



Noise Management Plan

for

Battlers Green Farm,

Common Lane

Radlett WD7 8PH

May 2021

Introduction

This Noise Management Plan (NMP) has been prepared to support the planning application for the development of a Bruce's Doggy Day Care Centre located at Battlers Green Farm, Common Lane, Radlett, WD7 8PH ('the Site'). The Site itself is located to the rear of Battlers Green Farm and Shopping Village and away from the residential properties on Common Lane.

NOVA Acoustics Ltd, an industry-leading, independent acoustic consultancy, were commissioned to undertake noise survey work and a Noise Impact Assessment to assess the appropriateness of the dog day care use in terms of residential amenity.

The Noise Impact Assessment assessed the existing background sound climate as well as the sound emissions associated with the proposed development. The closest noise sensitive receptors were identified as residential properties on Common Lane, located to the south east of Battlers Green Farm and Shopping Village and more than 150 metres from the Site.

The Nova Acoustics Noise Assessment Report (Ref: 5935BD 21/05/21) stated that the maximum noise level from a dog barking at the Site is predicted to comply with both the 'CIEH Clay Pigeon Shooting Noise Guidelines' and British Standard BS8233:2014 at the closest residential properties.

The Report concluded that the maximum noise level of a dog bark and the good management of the dogs on-site, in accordance with Bruce's Dog Handling Policy and Noise Management Plan, would ensure that the noise levels and frequency of dog barking is kept to a minimum and that the use of the site for up to 130 dogs would not cause an adverse impact on residential amenity.

Operational Noise Management Measures

This Noise Management Plan (NMP) describes the operational aspects and dog management measures that will be implemented at the site to ensure the levels of noise generated by barking and the frequency of barking events is managed to an absolute minimum and the potential for noise nuisance (generated by barking) to the local community is minimised.

With over a decade of experience Bruce's Doggy Day Care has built a good reputation with the local communities surrounding our existing sites. Our flagship and largest dog day care centre at Cobham licenced for 340 dogs, along with Oxshott licenced for 200 dogs, have not received any noise complaints since they opened. A statement from the Elmbridge Borough Council's Environmental Health Office confirming this is attached at Appendix 1.

Keeping dogs calm and quiet at day care is essential to ensuring both human and canine safety, welfare and mental well being. Some dogs are not comfortable in a noisy environment and it is unpleasant for staff.

1. **Enrolment Meeting** - We only accept social, happy and playful dogs. Every dog must attend an enrolment meeting prior to becoming a customer of Bruce's. This provides our experienced dog behaviour experts to assess the suitability of our environment for that dog. Our environment is not suitable for every dog and therefore we turn away business if necessary.
2. **Strict Entrance Criteria** - We operate a strict entrance criteria as follows:
 - a. Any mature male dog must be neutered
 - b. Female dogs cannot attend when they are in season
 - c. We have restrictions on some breeds based on general breed play style
 - d. We have restrictions on some breeds based on working background
 - e. We have restrictions on some breeds whereby size of the dog increases the handling risk
 - f. If it is apparent at the time of enrolment that the dog is not sociable then that dog will not be able to attend our daycare
 - g. We monitor canine behaviour closely and expel dogs that have behavioural problems that we feel are exacerbated by our daycare environment
3. **Introduce Dogs Slowly** - We introduce new dogs gradually, with only one or two dogs at a time to ensure a calm and slow introduction.
4. **Regular Dogs Only** - Every dog must have a minimum booking of 2 days per week, on an ongoing basis on the same day each week. This means that all the dogs attending are familiar with the environment, the staff and the other dogs attending on that day. This ensures that the dogs are comfortable and relaxed.
5. **Acres of Space** - Every dog has free access to a large outdoor field and indoor areas for resting and downtime. We do not have kennels and do not contain dogs in crates on site.
6. **Licensing** - We will be required to acquire a licence to operate from the site under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018. This licence will specify and therefore restrict the total number of dogs we are able to have on site at any given time.
7. **Carer Engagement** - The dogs are constantly supervised and engaged, and are not left unattended. We operate a minimum of 1 carer to 10 dog ratio. Barking behaviour is monitored continuously throughout the operational day by carers and centre management. Any barking behaviour is immediately addressed by the carer through distraction, engagement, enrichment intervention.
8. **Dog Enrichment** - Each week the carers will implement a different enrichment programme to engage with the dogs. This keeps the dogs engaged and stimulated to ensure they are having a fulfilling experience at daycare. High energy games (e.g. ball games, Frisbee) must never take place, as an excitable environment can cause barking, which could escalate further.
9. **Social Groups** - The dogs are socialised in groups of puppies, small dogs and large dogs to ensure all dogs are calm and well matched rather than being segregated on their own in cages

or kennels which reduces the level of stress and desire to bark.

