

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

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19th August 2026

Application ref 20260696

Queens Farm Queens Farm Road Shorne Gravesend Kent

Change of use of the existing livestock building to create x5 light industrial (Use Class Eg(iii) / storage (Use Class B8) units with x1 agricultural unit and installation of roof-mounted solar panels, along with the conversion of an existing agricultural unit in a building to the west of the site to a workshop (Use Class E).

The Parish Council has to **OBJECT** to this application due to significant concerns.

The site is within and adjacent to, and requires access through, a rural Conservation Area in the Green Belt, and will generate considerable additional HGV, van and other traffic on an unsuitable rural road (and other local roads) where problems are already being experienced. We question the appropriateness in general of creating a mini industrial/commercial estate in such an unsuitable Green Belt location, which is close to the Ramsar site.

A pre-application discussion with a GBC Officer is reported to have taken place.

1) Redundancy versus future need

The barn complex was permitted in connection with existing and on-going agricultural use, for which the historic existing barns and farmyard were deemed no longer suitable. The historic farmyard was then converted to residential use.

The location of the new barns west of Queens Farm Road was accepted as being a very special circumstance, and the subsequent use of one area for woodworking was accepted as being an appropriate use in an agricultural area.

It is concerning that it is now being stated that much of the new barn complex is redundant if that might lead in future to a new application for a barn/barns elsewhere on the landholding. Therefore all permitted development rights should be withdrawn.

2) Red line boundary

Land to the north of the barns is not part of the red line boundary but the proposed units have rear doors. Use of these doors and the land at the rear should be clarified, and prevented/controlled by Condition. Further landscaping (existing should be retained) would be appropriate.

Suitability for conversion

The main barn does not appear to presently have any floor or general foundations.

Parking

14 spaces are shown, it is unclear if that also allows for defined additional visitor parking.

Depending on the use to which the units are put, including internal expansion by means of mezzanine floors, it is a concern that parking need could greatly exceed the on-site provisions. Any roadside parking would compromise traffic movements and the visibility splays.

The spaces numbered 3 and 4 block the existing access to the west, to the rest of the land.

Landscaping and biodiversity enhancement

A landscaping scheme has not been provided, this should be submitted before permission is given.

Installation of one bird box and one bat box seems a rather minimalistic approach to environmental enhancement given the location of the site.

Exterior Lighting

This is an area that is presently dark, and which is close to the Ramsar site.

A lighting plan is needed, with strict controls on external and security lighting, this should be submitted before permission is given.

Foul drainage and other refuse

6 new toilets are shown. The Planning Statement states that "The existing development is not connected to mains drainage and a new Klargest treatment plant is proposed to serve the proposed development."

Details of this and its proposed location could not be found in the submitted documents, and it is not clear whether such installations are suitable for drainage from commercial/industrial uses.

3 water butts are shown at the rear of the main barn units, the access arrangements and usage of these requires clarification.

A Location for refuse bins (in-use and awaiting collection) is needed.

Road access and Traffic issues

The barns are in a non-sustainable location without any nearby public transport or local facilities, and where access largely relies on motor vehicles.

Queens Farm Road is a narrow, single track roadway with only informal passing places. It was not intended for the level of traffic it already receives let alone the increases that are proposed. There are already conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians accessing the marshes.

At some points, such as where Greendales immediately abuts the roadway, Queens Farm Road is particularly narrow and noise and vibration generation are particularly concerning.

Conditions should be attached regarding access routes. This should be only via Lower Higham Road (to Chalk or Higham) as Green Farm Lane is single track in parts, is unsuitable for increased traffic and has a 7.5Ton weight limit. Similarly, the whole of Shorne is protected by a less than 6'6" width restriction.

Unfortunately, a significant number of reports of HGV's associated with the barns (Unit 2) infringing the Green Farm Lane TRO restrictions have already been reported through the Lorrywatch scheme.

We would also like to know what the management arrangements are going to be, meaning who should be contacted about problems arising from any further conversion.

Use classes

Use Classes E(g)(iii) and B8 are proposed, including a Class E workshop, described as "Light industrial, storage, and small business use".

There is significant concern about possible use for storage and distribution as this class already causes problems of various kinds at the nearby Apex site.

Outside storage should not be permitted on the actual site and also not on adjacent/nearby land.

Other matters:

- Aerial views show a considerable amount of open storage taking place outside of the woodworking business and this should be regularised or removed.
- The Site location plan shows that the applicant also owns land east of Queens Farm Road. On the aerial views a large area of hardstanding was created (and is known to have been used for Lower Thames Crossing works) without any planning permission, and we look forward to this being removed.
- The site will also need EV charging points, and bicycle storage.
- Hours of operation – in view of the proximity to residential dwellings, operating hours should be restricted by Condition
- We note that the Site is not included in the draft Development Plan 2042 (Submission Version) for Gravesham (Regulation 19) that was recently under consultation.