas.
- The cycle assessment suggests ease of cycling within a 5km radius. This has clearly been assessed on the length of road and not the local topography that a place called "Caterham Valley" has. We would challenge any of the developer's team to make the journey from either Warlingham and back or Godstone and back. Caterham Valley to Caterham on the Hill and is up Church Hill which is very steep. You do not see many cyclists travelling that route.
- The current parking assessment by the developer suggests the total parking requirement for the site for retail, i.e. non-residential to be 385 spaces, not including cinema parking where an individual assessment is to take place. However the parking standards would suggest up to 503 spaces are required (this number is based on all A1 and no A3). If the number was assessed at 933 sq ft of A3, the total requirement for the retail units alone would be 540 spaces.
- The developer argues that the retail units should be assessed as A1 rather than A3 as there is no requirement when located in a town centre location. However, this assumption would be based on availability of car parking, of which there is none in the town for the extent of A3 proposed. Waitrose should be excluded as the car park is managed and restricts parking to 1 ½ hours and the upper two floors are all day pay and display and managed by Network Rail. Neither is an attractive proposition for an evening out on the town.
- There are clear guidelines for the parking requirements for a cinema, which should be followed.
- It is therefore clear that the development falls lamentably below the required standard, and the additional 220 spaces proposed, whilst welcome for the town, will not address the need within the town for the scale of the development. As such, this application should be refused on these grounds.

#### **CHARACTER / DESIGN / SCALE / MASSING**

- Caterham Valley has been developed, as the name suggests, in a Valley with steep wooded hillsides. Within the Valley itself, there are many changes in gradient. To preserve the character of the valley, care needs to be taken that new developments understand and work with contours, so as not to lose the identity of the area. This current plans diagrams showing different height of buildings is very misleading because it ignores the contours of the valley floor.
- In 2015, Tandridge District Council commissioned The Town Centre Design Statement, together with the Neighbourhood Plan group to develop a community and business-led vision of how Caterham Town Centre should look and feel in the future. This was completed and adopted by Tandridge District Council. It is in fact mentioned in the Design and Access Statement of this application.
- The current buildings on Station Avenue on the potential development side of the road are 3-storeys high. This development is an unacceptable 5-storey architectural mass, comprising the retail units on the ground floor with 4-storeys of flats on the upper floors. This is not in keeping with the character of the area and is much too high for the Valley, completely changing the look and feel of the area. It will dwarf everything around it, particularly the train station building and the Waitrose supermarket on the other side of the road.

- The height comparisons shown on the plans are disingenuous. Comparing heights of buildings that are on a slope means you lose the rhythm of building and character. The character of the Valley is that it is uneven chalk bedrock which allows for a diverse rhythm and balance with buildings that reflect the topography. The proposed design will lead to an overbearing canyon effect in the heart of Caterham Valley, eliminating views of the surrounding wooded hillside, a part of the area's character and in contradiction to the Town Design Statement, the Harestone Design Guide's Character Area, the AECOM Design Guidance and the SEA within the emerging Caterham, Chaldon & Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan.
- The frontage of the new development is built with no sense of place. Design cues should have been taken from the iconic building in the town i.e. on Godstone Road. The proposed development of the Miller Centre Theatre has merged good quality modern design with a much loved heritage building and any development in the Valley should follow this example.
- A comment already made is that 'The Station Avenue elevation is key to the town; it hits people as they come out of the station. Ropemaker's proposed design is a pastiche with an unimaginative, unattractive pseudo "Edwardian" facade with irregular roof lines and contrasting brickwork. Because it is proposed that the modular method of construction would be used, this means that it has to be all straight lines since curves cannot be accommodated.' We as a Council wholeheartedly agree.
- This development does not contribute in any way to the character of the town – the current buildings on Croydon Road and Godstone Road have local historic character. The current buildings on Station Avenue at least have some character. We believe it would take an exceptional and imaginative design to get around this issue. This is certainly not it. The suggestion is that the elevations have been amended to reduce impact from Station Avenue. The plan shows the scale and mass and the contrast with Hamptons and the Godstone Road corner framing the view of St Johns Church. The prison block impact of the view from the Church Hill overlook, or from Harestone Valley Road will be similar. Headlights will glare into bedroom windows for the houses and flats on both Clareville Road and Eothen Close.
- The draft Caterham, Chaldon & Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the heritage and historic buildings in Caterham. The Caterham Town Design Statement, which was adopted by Tandridge in November 2017, was to be a material consideration when looking at new planning applications. With regard to Station Avenue and Godstone Road, the Design Statement states the following:

