

# Delegated Report

## KCC Consultation

**Planning Application No:** 20240556

**Location:** Shorne Woods Country Park Brewers Road Shorne Gravesend

**Description:** KCC Consultation KCC/GR/0089/2024 - Application under Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning General Regulations 1992 - Installation of a tarmac pathway linking the main pathway to the pond dipping platform.

**Applicant:** Kent County Council, Planning Applications Group

**Site Visit Date:** None (desktop assessment)

### Introduction

Kent County Council (KCC), as the determining Planning Authority, has consulted Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) for its views on the proposed installation of a tarmac pathway linking the main pathway to the pond dipping platform at Shorne Woods Country Park.

### Submitted Documents/Plans

The planning application documents are available on the KCC website using reference KCC/GR/0089/2024 via the following link;

[Planning Register : Kent County Council \(kentplanningapplications.co.uk\)](https://kentplanningapplications.co.uk)

### Relevant Planning History

| Reference | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Decision     | Decision Date |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 20220113  | KCC Consultation KCC/GR/0024/2022 - Installation of a play area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | No objection | 10.03.2022    |
| 20180421  | Retention of a 4m high column with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Permitted    | 07.01.2019    |
| 20120587  | Application non-material amendment to amend the building position, door layout, shutters, fence alignment and hard paving associated with the satellite toilet block/refreshment kiosk permitted by consent reference number 20110092 at Shornewood Country Park, Brewers Road, Shorne.                                                 | No objection | 06.08.2013    |
| 20110961  | Application under Regulation 3 for permanent change of use of Chestnut Room in the Visitor Centre to permit dual use for both educational activities (already has permanent permission) and functions (currently has temporary permission until April 2012 under permission GR/2009/972). KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 15.2.2012 (CONDITIONS) | No objection | 14.12.2011    |

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |              |            |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| 20110746 | Application under Regulation 3 for the retention and continued use of temporary building. KCC GRANTED TEMPORARY PERMISSION 2.11.2011 (CONDITIONS)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | No objection | 21.09.2011 |
| 20110092 | Application under Regulation 3 for the development of a small satellite toilet block with refreshment kiosk to supplement existing facilities in main visitor centre. Proposal includes some minor remodelling of existing car park layout and the introduction of a footpath link from the car park to existing path which runs around the park. KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 19.4.2011 (CONDITIONS) | No objection | 22.03.2011 |

## Development Plan

### Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS10 – Physical and Social Infrastructure
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

### Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- None

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026

## Consultations, Publicity and Representations

As the determining authority, KCC have the responsibility to undertake relevant statutory consultations and publicity. In addition, the following consultation has been undertaken by GBC.

### Shorne Parish Council

The Parish Council has no objection to this proposal, which is located immediately north of the Visitor Centre, in an already urbanised area of the park.

## Officer's Analysis

### Principle of the development

The proposed development would provide a level access to an existing platform located adjacent to a pond within the application site. As such, it would improve the facilities at an existing country park, which would be beneficial to community well-being. Therefore in principle, the proposal would be acceptable and in line with Policy CS10 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

### Green Belt

The application site is located in the Green Belt. The proposed pathway would be used for outdoor recreation in connection with the existing country park and it would be of a scale that would have a very limited impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, particularly when taken in the context of the site as a whole.

Therefore, the proposal would meet the Green Belt exception set out in paragraph 154(b) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF) and not be considered as inappropriate development and be in line with Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

### Design, Character and Appearance

The application site is located in the Kent Downs National Landscape (formerly known as the Kent Downs AONB), a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA), the Shorne & Ashenbank Woodland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area (LCA).

The proposed development would result in the hard surfacing of a small area of land that is currently laid to grass. It would be located adjacent to an existing area of hardstanding and in close proximity to the visitor centre. Due to the mature woodland surrounding around the country park, the proposal would not be widely visible in the surrounding landscape. The tarmac finish would match with the existing hardstanding and the path would be viewed in the context of existing built development.

Overall, the proposed development would be of appropriate design and would not undermine the character or appearance of the surrounding National Landscape, LCA or SSSI. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

## Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development would improve the facilities at the country park, be of appropriate design and materials and would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding area or to the openness of the Green Belt.

No objection to the proposed development. KCC are requested to take into account relevant development plan policies and any other material considerations when making their determination.

(For a detailed response to KCC, see draft Decision)

|                      |                                                                                     |                     |                                                                                       |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Case Officer:</b> | Mrs Kelly Joyce                                                                     | <b>Team Leader:</b> | Miss Faye Hobbs                                                                       |
| <b>Signed:</b>       |  | <b>Signed:</b>      |  |
| <b>Dated:</b>        | 16th July 2024                                                                      | <b>Dated:</b>       | 16 July 2024                                                                          |