

Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260820

Location: Cyclopark The Tollgate Watling Street Gravesend

Description: Erection of a new modular classroom to be positioned on an existing tarmac area within the existing controlled access area of Cyclopark

Applicant: J Hamp, Cyclopark Charity

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Site Location Plan;
Drawing No. 2070/099 – Operators Agreement Map;
Drawing No. 2070/100 – Location and Site Plan;
Drawing No. 2070/108 – Existing East Elevation Pavilion Entrance;
Drawing No. 2070/109 – Existing Pavilion South Elevation;
Drawing No. 2070/110 – Existing Pavilion West Elevation;
Drawing No. 2070/111 – Existing Pavilion North Elevation Through reception;
Drawing No. 2070/112 – Existing Ground Floor Plan Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/114 – Existing Roof Plan Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/140 Rev A – Proposed Site Plan;
Drawing No. 2070/142 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/148 – Proposed East Elevation Pavilion & Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/149 – Proposed South Elevation Pavilion & Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/150 Rev A – Proposed West Elevation Pavilion & Classroom;
Drawing No. 2070/151 Rev A – Proposed North Elevation Pavilion & Classroom;
Supporting Information – BNG Metric; and
Supporting Information – Statement.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20260677	Application for the approval of condition 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) attached to planning reference number 20251142.	Approval of details	11.08.2026
20251142	Construction of a new fitness studio and nine containers to create a bike hire facility next to the existing building hub at Cyclopark.	Permitted	27.01.2026
20151054	Application to make permanent the temporary permission granted under application reference 20140199 for the use of up to 50 car parking spaces within the Cyclopark car park for commuter car parking.	Permitted	14.01.2016
20151038	Erection of a single storey cycle start gate building.	Permitted	01.12.2015

20150743	Erection of a single storey detached outbuilding for storage and viewing use.	Permitted	21.10.2015
20140714	Application for the approval of condition 6 attached to planning permission reference number 20140199 relating to the proposed improvements, including path clearance, surface repairs and any necessary lighting, to the footpath link that connects the proposed area of commuter car parking.	Approval of details	16.09.2014
20140713	Application for the approval of condition 5 attached to planning permission reference number 20140199 relating to a parking management plan.	Approval of details	16.09.2014
20140199	Use of existing car park for commuter car parking. Upgrading of footpath to the existing bus stop.	Granted Temporary Permission	25.06.2014
20100464	Application under Regulation 3 for the clarification of the usage of the Activity Park with particular reference to major events. KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 10.9.10 (CONDITIONS)	Observations Sent	24.06.2010
20100463	Application under Regulation 3 for the proposed external lighting of the core activity park, including the tarmac cycle track, BMX race track, multi use games area (MUGA) and skate park. KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 10.9.10 (CONDITIONS)	Observations Sent	24.06.2010
20090440	Application under Regulation 3 for the A2 Activity Park scheme consisting of an outdoor Activity Park including car parking, pavilion and associated buildings, cycle tracks, footpaths, boundary treatments and landscaping on the A2 corridor and adjacent agricultural land. KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 16.9.10 (CONDITIONS)	Observations Sent	21.07.2010

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS13 – Green Space, Sport and Recreation
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network

As set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012 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

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 (2026), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

- Section 3 – Decision-making policies
- Section 4 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change
- Section 7 – Building a strong, effective economy
- Section 12 – Making Effective use of land
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 16 – Promoting healthy communities
- Section 19 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) make it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework sets out that when considering development proposals, relevant policies may be given weight, however, this is subject to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement, the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part of the Framework, which from 17 August 2026 Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan has reached the Regulation 19 Consultation stage, with the consultation having ended on 18 August 2026. The emerging Local Plan does not form part of the Development Plan.

The Council is aware that third parties have raised objections to the wider emerging Local Plan and specific policies within it. Therefore, at present the Council cannot categorically state that the emerging Local Plan can be considered sound and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) [as an emerging Local Plan being brought forward under the legacy system, it would be examined under the 2024 Framework]. Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan.**

This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council; & Uttlesford DC [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of Appeal

[2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External

KCC Biodiversity

No comments received.

KCC Heritage

Thank you for your letter consulting us on the above planning application. In this instance I suggest that no archaeological measures are required

National Highways

Offer no objection.

HSE

Thank you for your email seeking HSE's observations on application 20260820.

HSE is a statutory consultee for certain developments within the consultation distance of major hazard sites and major accident hazard pipelines, and has provided planning authorities with access to the HSE Planning Advice Web App - <https://pa.hsl.gov.uk/> - for them to use to consult HSE and obtain HSE's advice.

However, this application does not fall within any HSE consultation zones. There is therefore no need to consult the HSE Land Use Planning (LUP) team on this planning application and the HSE LUP team has no comment to make.

