

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————

Clerk & Responsible Officer
Mrs S Poole
Shorne Village Hall
The Street
Shorne
Nr Gravesend
Kent DA12 3EA



E-mail: clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org

28th January 2023

Application ref 20221342

Starwood Pear Tree Lane Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3JU

Demolition of existing stables and removal of containers and conversion of existing framed structure to form separate bungalow with three bedrooms plus erection of detached double garage, additional single storey rear extension, front porch and use of existing access

This is a reapplication of refused Ref 20220531 with very minor alterations, so effectively almost the same. Hence the reasons for refusal will also be the same.

The Parish Council again has to **OBJECT STRONGLY** to this application for the following reasons and comments:

1) **Plots of land, land ownership, access:**

The land area shown is composed of parts of two parcels of land however the ownership remains confused:

- the rear land of Starwood K424735, stated previously and presently as being in the ownership of the applicant
- the narrow access track on the west side that is part of K654169, this was established previously to be in the ownership of the applicant's children but is again now stated to be in the ownership of the applicant.

The actual situation requires verification.

The manner in which proper and permanent access is to be maintained to the rest of K654169 needs to be clarified as it is not appropriate for access to be via a residential garden, or a route that might

come to be in different ownership. As the existing accumulated structures are said to be redundant and are to be removed, we suggest that the original track on K654169 should be reinstated.

2) Green Belt Location; Landscape character

The proposed property is located in the Green Belt where a new dwelling would not normally be permitted due to detrimental impact on openness. No “very special circumstances” have been cited that might override this restriction.

The proposed location would also cause harm to local Landscape Character.

3) Backland development and precedents

The proposal would be a backland development which is by definition undesirable. Contrary to the applicant’s statement, there are no backland residential buildings on the entire north side of Pear Tree Lane. There are also not “many” (see applicant’s point 6.27) on the south side, there being only one purpose-built residential property, “Furze Bank” which was permitted in the 1950’s, and “Sunridge” which is a mixed use building, previously related to the historic Bushylees Farmhouse and converted from genuine stable use.

Permission of this proposal would create a precedent in the area which could lead to other backland proposals being impossible to resist, particularly as Starwood is already set well back on its plot.

4) Out of character with the area; Amenity of neighbouring dwellings

The area is characterised by single detached houses built on large plots, this proposal would be out of character with the area.

The proposal will be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, especially “Colesmead” to the east.

5) Lack of planning permission for “hay barn”/“framed structure” building and other works

The “framed structure” that is the subject of this application was referred to in a previous application as being a “hay barn”. It was built without planning permission between May 2018 and April 2020 (dated by Google Earth aerial views).

As first reported previously in relation to our comments on Application Ref 20210376, a sand school/menage has been constructed in Starmore Wood, also without planning permission. This is first visible in a 2011 aerial view and was subsequently enlarged.

6) Proof of redundancy of existing buildings

It is claimed that the hay barn and various stable and storage structures are all redundant however further information is required proving this in case removals and any conversion might lead to pressure for more barn and stable structures to be built elsewhere on the properties owned by the applicant and his children, so leading to further erosion of openness of Green Belt land.

7) Suitability of structure for conversion

The structure was built on (at the time) non-residential land that was previously orchards. It appears to be merely a concrete frame with some timber posts although now referred to (in conflict with the submitted plans) as a “steel-framed barn”. There does not appear to presently be a floor or any existing services. We question whether the existing structure can be regarded as a building suitable for conversion and whether conversion to a residence can be achieved without considerable engineering works.

8) Other points about plans, layout and design:

- The plans show a structure to the east in the garden of “Colesmead” however this former tennis court cannot be identified in aerial views from 1990 onwards, since when the land there has become thickly wooded.
- A double gate is shown in the northern boundary fence, clarification is required over the need for and proposed use of this non-residential feature (see Point 1 above).
- The layout is the “wrong way round” on the site as it should relate to the roadway and not the open countryside:
 - The proposed two car garage is at the back of the site where it maximises visual impact and encroachment on the openness of the Green Belt, and unnecessarily increases the land area needed for driveway/access purposes.
 - The proposal puts the “front door” at the rear of the new property.
 - The site layout should be flipped.
- The plans do not indicate how surface drainage and sewerage needs will be met.
- We note that the applicant refers to there having been a pre-application discussion in 2020 however the Parish Council was not involved in those “without prejudice” discussions and has not been provided with a copy of the report.

We suggest that an opinion should be sought from Rural Planning regarding appropriateness and suitability of this structure for residential conversion.

The Parish Council **OBJECTS STRONGLY** to this application. **We request that the application should be refused**, and that enforcement action should be taken concerning the various buildings and structures that have been erected without planning permission, including the menage constructed in Starmore Wood, as discussed in a previous decision notice.

In view of the extent of built form proposed on the site, we also request that, should Officers be minded to permit the application, then Conditions should be attached withdrawing permitted development rights for the entirety of both the quoted Land Registry titles, to prevent further encroachment onto the Green Belt, open agricultural land and woodland.

However, should officers be minded to permit this application we would also request that the application should be called in to the Planning Committee to enable wider discussion and informed participation in any decision.