

## Appendix 13: Caterham Woods

Please refer to Figure 21b

Additional responses from second (2024) statutory consultation are given in blue.

### Overview

Question C1: Does the Caterham Woods Extension Area have Sufficient Natural Beauty to be Designated as AONB?

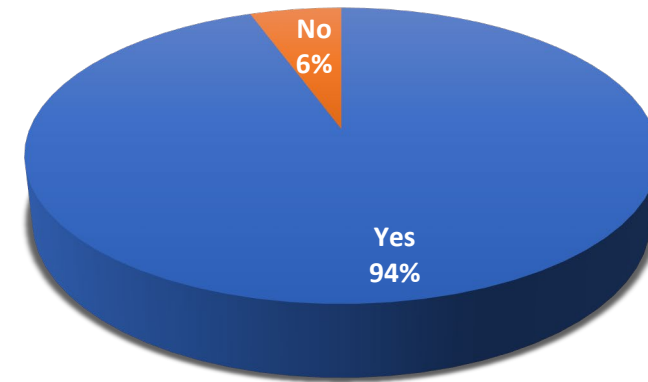
Natural Beauty	Responses
Yes	17
No	1
Not sure	0

Of the 18 respondents who answered Question C1, 17 (94%) felt that the Caterham Woods Extension Area has sufficient natural beauty to be designated as AONB.

Only 1 respondent answered no, this respondent answered no to this question for all Extension Areas.

Arguments setting out the desirability of designating this land focused around protecting the area for access and improved management for wildlife. These issues are addressed in Appendix 2.

Caterham Woods - Sufficient natural beauty to be designated



Question C5: Do you agree with the proposed boundary for the Caterham Woods Extension Area?

Boundary	Responses
Yes	14
Yes, but I wish to suggest an alternative	3
No	1
Not sure	0

Of the 18 respondents who answered Question C5, 14 respondents (78%) agreed with the proposed boundary for the Caterham Woods Extension Area while 1 respondent did not.

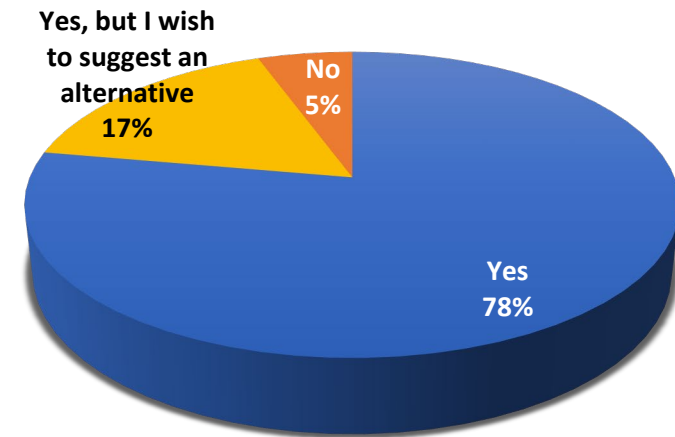
3 respondents (17%) agreed but wished to suggest an alternative boundary for the Extension Area, many providing supporting evidence.

The additional areas of land that respondents wish to see included within the proposed extension are:

- Extend boundary along Tupwood Lane.
- Extend boundary to include woods north of Weald Way.
- Include land at Dome Hill, Aldercombe Lane, Dome Hill Peak and lands around Beech Hanger.

There were no requested exclusions.

Caterham Woods - Agreement with the proposed boundary



During the second (2024) statutory consultation responses were received regarding **Deletion 6: Properties along Stanstead Road** and **Deletion 7: Property east of Tupwood Lane**. Natural England has reviewed these responses and provided further commentary in blue below.