I would be grateful if you would ensure that the HSE Planning Advice Web App is used to consult HSE on this application and any future developments including any which meet the following criteria, and which lie within the consultation distance (CD) of a major hazard site or major hazard pipeline.

- * residential accommodation;
- * more than 250m² of retail floor space;
- * more than 500m² of office floor space;
- * more than 750m² of floor space to be used for an industrial process;
- * transport links;
- * or which is otherwise likely to result in a material increase in the number of persons working within or visiting the notified area.

There are additional areas where HSE is a statutory consultee. For full details, please refer to annex 2 of HSE's Land Use Planning Methodology: www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/methodology.htm

The Cyclopark Trust

No comments received.

Internal

GBC Environmental Protection

There is no objection to this application. The following is advised:

Watching Brief

The applicant shall undertake a watching brief during construction in case any contamination issue is encountered. If during development any contamination is found, the local planning authority should be informed as soon as practical and the work shall not continue until written agreement is provided by the LPA as to the appropriate measures to be taken to resolve the matter and they are satisfied that those measures have been carried out.



GBC Food & Safety

No comments or objections

GBC Commercial Health Team

No comments received.

GBC Leisure & Resilience Manager

No comments received.

GBC Strategic Manager

No comments received.

GBC Economic Manager

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

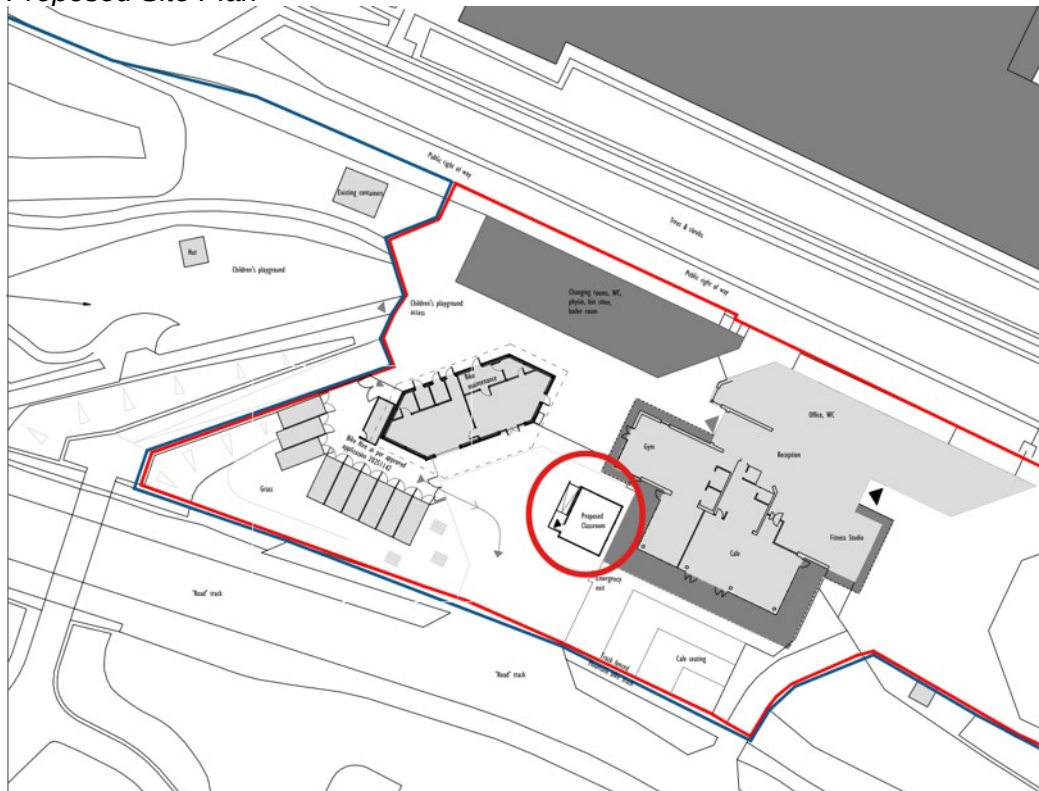
The application was advertised by the displaying of a site notice and individual letters sent to twenty surrounding properties, with an overall expiry date of 18th September 2026. No comments have been received.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

The proposal is for the erection of a new modular classroom to be positioned on an existing tarmac area within the existing controlled access area of Cyclopark, with access ramp and stepped access to the side.

