

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 04/12/2024 2:50 PM from [REDACTED]

Application Summary

Address:	Land South Of Pear Tree Lane Pear Tree Lane Shorne Gravesend Kent
Proposal:	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.
Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Address:	Woodlands Lane Shorne Gravesend

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

Comments:	The site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt, and directly adjacent to and opposite residential properties. It is an entirely unsuitable location for a gypsy/traveller encampment, the plans for which appear to demonstrate would be very cramped on the site. It is noted that the applicant has already arranged to commence initial work without waiting for planning consent, as Pear Tree Lane is due to be closed from 9th December 2024 to enable a permanent electricity supply to be installed to the site. When considering any planning application, planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Policy E of the Department for Communities and Local Government Policy for Traveller Sites relates specifically to Traveller sites in Green Belt. E16 clearly states: Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development. Subject to the best interests of the child, personal circumstances and unmet need are unlikely to clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm so as to establish very special circumstances. This application is for change of use of the land. E17 states: Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. If a local planning authority wishes to make an exceptional, limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site, it should do so only through the plan-making process
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and not in response to a planning application.

It is also noted that in the appeal ruling 2020/00048/REF for this piece of land, although the Planning Inspector found that the site would provide a suitable site for housing, there were a number of other considerations relating the landscape character, openness of the green belt, etc, and the Inspector concluded that the weight of all the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm, and that the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist. The Planning Inspector's findings should be taken into consideration.

Clearly the very special circumstances set out in the NPPF and the Department for Communities and Local Government Policy for Travellers Sites have not been met, and this application for change of use should not be granted in response to this planning application. Given the clear guidelines set out in the NPPF and the Department for Communities and Local Government Policy for Travellers Sites, it is quite likely that any decision to approve this application would be successfully challengeable under Judicial Review.

It should be noted that one of the aims of the Department for Communities and Local Government Policy for Traveller Sites is 'to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions'. Under a future review of Green Belt Boundaries as part of the Local Plan it may be decided to remove this piece of land from the Green Belt. However, this would have no bearing on this current application. If under a future review it was decided to remove this piece of land from the Green Belt, it may be appropriate for infill residential development in scale and density appropriate to the character of the area, but it would still not be an appropriate location for a gypsy/traveller encampment.

Kind regards