

**Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green – DO/09/1189**

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 13 April 2010

Application by Kent County Council Youth Services for the existing gates to entrance of campsite to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green, Kearsney Campsite, Kearsney Avenue, Kearsney, Dover, Kent, CT16 3BU (Ref: DO/09/1189)

Recommendation: Planning permission to be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr B Cope

Classification: Unrestricted

**Site**

1. Kearsney Campsite is located to the north of Dover, in an area known as Whitfield Valley. The campsite is accessed off Kearsney Avenue, near to the junction with Woodside Close. The access road into the site is 90 metres in length and is approximately 4 metres wide. The access road also runs parallel to Woodside Close. There is a fence between the access road and Woodside Close, but this is now in a poor state. A site location plan is attached.
2. The campsite operates exclusively for any organisation that works with or for young people and has a maximum capacity of 120 people. The campsite is officially open between 1 April and 30 September each year, with some very occasional, low level usage in March and October. As the campsite is mainly used by young (school aged) it is used mainly during the holiday period and during weekends through term time. There is also some occasional usage of the campsite at weekends during October and November by groups carrying at the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Dover Rugby Club also use the sports pitch at the campsite every weekend during the times that the campsite is shut for the winter period.

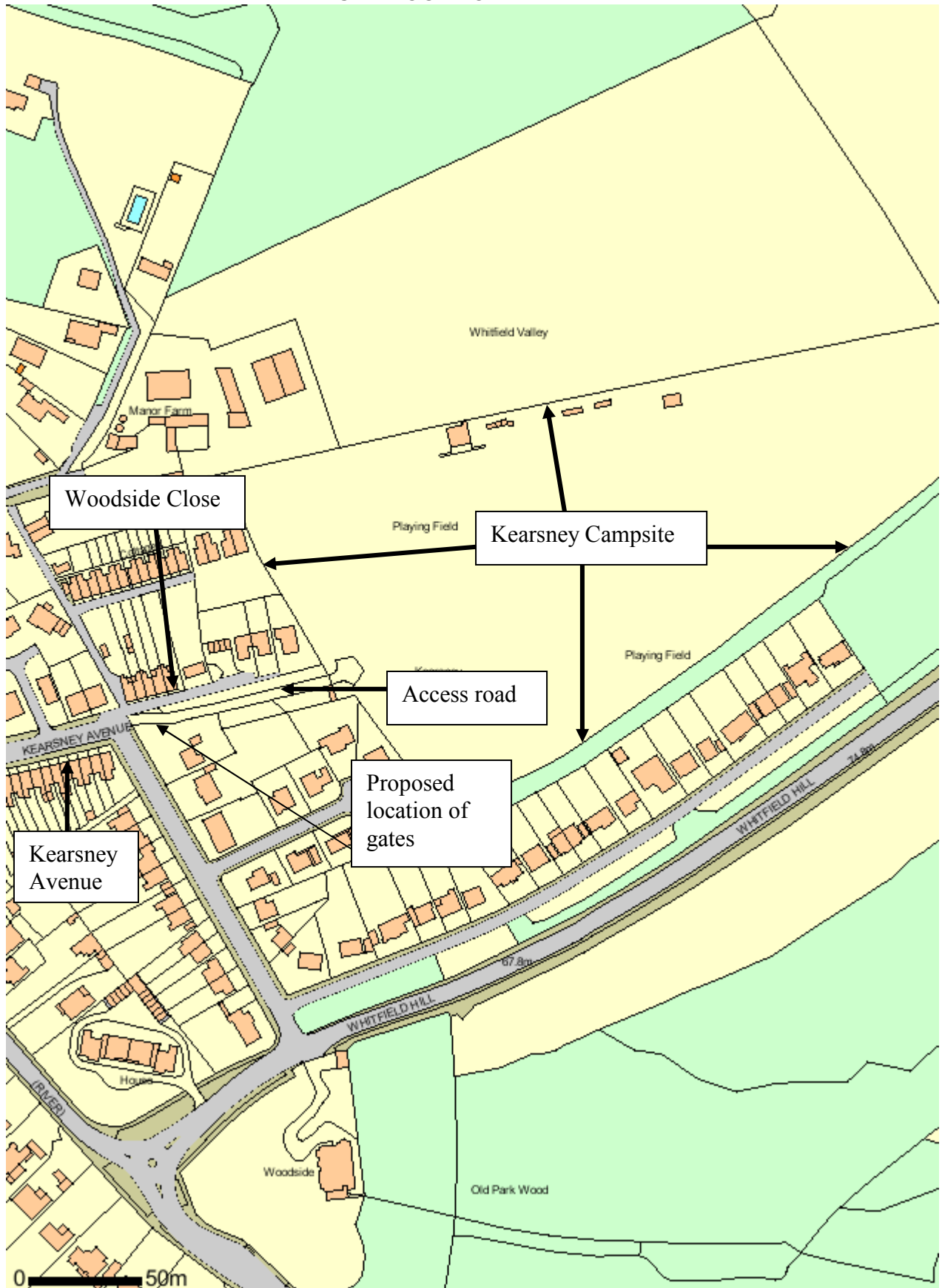
**Background**

3. The campsite used to have old timber gates located right at the end of the access road but these were in poor condition and were not able to be kept securely locked to prevent unauthorised access. These gates were also relatively low and could be breached without much effort. As the timber gates were old and beyond economic repair and were no longer fit for purpose, it was decided to replace them with new galvanised steel gates that are 1.8 metres in height. These steel gates were located along the same line as the old timber gates although they are a bit wider than the previous gates. The new gates were erected on 9 September 2009. Kent Youth Services, the owners of the site, were not aware of the need to apply for planning permission for the new steel gates, as they are higher than the previous gates, until a complaint about the gates was made to the County Council. Advice was also given that the gates needed to be moved 6 metres into the site (see paragraph 4 below for further information) so as not to cause a highway obstruction.

### Item D3

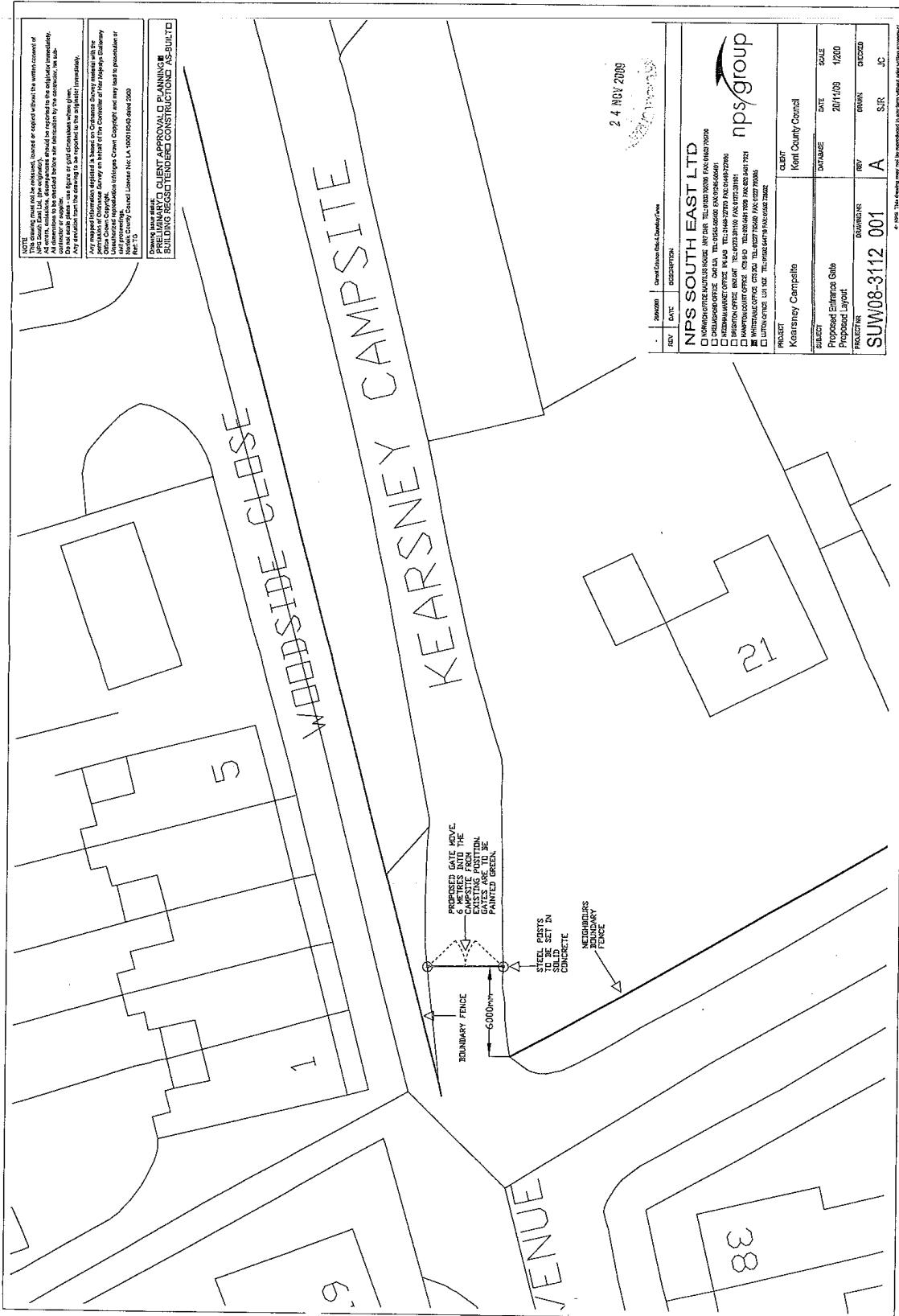
**Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.**