10. **Carer Intervention** - If any two dogs start to play boisterously carers are trained to intervene and calm the dogs to ensure they do not bark.
11. **Dog Expulsion** - If a dog is disrupting the daycare dynamic by being over-energetic or persistently barking then the human customer will be notified that the day care environment is not suitable for that dog and the dog will no longer attend daycare.
12. **Sensory Area** - The site will have a "Sensory Area" where individual dogs can be taken by the carers to engage in different activities to manage energy levels and stimulate a dog in a different way if required. This will be located in the north west corner of the site where we will not have more than three dogs at any one time.
13. **Landscaping** - The maintenance of the existing physical site features (bund and perimeter hedging) and our landscaping proposals have been designed to screen and buffer the site.
14. **Hours of Operation** - The site will be open between 07:30 and 18:00 during the weekdays only. No dogs are on site overnight meaning that there will be no noise generated by dogs outside these hours.
15. **Centre Management** - The Centre Manager will be responsible for the management and operation of the site and will have ultimate responsibility for managing the Noise Management Plan and ensuring that it remains effective.
16. **Staff Training** - Dog communication, which encompasses barking, is one of our key training modules that all staff will take within their first 3 months of employment.
17. **Internal communications** - All staff receive weekly operational updates via email and are required to attend regular toolbox training talks which deal in all aspects of our day care operations and ensure any challenges surrounding noise are addressed.
18. **Complaint Handling** - We aim to provide an empathetic and polite response to all complaints directly received by us, and we hope that escalation of problems can be overcome by simply talking to us, and us taking appropriate actions. Any complaints will be dealt with immediately by the Centre Manager and the complaint will be logged and managed in accordance with our operational procedures. The log of any complaints will be reviewed on a weekly basis by the Operations Director as part of the Centre Management Reports presented by the Centre Manager.
19. **Review** - The Noise Management Plan will be reviewed at least annually, taking account of operating experience and complaints feedback. When appropriate, the Plan will be updated and refined and amended versions will be copied to the Council's Licensing Team, as required

Noise Monitoring

To ensure that our operational procedures and dog management practices continue to remain effective at minimising noise levels the site will be equipped with a portable digital sound level meter.

This sound level meter will be used by the on-site staff to manually record actual sound levels near to the site perimeter and in the proximity of the closest Noise Sensitive Receptors. Certain staff members will be trained in the use of the sound level meter and a rota for undertaking the monitoring will be implemented.

Monitoring times and days will be randomly selected and sound level data will be logged on a spreadsheet recording the date, time of day, monitoring location, general observations of site operational activities, other off-site noise generating activities and general weather conditions.

The data will be analysed on a monthly basis by the Centre Manager and any upward trends in sound levels will be investigated and operational procedures and the Noise Management Plan will be reviewed accordingly.

APPENDIX 1

Statement from Mark Plummer, Environmental Protection Officer of Elmbridge Borough Council in relation to noise complaints from Bruce's Doggy Day Care Sites operating at Cobham and Oxshott, Surrey.

From: **Mark Plummer** <mplummer@elmbridge.gov.uk>

Date: Wed, Mar 31, 2021 at 2:54 PM

Subject: RE: Noise nuisance data

To: Ben Mann <ben.mann@bruces.dog>

Hi Ben,

Our records go back about 6 years which is our data retention policy, but I can confirm that we have not had any noise complaints about Bruce's Doggy Day Care Centre operating at Cobham and Oxshott Sites within the past 6 years.

Kind regards,

Mark Plummer | Environmental Protection Officer | Pollution Team

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Elmbridge Borough Council, Civic Centre, High Street, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9SD