#### **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

This recommendation has been completely ignored and the buildings are planned to be demolished and replaced by a huge very low quality functional development, which is based on a Lego style construction design, which does nothing to enhance the character of the town. The inclusion of Station Avenue shops in this plan without any attempt to keep the current facades is unacceptable.

- The Tandridge Local Plan Urban Capacity Report 2018 says that site and massing is based on its appropriateness within the wider landscape, townscape and site characteristics. How does this potential development meet these criteria?
- This proposed development is contrary to Tandridge Local Plan Detailed Policies DP2 in that it is not appropriate for the town in terms of scale, type and design. Old buildings full of character would be destroyed to make way for the 5-storey monolithic, characterless building if this application were approved.
- This proposal is also contrary to Policies CSP18 and CPS19 with regard to General Policy for new Development and Design of the development. It does not ensure that the proposals have regard for the character of existing build up and rural areas of the District respecting the attractive environment, both of which are valued by the communities. It neither provides a high quality of design nor makes best of use of the land nor respects the character of the local area. Any design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted (NPPF- paragraph 64).
- The height and density would set a dangerous precedent for anything else that is built / developed in the town centre (Quadrant House for example has planning permission for a change of use to residential). The new height of the development on the Rose and Young is being used as a precedent for Church Walk Shopping Centre, showing the potential domino effect should this application succeed. It should be noted that the Rose and Young site slopes from the Croydon Road down towards the railway. Therefore, it will not be as monolithic as the proposed development at Church Walk.
- The comments that have been made by the developer about the scaling down of the development are disingenuous. The change from 183 units in the Pre Application consultation to 178 units in this application makes very little difference to the scale and mass of this development.
- There are pitched roofs with flat bits in between but the design is very uniform. At the presentation the developer stated that they wanted to fit in with the local 'look' of slightly haphazard roof lines but clearly they have changed their minds. Apart from the Station Road façade, all other elevations have flat roofs, which does not adhere to the Harestone Design Guide.

## **ECONOMY**

- The current floor space for retail is 4,891 square metres; the proposed retail space is 3,945 sq metres. This equates to a reduction of 946 sq metres (almost 20%) of retail floor space. Even with the inclusion of the cinema which will be 894 sq metres, there is still a net loss of 52 sq metres. This development is about the residential offer and had little or no regard for a new / regenerated shopping centre.
- The transport report states that 'each retail unit will be less than 500 sq metres and that the area will be comparable to a local parade of shops serving the local community as part of a wider town centre provision'. This was certainly not the impression given at the exhibition / consultation as we were informed that the development would attract major brands into the town. Major brands are unlikely to want a unit of less than 500 square metres and we would like to see a more diverse range of shops than we have currently.