SITE LOCATION PLAN





Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.



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 Kent County Council, Lewes, East Sussex, TN38 9JF

**CLIENT NAME:** Kearsney Campsite  
**PRELIMINARY CLIENT APPROVAL:**  **PLANNING:**   
**BUILDING REGISTRATION:**  **CONSTRUCTION:**  **AS-BUILT:**

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	24 NOV 2009	ISSUED FOR TENDER

**NPS SOUTH EAST LTD**  
 NEWINGHAM ROAD, NEWINGHAM, LEWES, EAST SUSSEX, BN24 9JF  
 TEL: 01323 311111 FAX: 01323 311112  
 EMAIL: sales@npsgroup.co.uk  
 nps group

<b>PROJECT:</b> Kearsney Campsite	<b>CLIENT:</b> Kent County Council
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Proposed Entrance Gate Proposed Layout	<b>DATE:</b> 20/11/09
<b>PROJECTOR:</b> SUW08-3112 001	<b>REV:</b> A
	<b>DATE:</b> 1/2010
	<b>REV:</b> BRWIN
	<b>CHECKED:</b> JC

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### **Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.**

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#### **Proposal**

4. This is a retrospective planning application, which proposes to move the existing 1.8 metre high-galvanised steel double gates from the current location at the end of the access road to the campsite, to a location 6m into the access road. This would allow any vehicle to pull off the public highway before stopping to open or close the gates. Currently any vehicle that needs to open or close these gates must park in Kearsney Avenue and potentially block this road. It is also proposed to paint these gates a green colour to blend into the surroundings better.

#### **Planning Policy**

5. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to consideration of the application:

(i) The adopted 2009 **South East Plan**:

**Policy CC1**                      The principle objective of the Plan is to achieve and maintain sustainable development in the region.

**Policy CC6**                      Actions and decisions associated with the development and use of land will actively promote the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities.

**Policy C4**                        Outside nationally designated landscapes, positive and high quality management of the region's open countryside will be encouraged and supported by the local authorities and other organisations, agencies, land managers, the private sector and local communities, through a combination of planning policies, grant aid and other measures.

