

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

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14th December 2021

Application Ref 20211422

Agricultural Barn Warren Farm Swillers Lane Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3ED

Application for determination as to whether prior approval is required for the proposed change of use of the agricultural barn to a dwelling with associated building operations under Class Q(a) and (b) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.

This application is similar to Ref 20171312, to which the Parish Council also objected and which was refused. Our previous comments have been repeated or updated.

The Parish Council does not consider that the overall criteria in Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order have been met. The building does not appear suitable for conversion. Being just a frame without existing floor or services it is not already capable of functioning as a dwelling so conversion would require substantial building operations, construction of structural elements and engineering works including access drive continuation, vehicle hardstanding and pathway.

We consider that the nature and location of the proposed dwelling, and the planning history of the site, are such that a formal planning application should be submitted for this proposed development.

The Parish Council therefore has to again **OBJECT** to this application.

We submit the following reasons and comments:

1. **Village envelope, Green Belt, land designation:** The Warren Farm site is outside the village envelope of Shorne, so in an area where Green Belt policy applies. The site is classified as a local wildlife site although it has been subject to more intensive farming in recent years.
2. **Landscape impact, light pollution, privacy:** An inhabited building in this location will have landscape impact for the Green Belt and the nearby Shorne Woodlands landscape area. The building would cause additional light pollution in an area that is presently dark, especially as the proposed

building has a large number of windows and rooflights (six) for its small size. Perhaps this aspect of the design could be reviewed.

The existing building is on the southern boundary of the field. Its southern flank is partly screened from wider view by bushes and trees growing close to its wall, which would not be practical for a residential building with windows, which should be retained. As it is located on higher ground and right on the border of the land, a converted building would be visually intrusive to a wide area of view and would affect the openness of the rural area.

Both the barn and the adjacent walking path would mutually have their amenity and privacy compromised by this conversion.

3. **Justification for new dwelling:** No “very special” reasons have been provided to justify the creation of a new and additional dwelling in the Green Belt.

4. **Need for a barn on a smallholding, barn not redundant:** Warren Farm was previously given permission to convert the “Apple Store” to residential use, to become a farmhouse for the smallholding. A smallholding needs to have covered storage for feed, machinery and equipment, and shelter for animals – for practical reasons these should be located near to the farm residential accommodation. This facility is being/can be provided by the present barn structure hence it cannot be said to be redundant.

5. **No additional agricultural buildings:** If conversion should be permitted, the question arises as to what additional/replacement agricultural building(s) will be needed instead of the existing barn, where on the site they will be located and how they will be accessed. This could further adversely affect the openness of the rural setting and again be detrimental to the Green Belt.

We note in connection with this point that a stable building has also been built on the site.

6. **Potential need for replacement barn:** A replacement barn would need to be built and brought into use before the existing barn could be converted but there is no current planning application/permission for that purpose.

7. **Suitability for conversion:** We would question the suitability of the building for conversion. There is no current floor and the steel uprights are just set in concrete blocks.

8. **Proposed versus actual boundaries:** A red line bounded area is shown on the OS site plan. As a converted agricultural building the permitted residential curtilage would normally be very narrow around the building, differently configured than the area shown on the plans. The future use of the remainder of the recently defined field needs to be clarified as it would otherwise appear that a much larger area is being defined for dedicated use by the proposed dwelling. It is noted that a significant number of windows are shown as looking outside of the building at the sides and rear.

9. **Vehicular access, turning and parking, refuse bins and cycles:** The vehicular access arrangements are in common with the converted Apple Store building but are incomplete as the extension to the driveway is not shown on the plans, and neither is there a turning area or locations for refuse bins and cycle storage.

The Parking spaces appear to be 5m long by only 2.5m wide. These are small and likely to be impractical.

10. **Future access to remainder of the smallholding:** It needs to be clarified as to how access to the rest of the smallholding will in future be made and maintained. The barn is bordered by an unmaintained highway now used frequently as a walking path to Public Footpaths so safety issues might arise through increased vehicular usage.

11. **Cramped development, future changes not permitted:** The proposed dwelling is small and will create a cramped form of development out of keeping with the general area. No extensions, loft conversions or additional buildings should be permitted.

12. **Detriment to the amenity of the Apple Store:** Having a driveway to another property passing through and so close to the existing previously permitted barn conversion will be detrimental to its amenity.