Natural Beauty		
Theme	Representations	Natural England Commentary
<b>The proposed extension meets the Natural Beauty Criterion</b>	<p>The majority of respondents agreed that the proposed extension met the Natural Beauty Criterion, examples include:</p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WS18-U</b>  <i>'Caterham Woods importantly include, not only, the dramatic steep and folded chalk slopes but also recognised in the report: Extensive areas of woodland, including ancient woodland sites (Old Park Wood) and Arts and Crafts housing and historic sites (Whitehill Tower) which contribute to the natural beauty'.</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WEJ3-1</b>  <i>'The area has expansive stunning woodlands and chalk grasslands in which various wild flowers and plants, including orchids, grow. Other natural heritage includes Roman snails, butterflies, bats, bees and delightful deer with their fawns. Sites of cultural heritage such as Whitehill Tower and the War Coppice Garden Village should be included within the AONB.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-W5HJ-6</b>  <i>'The steep chalkland woodland.... is the strongest feature of the area. It has a tranquil nature. Even now exterior noise is barely audible. In the mornings, I can hear at least 6 different bird species (song), and neighbours have seen deer, squirrels and foxes. I'm informed there is evidence of badgers and bats. Ancient trees (when naturally dying in gap phase) cause an eruption in the chalk which produces unusual and varied habitats. So I would welcome a ANOB designation. The area has an interesting historical background and close proximity to</i></p>	<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p>Natural England agrees that land within the proposed Extension Area meets the natural beauty criterion for designation as AONB and that additional evidence provided by respondents supports the findings of the Natural Beauty Assessment.</p>

Natural Beauty		
Theme	Representations	Natural England Commentary
	<p><i>the Pilgrims Way (including nearby Pilgrims Fort). It is rumoured that, as part of the war fortifications, the area has a network of tunnels.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WE54-D</b>  <i>'This is, of course, very subjective but the woodland is peaceful, diverse and crucially within a relatively built up area, and as such should be preserved.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-W5RR-R</b>  <i>'It is an area with ancient woodland and fauna and an area with beautiful views and peace. A place where locals and visitors walk, relax and appreciate the history of the local area. The rich history of Chaldon and Caterham is encapsulated in this area. The trees throughout the year are stunning with change of colour and leaves.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WM6R-M</b>  <i>'I think it fits all the criteria you listed in your consultation report'.</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WM3Z-S</b>  <i>'Caterham woods is a magnificent retreat for walking, marvelling at the mature woodlands, or the bluebells that flourish. It is home to magnificent wildlife and, owing to its elevated position, reveal occasional but reaching views.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, it forms a wonderful filter to the ever increasingly busy M25 and other A roads. It is a special place that rightly deserves to enjoy AONB protection</i></p>	

Natural Beauty		
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	<p><i>(whatever that looks like in tomorrow's developer-led world....)'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-W5T7-Y</b></p> <p><i>'The chalklands of the North Downs around Caterham satisfy all of the criteria for land to be included in AONB:</i></p> <p><i>Landscape quality - unbuilt upon for centuries</i></p> <p><i>Relative wildness - the land is old woodland and not farmed or built upon</i></p> <p><i>Relative tranquillity - a few yards into the woods and no buildings or roads are visible</i></p> <p><i>Natural heritage features - the land supports huge biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Cultural heritage - there is nowhere in the vicinity to compare to these woods.</i></p> <p><i>The chalklands of the North Downs around Caterham are a unique landscape undisturbed for millennia.</i></p> <p><i>It is ancient prehistoric sea bed that has remained undisturbed since formation in the Late Cretaceous (~100-66 million years). Fossils of sea urchin from this period can often be found.</i></p> <p><i>In more recent geological time, a forest of dwarf oaks has emerged with the unique characteristic of having unusually short trunks before branches emerge, in some cases as little as three feet from the ground. These oaks</i></p>	

Natural Beauty		
<u>Theme</u>	<u>Representations</u>	<u>Natural England Commentary</u>
	<p><i>provide the basis for lichen and a huge variety of fungus and mushrooms, that emerge in late autumn. Among the oaks are a mix of ash, larch, mature beech, and other species of trees. This in turn supports a broad range of wildlife including owls, green woodpeckers, meadow ants, butterflies, deer and badgers - in fact literally hundreds of species of plants, animals and fungi.</i></p> <p><i>Ancient land of this nature cannot be replicated by rewilding projects. It is imperative this land is protected.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-W5HA-W</b></p> <p><i>'It's a beautiful landscape within easy reach of a contrasting busy city area. These open spaces need to be protected.'</i></p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-WMV4-P</b></p> <p><i>'It is a beautiful area with lots of wildlife and some protected wildlife. There's also some rare plant life that needs to be protected and allowed to grow. I think this area should be allowed to enable nature to flourish, rather than being subjected to building. Resident's should be promoting it, rather than destroying natural habitats.'</i></p>	
<b>The proposed extension does not meet the Natural Beauty Criterion</b>	<b>ANON-VUXE-W5T8-Z</b> considered the area did not meet the Natural Beauty Criterion. No justification was given.	<p><b><u>Commentary</u></b></p> <p>Natural England disagrees that the land identified for designation does not meet the Natural Beauty Criterion for the reasons set out in the Natural Beauty Assessment Report.</p>