(ii) **Dover District Council Local Plan 2002**

**Policy DD1**                      Requires proposals that are acceptable in terms of layout, siting, scale, architectural style, materials, spatial and visual character of the area, landscaping, privacy and amenity.

#### **Consultations**

6. **Dover District Council** – Raises no objection.

**Temple Ewell Parish Council** – Raises no objection.

**Divisional Transportation Manager** – Raises no objection. He also makes the following comments:

The relocation of the gates is acceptable and subject to the gates opening inwards to prevent problems with vehicles waiting to enter and having to reverse back into the highway. The relocation of the gates 6 metres back into the entrance is looked as betterment in highway terms as it allows vehicles to stop off the public highway. This distance could be extended to 10 metres to accommodate caravans. I would not wish to see it set back any further than 10 metres as a longer set back, in the absence of

### **Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.**

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turning facilities would cause a highway hazard with vehicles having to reverse back out on to Kearsney Avenue.

#### **Local Member(s)**

7. The local County Member Mr Bryn Cope was notified of the application on the 18 December 2009.

#### **Publicity**

8. The application was advertised by the posting of a site notice and the notification of 38 neighbouring properties.

#### **Representations**

9. 3 letters of representation have been received in response to the proposal. The main planning reasons for objection can be summarised as follows:
  - The metal gates make a lot of noise when being opened or closed.
  - Unhappy about proposed location of gates as would be located directly outside No. 2 Woodside Close's lounge window.
  - The gates are unsightly and galvanised metal is what you expect to see in an industrial estate.
  - Unacceptable hours of leaving and entering the site.
  - The users of the campsite have no respect for neighbouring properties.
  - Would like to see the gates moved to the end of the access road where it would not affect any residents in Woodside Close or if this is not practical then to a location half way along this access road.
  - There is currently a lot of late night disturbance with campers unlocking and locking the padlock, and noisy car and mini bus engines left running whilst the gates are opened or closed.
  - If the gates were repositioned to the end of the access road then there would be no need to replace the damaged fencing that runs along the side of the access road.

#### **Discussion**

10. A retrospective application seeks planning permission for the replacement of old timber gates with new 1.8 metre high steel gates and to move them 6 metres into the site access, from their current location at the end of the access road. These gates are also to be painted green. The application is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee as a result of the objections received from 3 local residents, as outlined in paragraph 9, above. In considering this proposal, regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 5. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore the proposal needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material considerations arising from consultation and publicity. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case relate to the visual impact and location of the new steel gates and the potential noise from the steel gates.

**Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.**

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## Design and location

11. 3 objections have been raised by local residents as to the location of the proposed steel gates and that they have been changed from the existing old timber gates. It is claimed that the proposed steel gates are unsightly and better suited to an industrial estate rather than residential area. It has also been suggested by these residents that rather than the gates being moved 6 metres into the access road, that the gates are moved all the way to the end of the access road to the campsite, where it would not affect any residents of Woodside Close and there would also not be the need to replace the old fence that runs along the boundary between Woodside Close and the access road.
12. Through discussions with the Divisional Transportation Manager, it has been suggested that the steel gates are moved 6 metres into the access road, so allowing vehicles to pull off the public highway and to open or close gates without causing an obstruction. These gates could be relocated 10 metres into the site access, as suggested by the Divisional Transportation Manager which would allow caravans to pull off the public highway safely. However as no caravans come to the site, it has been agreed to maintain the proposed 6 metre distance. The Divisional Transportation Manager has commented that they would not wish to see the gates relocated right to the end of the access road as there are no turning facilities at the end of this access road and there is not the available road width to create one. Vehicles would thus have to reverse all the way down along the access road, which is 90 metres in length and this could also create a highway hazard with vehicles having to reverse back out onto Kearsney Avenue. Kent Youth Services, who manage the site, also do not wish to see the gates relocated to end of the access road as it would leave the access road to the campsite open and could lead to illegal parking along this access road thus blocking access to the campsite. This access road is approximately 4m wide, so it would be very difficult for two vehicles to pass each other safely. This is an important point as many of the vehicles that arrive at the campsite are mini buses.
13. The applicant advises that steel gates were erected rather than timber gates because the old timber gates were beyond economic repair and on health and safety grounds. There was also the need to secure the site and prevent unauthorised access to the site. The height of the gates was also increased to prevent unauthorised persons from being able to climb over the gates. This application proposes to paint the colour of the gates from its current finish, i.e. galvanised steel, to a green colour. I consider that this would help the gates to blend in better into the surrounding area, and reduce their visual impact. On this basis I would not raise a planning objection to the visual appearance of the gates.