- The application allows for 22 retail units, 76% class A1 and 24% class A3 (food and drink). This could mean that of the 22 units, there may be 17 retail outlets and perhaps 5 food and drink outlets. Given what we have currently, is this really any better? As far as we know, to date there have been no definite shops or cinema names attracted. Given uncertainty over even developments such as Westfield in Croydon, how likely is it that we will end up with high-density flatted development with empty shops.
- How can Ropemaker guarantee that good quality traders will occupy the spaces or that we will continue to keep the one that we currently have. They cannot. This is illustrated in Addlestone (another of the developer's sites) where half the retail units are still empty. The retail is clearly not the priority for this development; it is the rental properties that will made money for Ropemaker and its pension fund with no consideration for the quality of living that we want for people who live in Caterham.
- With a lack of jobs and employment space in Caterham, the young professionals who will theoretically inhabit these flats will have to travel to work, either in London or elsewhere, and therefore they will not contribute to the daytime economy of the town at all. Many will also probably socialise away from home during the week too. For those who work in Caterham, many of the jobs are relatively low paid i.e. in retail, hospitality and care homes.
- All flats are rented and will be part of a managed development with a concierge. The developers, when asked for details of other towns where this sort of development has been successful, quote towns such as Epsom, Crawley and Guildford. All these towns are hugely different to Caterham both in size and composition. They are much larger, already have a large successful retail offering, have good local bus and train services, and crucially also a large number of local companies with offices so that people can work locally.
- The developer states that people living in the apartments will not use cars and that their presence will kick-start the other areas of the town centre. This is nonsensical. The only way that the new flat dwellers will help the general economy in the town is if they have local jobs and therefore be frequenting the town during the week as well as at weekends. However, as previously covered in this response, in the event that the inhabitants of the flats have jobs in the local area, they will need cars because, as we all know, to get anywhere other than Croydon or London, cars unfortunately are necessary. If they commute for work, and their family and friends are in Croydon or London, they will not need a car, but they will not be helping our local economy much. The developer cannot have it both ways.
- Tandridge District Council's own assessment, as published in the draft Local Plan 2033 document, says Caterham has lost office space and in the future, it should be protected. This development flies directly in the face of that assessment.

## **FLOODING / SEWERAGE**

- There are well-known concerns about drainage, and the ability of our sewage system to cope with yet more flats. These fundamental issues have not been dealt with in this application. A sustainable design that protects the town from flooding is essential.
- The Caterham Flood Action Group are concerned about all development in the local area and the increased flood risk to existing businesses and homeowners downstream and we would echo those concerns.

- Caterham Valley Parish Council also has serious concerns about potential flooding of the lower ground floor areas of the proposed development, as Caterham is an area that has had major flooding in recent years. The idea of the cinema becoming a subterranean swimming pool (as one local resident described it) is very worrying.
- Thames Water initially gave an incorrect assurance about foul water, and only after pushing them because of information from the Caterham Flood Action Group, did Thames Water agree that there may be a problem. However, Thames Water will only do network modelling if the application gets permission to go ahead, which may be a little late.
- There is a proposed Deployable Flood Gate to the entrance to the car park. However, this floodgate does not look like it protects the cinema complex at all. There is escape access from the cinema so, if cinema goers can get out, water can get in. Or presumably, they can just drown. Or perhaps it is not needed because the cinema complex will never be built?
- The Atkins Report for Caterham Valley has not been published or shared thus preventing us from being able to take it into account when considering this application.
- There is frequent flooding in the Valley when there is heavy rain which pours off Caterham Hill down Church Hill. The heavy rain in the week of 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018 flooded shops in Station Avenue and Church Walk yet again. Torrential rainfall has caused over 30 incidents of surface water flooding across Croydon Road at Pizza Express. The Clarks shoe shop unit and basement storeroom were flooded and had sandbags in the Station Avenue doorway. As a result, the shop's door was moved to the arcade.
- The area outside the current entrance to Church Walk is on a current 'Wet Spot' area and is categorised as the highest risk 'Wet Spot' in all of Tandridge.
- All of the water from the car park at Morrisons still comes down the entrance / exit ramp and floods at the bottom.
- Caterham Valley and Hill have seen a huge amount of development over the past twenty years, with no upgrading of the local drainage system. On top of this, there is the greater likelihood of rain storms as a consequence of climate change. Above anything else, it is essential that the flood prevention measures/drainage of the re-developed Church Walk be adequate or preferably over-engineered.
- People generally talk of the one in a hundred years storm and accompanying floods, but we have had storms and flooding locally in 1995, 2003, 2013 and 2016. In 2014, the rain was so heavy that flooding closed the A22 between Whyteleafe and Purley. It was more than a month before it reopened. The June 2016 storm caused a huge amount of flooding in Caterham.
- It has been pointed out that if the water table is already high after a prolonged period of very wet weather, the attenuation chamber would not discharge to ground. What would happen then? The attenuation chamber should be over-engineered to take account of the flood danger. Someone queried what would happen to the underground cinema if there were a flash flood.
- If potential commercial tenants learn that they are likely to be flooded out on a regular basis, they might well be wary of coming to Caterham at all.
- The Groundwater Report is based on incorrect Environment Agency maps, which do not reflect the catchment in reality. We would suggest that development in Caterham should in fact be put on hold until the flood maps and the flood alleviation schemes study are produced.

