

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

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16th September 2025

Application Ref: 20250843

Unit 23 Apex Business Park Queens Farm Road Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3HU

Erection of a temporary structure for workshop/office to include installation of foundation slab.

This application follows Ref 20240454 which was refused by GBC and is the subject of an Appeal that is still in progress.

***** It should be noted that the Parish Council disagrees with the Officer assessment in 20240454 regarding the height limit on this part of the site, and we have asked the Appeal Inspector to particularly review and address that aspect*****

When Officers visited the site for the previous application, it was observed that the building, which had already been constructed, was not located where shown on the plans.

This application shows the building as larger and located where it actually is, however the reasons for both objection and refusal remain unchanged. The applicant name is different from the previous application.

The Parish Council has to **OBJECT** to this proposal which has a variety of adverse impacts and infringes what are considered to be the planning conditions for the Apex site. We make the same representations as previously, with some additions:

The relevant planning references that we are aware of are 19970570 (site plans 1, 2 and 8) and 20000319 (especially Condition H).

In our view, the eastern, higher level extension area of the Apex site is restricted by Condition to usage being open storage in association with other units on the western, original site and has a maximum height restriction of 3 metres. The applicant's Planning Statement confirms in points 3.1 to 3.3 (note incorrect numbering subsequently) that the site has only been used for open storage.

We note in connection and as evidence that GBC themselves have previously taken enforcement action regarding eastern units which have infringed the height restriction conditions.

The site is in the Green Belt and close to important Designated landscape areas, which are susceptible to noise and other pollution, which is not mentioned by the applicant.

This proposal is for a very substantial “temporary” building in the presently numbered Unit 23 (originally Unit 20). The dimensions are greater than understood previously, there being a floor area of approximately 535 sqm in total, and a maximum height of 8m. This is larger than as shown on the proposed site plan. Contrary to the applicant’s second point 3.3 in their Planning Statement, this site was previously vacant as can be seen from advertising materials, and on the Google Earth view in August 2022, so there has not been continuous usage.

Aside from the overall existing Conditions and other matters as above, concerns are as follows:

- A building of this height and colour (bright blue) on the raised ground area would have significant landscape impact.
- Any exterior lighting would exacerbate this aspect. Any such external/security lighting should be time, duration and intensity controlled, shielded and carefully directed downwards so as to only illuminate within the boundaries of the unit.
- Usage of the building and site could also lead to noise pollution in the wider area. Details of what activities will be undertaken in the “workshop” have not been provided.
- “Temporary” buildings can become permanent – with a concrete slab and full services there is concern that could come to pass.
- The application would lead to expansion of built forms and the industrial activities area of the site, which is in a non-sustainable location.
- The various site plans show other shapes/structures outlined, and there are numerous structures/items visible on the latest aerial view.
- Proposed usage should be clarified, whether only for storage or intended as a manufacturing facility, as the previously cross-referenced Appeal documents state that “The Tenant stores significant plant and machinery including mechanical sheet metal folding machines and cutting machines, welding equipment and large boiler plant at the Property. This is all large machinery and will need to be moved via a third party heavy lifting specialist.”
- Increased traffic movements within the site and on the inherently unsuitable Queens Farm Road are also a concern due to potential traffic volume and safety issues including from conflicts with other vehicles and road users. It should be noted that the Shornemead Crossing footbridge has been installed recently, so pedestrian and cycling use of Queens Farm Road will shortly resume.
- The site is not in a sustainable location so use relies almost entirely on vehicular access.
- Working hours and vehicle movement routes should be restricted by Condition.
- The nature of the business operations to be undertaken, and the operational use of the site is not detailed, such as whether customer vehicles will need to access the site.

Should a permission be under serious consideration, we would request that the application should be referred to the GBC Planning Committee for advice and decision. In that circumstance strong Conditions based on the above information should be attached and any permission should be personal to the applicant and time limited.