## Noise

14. The applicant advises that the gates to the campsite are closed and padlocked at all times. The keys to the gate are held by Kent Youth Services and the campsite manager meets each group upon arrival to the campsite and issues the keys to the Group Leader. The Group Leader then retains the keys for the duration of their stay and thus has to open and close the gates every time they enter or leave the site. The keys are returned at the end of the visit. As the campsite operates exclusively for organisations that work with or for young people it must be noted that Kearsney Campsite does not operate like a public campsite, where campers arrive individually and can enter or leave the campsite whenever they want to, up until the campsite's curfew times. At Kearsney Campsite the users tend to arrive together in mini buses.

## Item D3

### **Application for the existing gates to campsite entrance to be moved approximately 6 metres into premises and painted green.**

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So even though the capacity of the campsite is 120 people, most of the campers arrive in groups of 12-15 people, so this number of people is moved through the gates in one operation rather than in individual vehicular trips. .

15. There are currently no time restrictions when campers can enter or leave the site but the campsite is used by young people who are supervised by their respective leaders and have strict guidelines for entering and leaving the site and times for 'lights out'.
16. The objectors to this application claim that the steel gates make a 'clanging' noise every time the gates are opened or shut. These new steel gates were erected on 9 September 2009. The new gates, simply by their construction will be noisier than the old ones. However I am advised that there are products available that can be fitted to the gates that would reduce the 'clanging' noise when the gates are opened and closed. The applicant has been looking at products such as nylon based materials that can be used at the hinges and a mixture of nylon and dense rubber that can be used on the leading edges of the gate and locking mechanism. The applicant is willing to arrange for these products to be fitted to the gates as soon as possible. I consider that such measures would help mitigate the 'clanging' sound experienced and subject to this being covered by an appropriate condition would not raise a planning objection.

### **Conclusion**

17. The proposal seeks to replace the old timber gates with 1.8 metre high-galvanised steel gates, which are also proposed to be painted green, and to move the gates 6 metres into the campsite access road. This proposal is seen as an improvement by the Divisional Transportation Manager as it allows vehicles to stop off the public highway and not to cause an obstruction when opening or closing the gates. The height and type of gate is dictated by the fact that the campsite needs to be made secure from any unauthorised access to the campsite. The location of the gates 6 metres into the access road is also necessary to prevent motorists from parking unrestricted along the campsite access road and thus blocking vehicular access to the site. With the proposed addition of nylon and dense rubber materials to the gates, hinges and locking mechanism, the 'clanging' sound of the gates opening and closing can be mitigated so as not to cause an unacceptable noise disturbance to local residents. I therefore see no overriding reason to raise an objection to the development and consider that it would accord with the general aims and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies. I therefore recommend that retrospective planning permission be granted for the gates as set out in paragraph 18 below.

### **Recommendation**

18. I RECOMMEND that PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, including conditions to cover the following aspects:
  - the standard time limit;
  - the development be carried out in accordance with the permitted details;
  - materials are fitted to the gates hinges, leading edges, locking and closing to reduce the noise of the gates opening and closing; and
  - the gates are painted in a green colour to be agreed

Case officer – Lidia Cook
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Background documents - See section heading
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