## HEALTH & EDUCATION

- We believe there has been no consultation with the closest doctor's surgery, Caterham Valley Medical Practice, in Eothen Close or as far as we are aware any other medical practices in the area. Has any thought been given to the impact of 480 extra residents on the medical services in the area?
- We understand that part of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment would be allocated to the NHS. However, there is no guarantee that any of this money would be specifically allocated to Caterham Valley Medical Practice. This was a comment made by one of the consultants at the exhibition last year.
- Where General Practice Facilities are concerned, the Health Report in the draft Neighbourhood Plan says the following:
  - 10.5 The total number of patients registered in the Neighbourhood Plan area is high at 31,864, which represents 38% of all Tandridge District patients. Four of the nine general practises in Tandridge are within the Neighbourhood Plan area – Caterham Valley Medical Practice, Chaldon Road Practice, Townhill Practice and Whyteleafe Practice – and the collective average patient list is 7,966, a figure that is 75% more than the national average patient list. The number of patients registered in the Neighbourhood Plan area exceeds the population of 26,725 by approximately 5,100 people from other areas.
  - 10.6 The Practice Managers consider that the increase in population – compounded by the increasing percentage of elderly patients and patients with dementia – will inevitably lead to pressure on their premises and services. In particular both Chaldon Road and Whyteleafe Practices considered that future growth could make their existing provision unsustainable; the Whyteleafe Practice, for instance, already believe that they need to increase their premises by 100% as soon as possible to cope with the current patient load.
  - 10.7 Not only should the existing provision be safeguarded, but there is an urgent need for expansion of facilities or their relocation. It is important that any new location is not too far from the existing location to minimise disruption to patients and that it provides adequate parking facilities.
- As The Independent reported in December 2018, "**Millions could lose GP in 2019 as staff shortages and stress force doctors to close surgeries**" so the situation is going to get worse. In Caterham, the imposition of a high concentration of additional residential units will place an unsustainable burden on the local medical services.
- During the consultation, we were advised that no provisions for children would be necessary because these flats are designed for people who would flat share and who would not have children. If they subsequently had children, then they would move out of the development. What if they could not afford to move? There is little or no allowance for children to reside in this potential development so consideration has not been given to school provision. We are concerned as to what Ropemaker envisage will happen when one of their 'young professional' gets pregnant and cannot afford or does not wish to move out of their home. Would they be evicted? Ropemaker's stated assumptions on this matter are clearly illogical and provision for children should be reviewed.

## HIGHWAYS SAFETY / ACCESS

- The access to the resident's car park is the same as the access for the delivery vehicles. The turning space for delivery vehicles seems very tight. The common access onto Harestone Valley Road appears to be from the side of Soper Hall. Given Morrisons' car park access is just up from there and already causes congestion and near accidents on the mini roundabout, this is likely to cause serious problems on that road.