Boundary		
Theme	Representations	Natural England Commentary
General agreement with proposed boundary	<p>A number of respondents agreed with the proposed boundary simply answering yes to the consultation question and providing no additional information. Some did provide additional commentary including:</p> <p><b>ANON-VUXE-W5HJ-6</b>  <i>'The current proposed boundary catches the highest areas of value.'</i></p>	<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p>Natural England notes the support for the proposed boundary and has provided a detailed commentary to the boundary issues raised by other respondents, which can be found below.</p>
Requests for Additional Areas		
Extend boundary to include woods north of Weald Way	<p><b>ANON-VUXE-WEJ3-1</b>  Reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance wildlife.</li> <li>Protect northern boundary of the War Coppice Garden Village and western boundary of Old Park Wood.</li> <li>Wood is owned by Tandridge District Council.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p>The woods along the western side of Weald Way occupy a steep bank which slopes down towards the rear of properties at Dome Hill. These woods are not ancient and comprises recently established beech woodland with little structural diversity. Natural England considers, in this location, that the road edge forms a more robust and permanent boundary.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>No change.</p>
Include land at Dome Hill, Aldercombe Lane, Dome Hill Peak and lands around Beech Hanger	<p><b>ANON-VUXE-WEJ3-1</b>  Reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views from these roads towards Old Park Wood are impressive.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p>The housing development associated with Dome Hill and Aldercombe Lane were considered in the Natural Beauty Assessment under EA8c and at the boundary setting stage where the boundary was adjacent to the fringes of Caterham. The Boundary Report states at page 37 <i>'Further east, where the landscape drops northwards towards the settlement of Caterham, care has been taken to include the steepest wooded or open slopes where the folded nature of the topography is strongly expressed and there are features of interest including ancient woodland, whilst at the same time, avoiding the splitting of settlement.'</i> It goes on to state <i>'The proposed boundary seeks to exclude the settlement of Caterham from the proposed extension. Tandridge Local Plan was</i></p>

Boundary		
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		<p><i>consulted to determine the extent of urban areas and of the Caterham Conservation Area. The proposed boundary does not include any of these built-up areas.'</i></p> <p>Natural England acknowledges that the development associated with Dome Hill and Aldercombe Lane does not fall within the settlement boundary of Caterham as defined in the Tandridge Local Plan. These areas of residential development nevertheless comprise relatively dense housing and express an urban character despite the heavily wooded slopes which form their setting.</p> <p>The views from this residential area are not into Old Park Wood which lies to the east of Weald Way.</p> <p>However, Natural England has reviewed the boundary in this area and has proposed a couple of minor changes in order to consistently exclude development along Stanstead Road.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusion</u></b></p> <p>Minor deletion to exclude residential and a public house along Stanstead Road. The boundary follows property boundaries.</p> <p>(Deletion 6 – Refer to Figure 21b)</p>
Object to proposed Deletion 6 and wish to comment on the boundary to include more land	<p>Of the 34 responses received for this area, those that provided a reason for their view objected to Deletion 6, and commented on the boundary as follows:</p> <p><b>ANON-PQ5Q-KRHH-H (Tandridge District Council)</b></p> <p><i>'Tandridge District Council would like to understand the rationale behind the deletion beyond that of being residential development. Elsewhere residential development is included within the</i></p>	<p><b><u>Commentary</u></b></p> <p>In each given situation Natural England seeks to define a pragmatic boundary which takes local circumstances into account and applies the Natural England Guidance boundary setting considerations. In this instance Natural England sought to consistently exclude development (in this case along Stanstead Road) as noted above.</p> <p>The application of wash-over should only be applied in exceptional circumstances. As noted in the Natural England Guidance, land needs to sit within a tract of qualifying land in order to be washed over. Given the peripheral location of the development and the</p>



