

Westcott Village Association

Application for Designation of Neighbourhood Area

Application for Designation as a Neighbourhood Area – Part 2 (5) (1) & (b) Westcott Neighbourhood Area was formally designated on 5th February 2012 by the council’s Executive.

In accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) Part 2 (5) (1) (a) & (b) this document represents the statement explaining why Westcott Neighbourhood Area is considered appropriate to be re-designated as a neighbourhood area.

(a) Map Identifying the area to which this application relates

A map illustrating the proposed ‘Westcott neighbourhood area’ to which the application relates is available in **Appendix One**. The proposed boundary is almost identical to the current designated area in the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2026. Due to a minor change of Ward boundaries by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in 2023. Westcott now includes Milton Heath House, Milton Court and some other properties around both of those sites on its eastern boundary.

(b) Statement by Westcott Village Association explaining why this area is appropriate to be designated

The map in **Appendix One** represents a consensus of the members of Westcott Village Association and Westcott Village Forum that the neighbourhood area as described and specified in this application should be designated:-

The proposed Neighbourhood Area is called “Westcott” and is defined by the civil parish (unparished) of Westcott which is within the Mickleham, Westcott and Okewood Ward.

Westcott lies to the west of Dorking and covers an area of 9.78 square kms most of which is farm and woodland and the area extends approximately 4.5kms from north to south and 3.0kms from east to west at its longest points. Westcott neighbourhood has a population density of 232.6 per square km.

The Westcott neighbourhood area is bounded to the north and west by Wotton Parish, to the south by Capel Parish (Coldharbour) and to the east by Dorking North and South (unparished). The centre of Westcott village is a Conservation Area. There is also the Milton Street Conservation Area to the east of the village core.

Beyond the settlement boundary of Westcott village core the entire neighbourhood area is designated Green Belt and the majority of the Neighbourhood is also designated an Area of Great Landscape Value and Surrey Hills National Landscape (formerly the AONB).

The Westcott neighbourhood comprises (2021 census) 979 households and 2,275 residents most of whom live along or close to Guildford Road (the A25) within the village core. There are also a number of households in the more rural parts of the neighbourhood.

Westcott is “unparished’ and has a Residents Association (Westcott Village Association) with a Committee comprised of five volunteer Members from the village. Meetings are held every two months, including two Open meetings and an AGM every year.

There is a significant community spirit in the Village with several organisations providing social, sporting, youth, pastoral and caring facilities and services to all age groups.

Westcott village has two general stores and other retail premises, a village hall, church, primary school, community hub, doctor's surgery, public house, a sports club, recreation ground with children's play area and other amenities. These are mostly concentrated within or close to the village core and are accessible to the two bus routes which operate in Westcott.

We believe the area identified is appropriate for designation as a neighbourhood area for the following reasons:-

- It is the same area used for the existing Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2026
- It is consistent with the civil parish boundary for Westcott
- It does not overlap with any adjoining parish, ward or existing neighbourhood area
- That Westcott Village Association and Westcott Village Forum are the relevant bodies to make the application as they already represents the area concerned

Where relevant, consultation will be undertaken with our neighbouring parish councils.

Westcott Village Association has re-established the Westcott Village Forum to progress the preparation and submission of a Neighbourhood Development Plan on its behalf. This is the same process WVA followed for the current Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Forum is open to all residents of the village and a number of other stakeholders representing the interests of groups within the village – businesses, the school, the church, the doctors' surgery, village hall, the sports club, clubs and societies as well as different geographical areas of the village. This group has a written constitution (**Appendix Two**) agreed by Westcott Village Association and Westcott Village Forum in discussion with Mole Valley DC.

In summary, we believe that Westcott Village Association satisfies the requirements of the regulations. We trust the information provided in this application is sufficient to progress the application for designation of a neighbourhood area.

(c) Statement by Mole Valley District Council that the Organisation is a Relevant Body

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Part 2 (5) (1) (c) requires a 'relevant body' submits an area application to the local planning authority. Section 61G (2) of the 1990 Act defines 'relevant body' as:

(a) a parish council, or

(b) an organisation or body which is, or is capable of being, designated as a neighbourhood forum (on the assumption that, for this purpose, the specified area is designated as a neighbourhood area).

Mole Valley District Council notes that Westcott Village Association has submitted this application and is a relevant body for the purposes of Section 61G of the 1990 Act.

Appendix One – Proposed Westcott Neighbourhood Area

Appendix Two – Draft Constitution

Appendix Three – Westcott Village Forum membership distribution

Appendix Four – Outline of Westcott Village Forum Member Responsibilities