- The only pedestrian access that seems to be mentioned is the main one from Station Avenue. Has the access from the Church Walk side road now been removed from the plans? If so, this will leave that end of Godstone road isolated with no linkage to Church Walk shopping centre.
- How will pedestrians enter the development / shopping centre from Harestone Hill and Harestone Valley Road? Many elderly and disabled people currently enter via the current car park entrance. There needs to be a safe way for them to continue to do this, particularly if the access for vehicle traffic is to become two lanes wide as this will restrict the available space for a footpath for pedestrians.
- The service area off Harestone Valley Road will see an increase in traffic, especially if, as proposed, there will be more restaurants in the area, as they will have deliveries every day. Management of delivery times needs to be carefully managed to avoid chaos when school traffic already brings the area to a near standstill.
- We note the traffic report suggests that traffic wishing to get from the car park from Croydon and Godstone Road could go via Clareville road, then onto Harestone Hill and down. This will obviously cause the junction between Clareville Rd and Harestone Hill to be much busier, and the mini roundabout in front of the car park entrance to have a lot more traffic coming from the Harestone Hill direction. This mini roundabout is already subject to many near misses and will become even more congested and dangerous irrespective of the developers assertion that it 'will cope'. There is also Caterham School's term time traffic at morning drop off and afternoon pick up to be considered.
- On the fourth floor, the lift on the right hand side appears to run out. The only lift to this floor is therefore the main one at the front. There are stairs going down on both sides but we are unsure as to how this connects to the refuse areas.
- On the fifth floor, the apartments at the front have balconies/external terraces. What restrictions will be placed on residents about what they can do with that space? This has the potential, particularly with rental flat sharing, for the exterior to look very untidy, and for anti-social problems. How will this be managed?

## **AMENITY / PRIVACY**

- There are no family and amenity areas provided except some communal facilities for flat dwellers and a 3-screen cinema in the basement. The only traffic free area that children in the development can use as a play area would therefore be the Town Square outside Morrisons.
- On the first floor level, the residents have private terraces overlooking both the middle of the development and looking out. These are shown on the plans as being planted up and green. Is the developer doing this or relying on the residents to plant? Will there be any restrictions on what can be put on the terraces? Will the residents be under an obligation to maintain the green areas of their private terraces?
- All flats have access to a balcony or outside area. However, these overlook either the interior of the new retail space and 'town square' or Station Avenue, or Church Walk (the original) at the side.
- On the third floor the flats completely overlook the 'private terraces' below.
- We would like to see a landscape plan of the external communal area.

- The extra level of car parking by Eothen Close is very close to flats that currently suffer very little disruption or noise from the car current park. We can see no information on the plans as to how this extra level will be landscaped, both from the Eothen Close side and the Harestone Hill frontage. It is important that this is not neglected, as it could look really ugly.
- Consideration should also be given to the residents of Eothen Close, as their views will be impacted, and noise is likely to be a lot worse for them, especially with the longer opening hours of the retail centre and the car park.
- A condition should be applied to the application that a Phasing and Construction plan must be approved with the application.

## **RUBBISH & RECYCLING**

- It appears that residents will have to take their rubbish either down the stairs or by the main lift to the main lobby area which is a long way to deposit it in the main bins. This could create issues with disposal, which could result in a very untidy appearance as residents could leave rubbish in other parts of the development.
- Whilst the application details the residential bin store facilities, there appears to be no detail on the disposal of the retail rubbish.

## **SECURITY**

- Car park – Retailers currently say that security and monitoring currently is insufficient. An update in security measures is certainly required with better lighting and security cameras, as we would have concerns regarding damage to cars, and the potential for criminal activity with the later opening hours.
- The development creates a rat run through various stairwells and the car park creates dark, shady and isolated areas, which could encourage anti-social behaviour. How will the developer manage this?
- The alleyway on Station Avenue, between the current Lloyds building on one side and the Park and Bailey office on the other side, is dark and isolated and could also encourage anti-social behaviour.