Boundary		
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	<p><i>AONB and paragraph 5.3 of the guidance document states at bullet point 9 “a designation can wash over a tract of land even though land does not itself meet the designation criteria, even close to the boundary of a designated area, provided it sits within a sweep of qualifying land” – it therefore appears overly prescriptive to have removed the properties (which are few in number) from the AONB boundary. It is considered that the properties do not detract from the AONB’s natural beauty; the properties are congruous with their surroundings.’</i></p> <p><i>‘For the sake of clarity, Tandridge District Council would like to make it clear that it is in full support of all the proposals within the second consultation. This includes all proposed amendments, additions, and deletions; in regard to the deletions the Council would like some clarification as stated within the response. This should not be seen as opposing of the proposed deletions.’</i></p> <p><b>ANON-PQ5Q-KRPH-V</b>  <i>‘The land on both sides of Stanstead Road from The Harrow pub to the northerly entrance to Beech Grove is predominantly woodland. These woodlands are the habitat of foxes, deer, badgers, rabbits, owls, bats, kites, buzzards, multitude of small birds, butterflies and insects. The housing in this area is mainly rural in design with urban properties not starting to [until] you reach Stonehouse Gardens. The woods behind Dome Hill Peak and Aldercombe Lane provide paths for</i></p>	<p>opportunity to define a boundary which excludes the development, Natural England remains of the view that development along the road should be excluded.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Natural England has reviewed the boundary in this location considering the consultation responses. Natural England is aware that land between the two clusters of development has been cleared of vegetation and green metal fencing erected. Natural England is of the view that the clearance activity and fencing, coupled with existing clusters of development along the road, has caused fragmentation, impacting natural beauty along Stanstead Road. However, there is no current planning application or approved development associated with the cleared land and Natural England does not consider the adoption of the eastern fence line to be an appropriate robust boundary feature in this instance.</p> <p>Should the status of the land between the two clusters of development change, the boundary in this area would be reviewed accordingly.</p> <p>Natural England is also aware that further east there are active felling licences but it considers this activity to form part of active long-term woodland management, albeit resulting in some short-term change.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusion</u></b>  No change.</p>

Boundary		
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	<i>walkers, nature trails for the Oakhurst Grange school children and bridleways for the 4 local stables. The public footpaths behind Willey Lane are used by ramblers from Caterham en route to the more extensive walks of the North Downs Way and the fields to the west of Stanstead Road have public footpaths that run through unspoilt countryside and provide fantastic views of the South Downs and Wembley Stadium.'</i>	
<b>Extend boundary along Tupwood Lane</b>	<b>ANON-VUXE-W5HJ-6</b> requested the boundary be extended to follow Tupwood Lane. However, they also noted ' <i>I think there are pros and cons to this given the nature of the Urban landscape at the Northern end of the lane.'</i>	<p><b><u>Commentary</u></b></p> <p>The boundary along Tupwood Lane seeks to exclude development where it starts to occur on both sides of the road and is a higher density. Natural England has reviewed the boundary in this area and has made a minor boundary refinement to ensure the consistent exclusion of properties along the road.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusion</u></b></p> <p>Minor deletion to boundary to exclude property on eastern side of Tupwood Lane. (Deletion 7 – Refer to Figure 21b)</p>
<b>Support for the proposed Deletion 7</b>	<p><b>Of the 38 responses received for this area, only 1 provided a reason for their view, as follows:</b></p> <p><b>ANON-PQ5Q-KRHH-M (Tandridge District Council)</b>  <i>'Tandridge District Council considers that the deletion is consistent with the omission of properties forming the ribbon development that continues along Tupwood Lane.'</i></p>	<p><b><u>Commentary</u></b></p> <p>Natural England acknowledges the support for this deletion.</p> <p>No respondents commented on the boundary. Natural England notes, therefore, that there are no further responses seeking a change to the boundary in this area.</p>

Boundary		
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	<p><i>‘For the sake of clarity, Tandridge District Council would like to make it clear that it is in full support of all the proposals within the second consultation. This includes all proposed amendments, additions, and deletions; in regard to the deletions the Council would like some clarification as stated within the response. This should not be seen as opposing of the proposed deletions.’</i></p>	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>No change.</p>