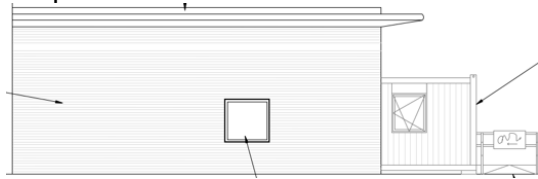
Proposed Site Plan



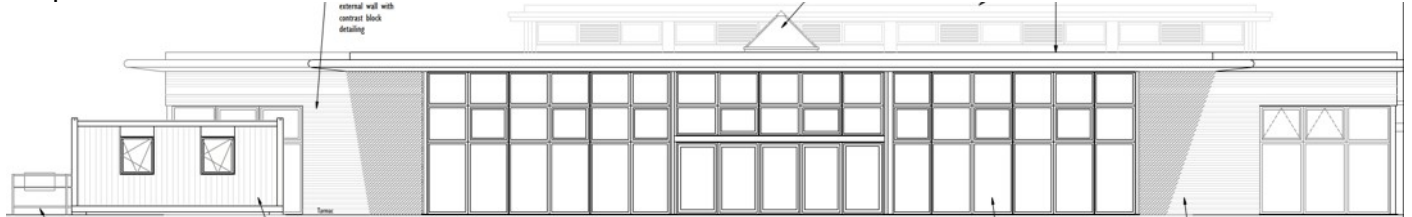
The new modular classroom would be located to the south of the existing Pavilion and would measure 6m wide, 7.38m in length and 2.7m high. The new classroom is to facilitate the continued growth of the

Cyclopark by providing a space that can be used as a classroom for small group of health and well being events. The classroom would be a modular building, positioned on the existing tarmac to the side of the existing Pavilion.

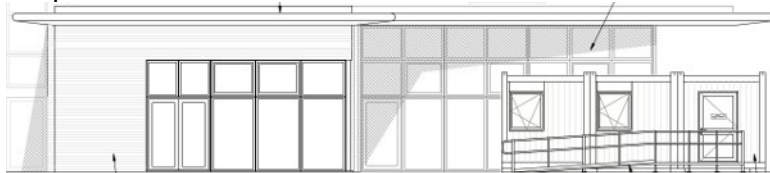
Proposed North Elevation



Proposed South Elevation



Proposed West Elevation



Proposed East Elevation



Site and Surrounding Area

The application site is the Cyclopark which is located adjacent to the A2, within the Green Belt, an Area of Archaeological Potential and the Gravesend Southern Fringe Landscape Character Area.

Satellite Image



Principle of Development

The proposal is to facilitate the expansion of an existing sport recreation facility located on previously developed land within the Green Belt. CycloPark is a purpose built multi-activity centre located to the north of the A2 and has been operating since 2012 and has seen its growth in its popularity and is addressing the need for further expansion to meet the needs of its customers.

The objectives of Section 7 of the NPPF (2026) “is to enable businesses to invest, expand and adapt in a way that reflects the opportunities, challenges and characteristics of different areas, and supports long-term economic growth both locally and nationally.”

Section 16 of the NPPF (2026) has the objective to “is to promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places and support the provision of appropriate public services, by enabling development which can support this aim and seeking to retain, improve and deliver new facilities which are important for community wellbeing and minimising inequalities”, and specifically Policy HC4 which states that “substantial weight should be given to the benefits where:

- a) New or improved public service infrastructure or community facilities would be provided; and
- b. Development proposals would make a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health, preventing ill-health, reducing health inequalities or supporting social interaction in the local community (such as, but not limited to, the provision of new recreation facilities, meeting places and opportunities to grow or purchase healthier food).”

Taking above into consideration, the proposal would support the operation of the existing CycloPark and therefore is considered acceptable in principle.

Green Belt

The site is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt, Grade 2 Agricultural Land, the Gravesend Southern Fringe Landscape Character Area and an area of archaeological potential.

Policy CS02 states that development in the Green Belt that proposes to maintain and diversify the rural economy will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and

policies in the Core Strategy.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Policy GB2 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b. Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e. Assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Policy GB1 states that the general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions.

Policy GB6 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. '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 GB7 states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- a. Development which is for agriculture, horticulture and forestry, or which is solely for nature conservation, restoration and/or enhancement;
- b. The reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the original building⁴⁰. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- c. Limited infilling in villages lying within the Green Belt;
- d. Limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in this Framework or the development plan (for instance, on a rural exception site);
- e. The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt;
- f. Certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are:
 - i. Mineral extraction and processing, engineering operations, and transport, electricity network, water and telecommunications infrastructure required in a Green Belt location);

- ii. Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order;
- iii. Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- iv. The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments.

g. Development where all of the following apply:

- i. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- ii. There is an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed⁴¹;
- iii. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework⁴²; and
- iv. In the case of major development involving the provision of housing, the development proposed complies with policy GB8.

h. Residential or mixed-use development which would:

- i. Be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station (applying the definitions in the glossary at Annex B);
- ii. Be physically well-related to the station or the settlement within which the station is located;
- iii. Be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure;
- iv. Not prejudice any proposals for long-term comprehensive development in the same location; and
- v. In the case of proposals for major development, comply with policy GB8.