## **DENSITY**

- 178 apartments with full occupancy as per the figures in the Design and Access Statement, this proposed development would have 480 new residents. Tandridge current Parking Standards 2012 state at 1.5 spaces unallocated or 2 spaces allocated, this equates to 267 spaces and 356 spaces respectively. The developer's argument is that young people renting do not have/want cars, hiring a vehicle as required. Should this development be given planning permission, the parking spaces must remain unallocated.
- Following the exhibition in October 2018, the Planning Consultant for Ropemaker said that the developable space at Church Walk was 1.5 hectares. This excludes Morrisons Supermarket but includes the car park.
- At 1.5 hectares, a residential density of 75 units per hectare (as per the current TDC Core Strategy 2008) would have allowed for a total of 113 units. This however does not include allowance for retail units so is gross overdevelopment of the site.

- Even allowing for the maximum residential density of 100 units per hectare in town centres, based on this figure, Church Walk should have a maximum of 150 residential units. However, again this does not allow for any retail space so is gross overdevelopment of the site. As stated earlier, the Tandridge draft Local Plan refers to the Caterham Masterplan in relation to density figures. However, there are no density figures quoted in the Caterham Masterplan document so we question its relevance to this application in this regard.
- It is clear that Tandridge have pushed a higher density to help with their housing targets. It is interesting to note that 49% of all development in Tandridge has been in Caterham in the last 10 or so years.
- We would consider this application provides for an overdeveloped block of flats with little privacy for the occupiers. It crams as many people as possible into the minimum allowed space. As the flats are all rented, the tenants will have little interest in the long-term upkeep of the development or the sustainability of the town as people will travel to work and move on when they find something more suitable. They are, by Ropemaker's own definition, transitory.
- Caterham Valley Parish Council would assert that a lower density and height would not make this proposed development unfeasible, contrary to the claims of the developer. This is the statement that is always used as an excuse or reason to have a higher density. For example, Councillors were informed that the original density of 72 units with 73 parking spaces at the old Adult Education Centre site was necessary to make the development feasible. The site now has 38 units with 72 parking spaces and somehow became feasible.

## SUMMARY

Caterham Valley Parish Council does not believe this development is about what is best for Caterham. It is about making money for the owners of Church Walk (BP Ropemaker Pension Fund) and Tandridge putting a dent in their housing targets at the expense of Caterham and its residents.

The developer has proposed the minimum affordable housing, the minimum Government standard in size for the apartments and substantially below bare minimum parking spaces. However, they have gone for an excessive maximum in housing numbers for the site. This development is about making money for the developer and BP Ropermaker and not about what is best for the residents of Caterham and the town.

We also believe that none of the flooding issues have been correctly addressed by this application.

The developer has paid lip service in its attempts to consult the residents and local groups and subsequently has given little or no consideration to their concerns, specifically in relation to overdevelopment, height of the proposed building and lack of parking provision. There have been no substantive amendments in this iteration of the scheme to address any of these concerns.

The developer has ignored the Caterham Town Design Statement recommendations and the draft policies in the Caterham, Chaldon and Whyteleafe Neighbourhood Plan. They have cherry picked statements from the CTDS with regard to an evening economy throughout the town to imply tacit approval of the whole Church Walk proposal, both residential and retail.

The developer quoted the Vision of the Caterham Town Masterplan when it says 'Caterham will be a town centre that is easy to access and enjoy. It will capitalise on its heritage, structure and central location. It is our aspiration for Caterham to become a thriving and vibrant place to live, shop, work and visit.' This is certainly not what this application delivers. This development will destroy much of what is left of Caterham's historic heritage and make the lives of the people who live in the immediate vicinity and

surrounds impossible and stressful as they try to park, use medical services and potentially find places for their children in the local schools.

Redevelopment of this site provides a unique opportunity to regenerate the town. We believe this current proposal is a missed opportunity for Caterham and will be detrimental, in its current form, to the residents of Caterham. With a development of this size and impact, in order to garner widespread support, the developer must do better with regard to design and size and must provide a proposal that would enhance the town for the residents who live here.

Caterham Valley Parish Council request that this application be refused.