

Delegated Report

Application No: 20251171

Location: Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, Gravesend DA12 4LG

Description: Application for the approval of condition 7 attached to planning reference number 20221293 relating to arboricultural impact assessment and arboricultural method statement.

Applicant: Gravesham Borough Council

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Cover letter
Arboricultural Method Statement by Lloydbore
Drawing no. 6183-LLB-XX-XX-DR-Ab-0002 rev P03 (Tree Protection Plan)

Relevant Planning History

20221293 Demolition of the existing Cascades Leisure Centre and public house and redevelopment of the site to provide a new leisure centre with community pool, leisure water, cafe, soft play, 'clip n climb' facility, a six court sports hall, fitness suite, spin studio, 2 no. fitness studios, 2 no. squash courts, a new tennis/netball court, improvements to the existing play area, landscaping across the site and associated car parking.

Approved 03.03.2023

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC Biodiversity

No comment.

KCC Highways

I refer to the above planning application and consider that there are no highway implications associated with the proposals.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

GBC Parks and Open Spaces

A visual assessment of the site has been conducted, and this has highlighted the need for the removal of certain trees and the protection of others as part of the proposed development. This includes the loss of 16 individual trees and 12 groups of trees, which have been identified for

removal due to their location in relation to the development footprint.

While the proposed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) outline appropriate measures to protect the retained trees and mitigate environmental impacts, there is a lack of clarity regarding the specific mitigation plan for the loss of these 16 individual trees and 12 groups. This is a key concern, as the removal of these trees will have an impact on the local environment and biodiversity, and the mitigation measures need to be fully detailed.

It is essential that a comprehensive mitigation plan is provided to ensure the loss of these trees is addressed, whether through replacement planting or other compensatory measures. I would recommend that the applicant submits further details regarding the replanting strategy, including species selection and the location of new planting to compensate for the lost trees, as well as any additional ecological mitigation that may be required.

Furthermore, I agree that the tree protection measures outlined in the Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan should remain in place throughout the construction phase, with due consideration given to the protection of tree roots and the impact of construction activities on the retained trees.

Analysis

Condition 7 of 20221293 states:

No development shall take place until an arboricultural impact assessment and arboricultural method statement explaining the measures you will take to protect the trees (including roots) on and close to the site, including a tree protection plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These documents shall include details of the location of service cabling for EV charging points and lighting, the location of pipework for SUDs and proposed surface water sewers, as well as details of how the widened paths will be constructed and the full extent of repairs/alterations to the parking areas. The tree protection plan should also take account of where the site compound will be placed during the construction phase including access, parking and storage. The tree protection measures shall thereafter remain in place throughout the construction phase and the development shall be implemented in accordance with the details once approved.

Reason: Required prior to commencement of development to ensure no irreversible detrimental harm to the existing tree and in accordance with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014.

The submitted information is acceptable and therefore this condition can be discharged. It is noted that details of replacement planting of those trees that are to be lost will be provided within the submission of condition 19 and biodiversity enhancements will be dealt with under condition 14.

Recommendation:

Discharge condition 7 of 20221293.

See draft Decision

Case Officer:	Team Leader: Richard Hart
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Signed: 	Signed: R Hart
Dated: 7 January 2026	Dated: 7th January 2026