

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

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24th September 2025

Application ref 20250110

Land South Of Pear Tree Lane Pear Tree Lane Shorne Gravesend Kent

Change of use of the land for the stationing of 2 static homes, 2 touring caravans and shared day room for Gypsy/Traveller occupation. Associated hard and soft landscaping.

This document provides Shorne Parish Council representations on proposed Conditions set out in the papers for today's Planning Committee meeting, as well as other matters of concern.

Section 1 – Proposed Conditions:

Condition 7 “Caravan Numbers”:

- The application was for 2 static caravans.
- Condition 7 is presently worded ambiguously as it instead states that “No more than 2 static mobile homes and 2 touring caravans shall be stationed on the site at any one time.”
- There was mention that there would be 2 touring caravans owned by the occupants of the static caravans merely being stored, but meaning these parked items would not be occupied/in use at the same time as the static caravans.
- **We object to Condition 7 as presently worded**, the Condition reads as if there would be 4 pitches rather than only 2 so it therefore needs amending to have clear wording and to reflect the correct situation.

Condition 8 “Removal of PD rights”:

- This should also refer to no other structures being permitted without planning permission.

Other Conditions that should be added:

- The application was based on the perceived necessity of meeting the needs of a single family of 5 closely related members of the Traveller community (who were not existing Gravesham residents

or connected to the area) to facilitate future schooling of 2 children locally and to support the health needs of 1 adult.

- The permission should be made personal to the applicant and named family members, and/or restricted to being a single closely related family perhaps with a maximum number limit.
- A time limit on use of this small and isolated Traveller site could be included, as the site is inherently unsuitable as compared to national guidance. Use will no longer be needed once facilities that better meet the provisions of the Traveller community are made available in Gravesham through the forthcoming Local Plan update.

Section 2 – Other matters:

Continuing concerns:

We continue to have concerns over several aspects of the application such as:

- The Applicant is not the owner of the land.
- Day facilities are not needed as the static caravans are fully fitted, and the touring caravans are only being stored.
- The static caravan already delivered is a different design to those in the application.
- The bathroom access proposed in the static caravans should not be at a lower standard of residential amenity than for normal dwellings.
- Hardstanding was greatly extended pre-application, which affects the Biodiversity assessments.
- The traffic chaos that occurred when the first static caravan was delivered must not be repeated for the second.

General comments:

Shorne Parish Council was represented previously at the Planning Committee held on 11th June 2025 when this application was discussed and regrettably Approved by the Planning Committee.

The published Minutes of the 11th June 2025 Meeting did not include the verbal presentations that were made, ours are therefore attached for the record as Appendix A.

The proposed Conditions were not easily available prior to the papers for today's meeting, and we were not made aware of any re-consultation taking place.

The Parish Council still disagrees with the content and conclusions of the various Officers reports, particularly around Grey Belt designation and the extent of local impact. We continue to disagree with the Approval decision and reiterate all our previous representations.

Appendix A: Representations made verbally at the GBC Planning Committee on 11th June 2025.

Thank you very much for allowing me to speak on behalf of Shorne Parish Council.

You will have seen our comprehensive representations against this application, but in 3 minutes we can only cover a few aspects:

1) Green Belt status

- This land is outside the boundary of Shorne Ridgeway, so it is not infill, and it is classified as Green Belt.
- It has been Green Belt through several formal Green Belt reviews, 5 refused planning applications and 3 dismissed Appeals.
- Its classification can only be changed through a formal review with community consultation, and it cannot be changed during a planning application – it is in fact the recently updated Traveller Site guidance that makes that point.

2) Green Belt review and Grey Belt

- According to a letter in February from the chair of the House of Lords Built Environment Committee to the deputy Prime Minister, the Grey Belt planning designation is “largely redundant” as it was eclipsed by the revised NPPF guidance.
- Furthermore, the letter stated that “....grey belt policy has been implemented in a somewhat rushed and incoherent manner...”, and that is disappointingly what we are seeing in Gravesham.
- There needs to be a Gravesham policy on Grey Belt designation that is under the control of the Council rather than being the result of random individual planning applications.
- This and other guidance is being misapplied - we absolutely disagree that this single, small plot of land either is or can be labelled as Grey Belt.

3) Unsuitability for any form of development:

- The planning Appeal decisions mentioned previously all concluded that however much the piece of land looks like a building plot, it simply isn't, and all reiterated it to be vitally important in defining the transition from urban environment to more rural landscape.
- Unsuitability for development means that it is not suitable for any kind of development.

4) Unsuitability as a Traveller Site:

- Reference is made to the site being a “windfall Traveller site” however that terminology is not found in the relevant guidance, which stresses the need for advance planning.
- A formal review process would not identify this site as being suitable, therefore it should not become one by chance.
- In this unsustainable location, against the guidance, a situation of community conflict and occupant isolation is being created.

5) Community expectations:

- Residents of Shorne elect representatives who they reasonably expect will protect their environment and interests.
- Unfortunately, they do not feel that to be the situation for this planning application as the previous Officer report and Decision Notice were considered incorrect and inadequate.
- Sadly, the new report presented tonight has all the same faults.

In summary:

- Residents of Shorne are strongly opposed to this application.
- The Parish Council disagrees entirely and fundamentally with the latest Officer Report.
- The piece of land under discussion is not a suitable location or site for what is being proposed.
- This is also a very important decision as it will set a precedent throughout the Borough.
- We urge Committee Members to prioritise and support the interests and lives of longstanding residents of the area and therefore request that the Committee should refuse this completely inappropriate Application.

Thank you.