The proposed development comprises the existing use of the land for outdoor recreational facilities and would support the continued use and growth of the Cyclopark. As such, the development may therefore be considered an exception under Policy GB7(f) (iii) and/or (iv) of the NPPF (2026).

f. Certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are:

- iii. Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and*
- iv. The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments.*

In this case, the application site is previously developed land and is for the further provision of outdoor sport/recreation and as such, the proposal would accord with Policy GB7(f) (iii) and/or (iv) of the NPPF (2026).

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS13 (Green Space, Sport and Recreation) of the Local Plan states that “The Council will seek to make adequate provision for and to protect and enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of green space, playing pitches and other sports facilities, in accordance with an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base”.

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) states that “New development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area and meet anti-crime standards.”

The objectives of Section 7 of the NPPF (2026) “is to enable businesses to invest, expand and adapt in a way that reflects the opportunities, challenges and characteristics of different areas, and supports long-term economic growth both locally and nationally.”

Section 16 of the NPPF (2026) has the objective to “is to promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places and support the provision of appropriate public services, by enabling development which can support this aim and seeking to retain, improve and deliver new facilities which are important for community wellbeing and minimising inequalities”, and specifically Policy HC4 which states that “substantial weight should be given to the benefits where:

- a. New or improved public service infrastructure or community facilities would be provided; and
- b. Development proposals would make a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health, preventing ill-health, reducing health inequalities or supporting social interaction in the local community (such as, but not limited to, the provision of new recreation facilities, meeting places and opportunities to grow or purchase healthier food).”

Policy P3 of the NPPF (2026) requires that developments should (a) “Provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and the quality of life.”

The proposed classroom is located within an existing tarmacked area, adjacent to the existing Pavilion. As such there would be no loss of greenspace. The building is of a modular construction and has taken on design features of the existing buildings and Pavilion with a materials palette that matches the existing buildings.

Overall, it is considered that the new classroom would be fit for purpose, would enhance the existing use of the Cyclopark and facilitate its growth and future use, with little detrimental impact on the existing facilities or the wider area.

As such, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies CS13 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Sections 7, 16 and 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

Amenity

The proposal is to support the existing use and running of the Cyclopark and is limited to within the confines of the development. The nearest residential properties are located sufficiently away that there would be no impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy and Policy P3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

Parking and Highways

The proposal would not result in any changes to the parking provision for the site. The new classroom is not considered to generate a substantial increase on the parking provision of the existing site and use.



As such the proposal would accord with Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy and Policy T1 of the Local Plan First Review.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.

Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

The proposed modular classroom would be located on the existing tarmacked area and as such, the development would not result in a loss of biodiversity. It is further acknowledged that a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan was submitted and approved under application reference 20260677, which related to the previous application for the *Construction of a new fitness studio and nine containers to create a bike hire facility next to the existing building hub at Cyclopark* (App. Ref. 20251142). The current proposal would not affect the approved biodiversity enhancement plans and proposal as this area is located to the east of the site.

Approved Proposed Biodiversity Enhancement Plan



As such, the local authority are satisfied that the proposed development will not require any biodiversity net gain.

Subject to the imposition of conditions securing the biodiversity net gain and enhancements are implemented, the proposal accords with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and Policies N1 and N2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

Landscape Character Area

The site is located within the Gravesend Southern Fringe Landscape Character Area which is a linear character area that runs along the southern edge of Gravesend. Its characteristics are dominant settlement of urban edge of Gravesend with very gently undulating topography rising from north to south. The man made golf course landscape acts as visual detractor and the landscape is dominated by large road, Channel Tunnel Rail Link and associated infrastructure. The condition is poor and the guidance is to restore and create.

The proposals are within the confines of the existing Cyclopark and are modest in their setting. As such, the proposals would not have an impact on the landscape character area and would accord with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and Section 19 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

Archaeology

Whilst the site is located in an area of archaeological potential, the proposals are within the existing site located on the tarmacked area and grassed area, adjacent to the workshop and as such there is little impact in this regard.

Conclusion

The proposed modular classroom would enable the existing Cyclopark to continue and provide additional facilities. The development would not have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt or the Landscape Character Area, as well as no impact on neighbour amenity, parking or highways and would not result in a loss of biodiversity.

For these reasons, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies CS12, CS13 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026). It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>A Cue</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	24 th September 2026	Dated:	1st October 2026