

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

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15th October 2021.

Planning Application Ref: 20211106

Application for a determination as to whether prior approval is required for the siting, design and external appearance of a general purpose agricultural building 30.36 metres long, 16.00metres wide and 7.00 metres high.

Harlex Haulage Services, Park Pale Farm, Park Pale, Shorne Kent ME2 3UD

This application is a resubmission of applications ref 20201012 (refused as inappropriate procedure) and 20210087 (refused) with some differences in design and location. Overall, we still do not consider the proposals to be suitable or practical and consider that some of the changes made have increased these adverse aspects.

The Parish Council therefore continues to **OBJECT** to the proposal (please also see our previous detailed representations concerning the above mentioned previous applications), comments/reasons as follow:

Building size, configuration and orientation, and curtilage:

- The barn is the same size as in application ref 20210087 and will therefore have the same visual impact (but see askew position para below).
- The large doors have been moved to either end but this is less practical as it must reduce the useable space by requiring a corridor to be left along the length of the building.
- There is a small area of hardstanding immediately outside the northern door but no other means of accessing this end of the building is shown (as not in the red line boundary of the proposal) so access through the building is assumed.

- The building has been relocated in an askew position rather than parallel (or perpendicular) to the existing buildings as would have been expected. This is an adverse change as it is wasteful of space on the site and increases visual impact.
- There now appears to be sufficient turning area at the approach to the barn.
- On the “Illustrated Proposed Landscaping Visuals” drawing, the building is shown within a landscaped “curtilage” but this is outside the red line boundary of the proposal. The purpose and proposed uses of this enclosed area are not discussed in the application and need to be clarified. The landscaping also encroaches onto the small field area that might otherwise remain after the Lower Thames Crossing mitigation is in place

Previous Planning Permission ref 20100878: This is referred to in the supporting statement points 1.3.2-4. We understand that additional buildings have been erected on the Park Pale Yard site without planning permission, and that a non-haulage business has been located and operating there (Otium Services & Facilities Limited – Specialist Cleaning).

Although the LPA apparently restricted Park Pale Yard to haulage use there seems no reason why this could not be varied and any additional/redundant building in the yard used instead for agricultural purposes, as this would avoid further encroachment into Green Belt and AONB designated lands.

As raised previously, it would also appear, as evidenced from the previous GBC Officer’s visit, that the applicant has been using the “unmaintained land” area that is the subject of this proposal for open storage.

Building purpose and extent and location of associated agricultural land: The purpose of the proposed building is stated to be for agricultural use for the storage of hay, equipment and machinery. The application refers to three plots of land that are owned and managed by the applicant and to be serviced by this barn, two of which are much larger and distant sites.

The applicant has provided evidence of ownership for the two larger plots but not for the blue bordered land at Park Pale itself. The Land Registry documents may not be up to date reflecting any recent land purchases however at present the applicant cannot be verified through publicly available documents as being the owner of the location of the proposed barn or the adjacent land. These are presently registered under titles K516236 (not checked again) and K515286 (checked again today) naming a different owner. (See also “Lower Thames Crossing” below).

The Planning Statement refers to Solicitor correspondence concerning ownership however this has not been made available to us.

Overall, the total land being serviced is small in area and the majority is distant from the proposed location. The total area being farmed would not seem to justify much major equipment being purchased and stored rather than being loaned or hired in as needed.

Traffic implications: The bulk of the related agricultural land is distant from the proposed building which gives rise to concerns about additional traffic volumes and types (which needs specifying in more detail) using Park Pale Road and having to make turning movements at the T-junction with Brewers Road. There also needs to be a plan for how access will be undertaken while the Brewers Road overbridge is closed due to the Lower Thames Crossing proposals (see below).

Lower Thames Crossing proposal impacts: While the boundary of the application site is outside of the Lower Thames Crossing “Red line boundary” for construction, the applicant will be aware that nearly all of the adjacent 22 Acre field is identified on the LTC plans as to be compulsory purchased and used for mitigation, so the 22 Acre field will not be available to be farmed. This raises further questions as to the suitability of the proposed location for building a barn for agricultural use when there will not in the near future be any directly associated land to be farmed. There will also be a significant period of time during construction when the Brewers Road bridge over the A2 will be closed, which will also render the proposed building inaccessible except via residential routes.

Landscape Impact: The site is in the Green Belt and the North Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Although there are other buildings nearby, due to its size and position this proposed additional building would detrimentally affect landscape and openness.

Type of application: Full planning permission should be applied for so that appropriate conditions can be attached including hours of operation.

Additional information and Conditions to be attached: Screening plantings are now shown on the plans but should be required by Condition, as should be the proposed operating hours and information about proposed traffic movements.

Detail of fencing and security arrangements, and any external lighting also needs to be provided and controlled by Condition.

If permitted, there should also be very strong conditions attached restricting the building to purely agricultural use and governing the type, extent and height of any outside storage. As the building is being located in Park Pale principally to serve other land holdings, the reduction in available agricultural land area that may take place due to the Lower Thames Crossing will not affect this restriction.

However, we would encourage the Borough Council to again **REFUSE** this application.