

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 20230017

Warren Farm Swillers Lane Shorne Gravesend Kent DA12 3ED

Change of use of part of existing holding to a mixed use for agriculture and the keeping and exercising of horses and construction of a sand-school

The Warren and Warren Farm are classified by the Wildlife Trust as a local wildlife site but that does not provide it any protection in planning terms.

The Parish Council overall has **no objection in principle** to this proposal but has the following comments and significant concerns with **objections to aspects where stated**.

1. Landscape impact:

- The proposed location will have landscape impact from higher ground and negatively affect the ambience of the unmaintained part of Swillers Lane.

2. Plans and drainage:

- The documents and plans submitted do not include a detailed plan of the sand school (including peripheral plantings to screen jumps etc from view) or of land topography and drainage, these need to be provided and include information about the proposed drainage installations and outfall, and the surfacing materials proposed. There are concerns due to the proximity to the Swillers Lane aquifer. Permission will be needed from the Environment Agency over drainage.
- The plans do not show all the land in the ownership of the applicant and therefore do not convey the relationship of the proposal to the entire southern boundary.

3. New access:

- The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to the proposed new access shown. We question the need for this (either temporarily or permanently) as the existing access points should be adequate and the site can and should be accessed through the applicant's own land, especially post-construction.

- Permission would be needed from the Kent County Council Highways dept and other affected landowners (presently St John's College, Cambridge) regarding the proposed additional new access point.
 - Swillers Lane is very narrow and not suitable for additional traffic save during construction.
 - The unmaintained part of Swillers Lane is largely used as a footpath and bridle path, care must be taken during construction and the surface condition must be reinstated to a safe condition after construction is completed.
4. Size, use and change of use:
- The proposed size of the sand school at 60x30m is larger than the average domestic installation which is most commonly only 40m by 20m. Supporting reasons for the particularly large size need to be provided given that there are very few resident horses.
 - If the sand school is 60m by 30m and occupies the entire land in the red line boundary, save for the suggested access route, it is unclear as to whether it is the same land that is the subject of the proposed "change of use of part of existing holding to a mixed use for agriculture and the keeping of horses". This should be clarified as horses would not normally be kept on a sand school.
 - The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to the proposed change of use, which does not seem necessary or desirable. If no longer required as a sand school the land should revert to agricultural use.
5. Stable and other buildings:
- The applicant's comments about a small stable building having been erected in 2017 are noted, however we are unclear whether the "4y rule" applies to a non-residential building on agricultural land. A certificate of lawfulness may be needed in either case.
 - No other stable buildings are needed or proposed on the site.
6. Lower Thames Crossing proposals:
- Swillers Lane and its northern bank are within the National Highways "Red Line Boundary" for the Lower Thames Crossing proposals, so they will also need to be consulted.

Suggested standard Conditions:

- No exterior lighting is proposed, there should be a fresh planning application should lighting be considered subsequently.
- No other buildings are proposed. In order to protect openness of the Green Belt, none are permitted without a planning application.
- Any temporary access must be closed off after construction and the non-maintained part of Swillers Lane reinstated to its pre-existing condition.
- The permission for the sand school is personal to the applicant and only in connection with Warren Farm and its occupants, for private use by the applicant and immediate family, and cannot be used by non-resident horses. When no longer required, the land should revert to agricultural use.
- The sand school should only be used for the practice and training of horses permanently kept at Warren Farm and not used or hired out for other purposes or as a training business.
- The sand school and site equestrian facilities cannot be used to operate a business or for competitions, commercial riding events or gymkhanas, and for no other commercial purposes such as a livery or riding school.