

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Land Adjacent to 356 Singlewell Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7RZ

Change of Use to Managed Residential Garden

1. Introduction

This assessment supports a revised planning application for land adjacent to 356 Singlewell Road, Gravesend. It examines the site's role within the Southfields redevelopment and confirms that its use as managed residential garden would not cause any material loss of open space. It should be read alongside the Planning Supporting Statement.

2. Site Description

The site measures approximately 95 sqm and adjoins 356 Singlewell Road. It is maintained as lawn and amenity space under a licence from Kent County Council. Although part of the former Southfields School site, it is physically separate from the main recreational facilities created through the redevelopment.

3. Purpose of Assessment

This assessment establishes:

- The site's historic function.
- Whether it forms part of the Southfields open-space network.
- Whether any recreational or community facilities would be lost.
- The significance of the small land area involved.
- Whether the proposal conflicts with open-space policy objectives.

4. Historic Function

Historic aerial imagery shows the land was once a vehicular and service route for Southfields School. It was never used as playing fields, sports pitches, play space, public parkland, or community amenity land. After redevelopment, the route became a small residual parcel adjoining residential properties. **Conclusion:** The site was not created for recreation; its use as managed amenity land does not remove any historic open-space provision.

5. Relationship to the Southfields Open-Space Network

The approved Southfields scheme includes playing fields, youth football areas, changing facilities, a MUGA, meadow grassland, biodiversity zones, informal paths, and community recreation spaces. The application site is not part of these facilities and does not support organised sport, public access, or recreation infrastructure. It therefore performs a different, non-strategic role.

6. Quantitative Assessment

Description	Area	% of Southfields Open Space
Application Site	95 sq. metres (0.024 acres)	0.16%
Southfields Site	14.6 acres	100%

The site represents less than 1/600th of the wider Southfields area — a negligible proportion.

7. Functional Assessment

- **Sports Facilities:** No loss of pitches, changing rooms, or MUGA provision.
- **Public Access:** No closure of rights of way, pedestrian links, or cycle routes.
- **Community Use:** The land is not used for organised sport or community activity.

8. Open-Space Quality

Before maintenance, the land was unmanaged by either KCC as landowner or Moat Housing as the Housing Association and was overgrown. Current management by the applicant and owner of 356 Singlewell Road provides regular upkeep, grass cutting, and improved visual quality, preventing neglect and enhancing the local environment.

9. Conclusions

- The site measures 95 sqm and was historically part of a school service route.
- It was never intended or used as recreational open space.
- The proposal does not remove any playing fields, sports pitches, MUGA facilities, or public access routes.
- The land has no strategic recreational function and represents 0.16 % of the Southfields site.
- The proposal does not affect the operation or accessibility of the wider open-space network.

Overall Conclusion The site was historically operational land, not designated recreational space. The proposal would not cause the loss of any recognised recreational facility, sports provision, public access route, or strategic open-space asset. It should therefore not be regarded as causing any significant or harmful loss of open space.

Appendices

Appendix A: Historic aerial photographs showing the former Southfields School service road and application site.

Appendix B: Kent County Council licence.