

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

Clerk & Responsible Officer
Shorne Village Hall
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Nr Gravesend
Kent DA12 3EA

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12th February 2024

20231324

Land South Of Gravesend Road Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3JR

Change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian and erection of stable building with tack room and a detached barn.

This is a reapplication of lapsed planning application Ref 20190717, permitted by GBC despite Parish Council **objections**. That previous application has not been mentioned in the applicants supporting statement.

Our previous representations are included as an Appendix below as we consider that all the same aspects are still relevant and we would be grateful if they could all be carried forward to this application.

The reasons and concerns stated previously remain valid, and we therefore have to again **OBJECT** to the application.

It should be noted that the previous application 20190717 was discussed at the Regulatory Board with the result that modified plans were required that preserved the historic wooded area on the site, that conceals a former quarry.

However, the applicant has presently submitted their original plan and not that actual previously agreed plan as shown below.

A revised plan as shown needs to be resubmitted to supersede that presently provided.



Plan agreed previously following the Regulatory Board discussion (GRC-A-P1 Revision 1 (site layout) received 05 February 2020)

The Parish Council again **OBJECTS** to this application for the following additional reasons/comments (please see also our previous representation reproduced below):

1) Use of the land:

The land has not been used for grazing in the intervening time period since 2019 and no horses have been seen there. Therefore the justification for building a stable is not entirely clear.

2) Quantum of development on the Applicant's land; Additional impact:

Since 2019 the Courtlands house and site has been redeveloped with very considerable increase in built forms, this proposal would further reduce openness in the Green Belt and extend built forms as ribbon development westwards on the Gravesend Road.

3) Reiteration of points previously raised:

As well as all the points that we raised previously, we remain particularly concerned about the welfare of the animals if 4 horses were to be kept on such a small piece of land.

In view of the small size and inherent unsuitability of the plot for keeping horses we **OBJECT particularly** to the proposed change of use which seems inappropriate as well as unnecessary, the land should remain agricultural.

4) Conditions to be attached:

We request that at least all the same conditions as in the previous decision notice 20190717 should be attached to any new permission.

We do not agree that there would be lack of adverse impact on biodiversity of the site and request that a Condition should be added to ensure this through the fencing off of the wooded/biodiversity area from the horses.

We request also that if Officers should somehow be minded to permit the application based on the current layout plan, then we request that the application should once again be called in to the Regulatory Board for full member discussion. GBC Councillors for Higham and Shorne Ward have been informed of our concerns.

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6th September 2019 – **RESUBMITTED 7th February 2024 FOR Ref 20231324**

GR/2019/0717

Courtlands Gravesend Road Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3JR

Erection of stable building with tack room and a detached barn.

The Parish Council wishes to **OBJECT** to this proposal, with the following reasons/comments:

1. **Previous application:** The applicant previously applied under reference 20160216 to install a double-width field gate, which was permitted by GBC. This does not appear to have been implemented except that a small length of the hedge (not as wide as the proposed field gates) was recently cut down. At the time of the previous application no indication was given that any buildings might be desired or concerning the number of horses to be accommodated on the plot.
2. **Structural aspects:** The submitted plans do not make clear the exact nature of the walls of the buildings, i.e. whether the brickwork goes up to roof level. The external walls appear from the plans to be at least 25cm thick which suggests double-skin cavity walling. Overall the proposal is for a robust structure, more so than is usual for stable buildings, which are usually prefabricated and more like garden sheds in construction. The buildings are large (nearly 20m by 6.5m and 7m by 5m) and there is also a large area of hardstanding of nearly 20m by 7m.
3. **Location on the plot:** Given how small the field is and the number of horses to be accommodated, the proposed location on the site and orientation of the proposed building is wasteful of space. Stable buildings are usually placed at the edges of fields. We suggest that the building should be relocated on the site so that it is side-on to the Gravesend Road or with its back to the dividing fence, i.e. in the north-east corner of the field. This would also reduce its visual impact and improve its accessibility from Courtlands. No access gate is shown in the dividing fence. The field gate already permitted but not constructed might be

better located further east, and together this suggestion would reduce the amount of “driveway” that is needed, also maximising the equestrian land use.

4. **Vehicles and traffic:** The application does not discuss whether vehicles will be kept at the site apart from mention of loading manure onto a trailer for weekly removal (the amount of manure and soiled straw, bedding etc produced by four horses within a week will be considerable) and moving the horses to the other land stated as being owned by the applicant for proper pasture/exercise, which does not appear to be contiguous with the land that is the subject of the present application. Any turning movements by slow moving vehicles are of concern as traffic on Gravesend Road is often moving at 50mph and above.
5. **Services to the site:** The plans also do not indicate likely services to be supplied to the stables/field (we would assume water and electricity) or any security lighting, which could introduce light pollution. Drains and sewer connection will not be needed.
6. **Animal welfare:** We remain concerned about the welfare of the horses if four are to be accommodated on such a small piece of land, constrained by woodland, and request expert input into the suitability of the proposed arrangements. Overall, we suggest that the stable might be better located on the other fields owned by the applicant, which are apparently larger, rather than adjacent to a busy and noisy A road. For the previous application 20160216, and as was supported in the comments by Rural Planning, we commented that the proposed fencing was too low at 1.0m to ensure that the horses were safely contained but the proposed low fencing was permitted by GBC without amendment. The consequences of any of the horses escaping onto the A226 could be very serious, for both the horses themselves and passing vehicles. The height of the fencing is not stated on the latest application so we make the same comment again, that the fences should be approximately 1.5m high.
7. **Planning restrictions, hedges and woodland:** The site is in the Green Belt where new buildings would not normally be permitted, and this building if permitted would detract from its openness. The proposed recreational use does not appear to be a valid exception, especially as outside of the residential curtilage. The site is bounded by mature hedges and also includes (described and shown separated off in the 20160216 approved OS and site plan but not shown in that presently submitted which does not include the true OS plan or the entire plot) a significantly large area of mature scrub/woodland, possibly related to a former chalk pit, which adjoins the footpath NS159. These should all be retained and protected from the horses by fencing, in order to maintain the biodiversity on the site.
8. **Suggested Conditions:** If permitted we suggest that **conditions should be imposed** that the building is only ancillary to the Courtlands property and cannot be used for any commercial use or any recreational purpose except for keeping of horses, nor any residential purposes or as a separate dwelling. We are very concerned that this application might lead on in the future to a subsequent application for residential conversion, as the proposed structure and layout could easily be imagined as being a bungalow. We would be grateful therefore if any permission could be **strongly conditioned to prevent future residential conversion**, perhaps by requiring demolition and return to agriculture once the land is no longer required for keeping horses, or that the permission is temporary and/or personal to the applicant.