

# **4D PLANNING™**

Chartered Town Planners & Architectural Technicians

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS / PLANNING / HERITAGE STATEMENT**

Change of use from B1/B8 to dog care facility (sui generis), and alterations to front elevation.

**Property Address:** Unit 5, Titan Business Estate, Finch Street, SE8 5QA.

**April 2022**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** This Design and Access / Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant in respect of a planning application for the change of use from B1/B8 to a dog day care facility (sui generis use) and alterations to front elevation. This Statement should be read in conjunction with other drawings and documents accompanying the planning application.

**1.2** This Statement comprises:

- A description of the application property and surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed development;
- A summary of relevant planning history; and,
- An assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy.

## **2.0 APPLICATION PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA**

**2.1** The application site is located within Titan Business Estate which is accessed off Finch Street. The premises is a railway arch unit and one of many in the estate. Communal parking is available in the Estate.

**2.2** The site is located within a mixed use area, with Titan Business Estate being commercial / in character. There is significant variety in the scale and appearance of properties in the area.

**2.3** Within 400m (5 minutes' walk) of the site there are a variety of land uses including nurseries, schools, church, health centre, local convenience/grocery shops, and restaurants. The site is therefore centrally located to day-to-day facilities, services and amenities.

**2.4** Bus route No's 47, 108, 188, 199, N1 and N199 run along the A200 within minutes walk of the premises. Deptford Train Station is located just minutes walk away. The area has a high PTAL rating of 5. The site is located within flood zone 1 and thus has a low probability of flooding. Most of Titan Business Estate is not within a conservation area although Unit 5 is just within the Deptford High Conservation Area.

### **3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

**3.1** Planning permission is sought to use the premises as a dog day care facility. Alterations are proposed to the front elevation to include an aluminium frame ‘shopfront’ with door and window.

**3.2** The applicant has recently commenced a new business of dog care in this area of London and the premises in question will represent a significant development for the business. It is understood it would be the first dog day care facility in the borough. Over a hundred people have already expressed interest in using the facility on a regular or irregular basis. The premises is modest in size at only approx. 98m<sup>2</sup> and thus will only cater for a relatively small number of dogs on a day to day basis from 8am to 6pm (dogs will not be kept overnight).

**3.3** Initial staffing will consist of 1 full time member, two part time and an apprentice. This staffing number is expected increase by 1-2 members as the business grows. Waste will be collected from a commercial waste company.

### **4.0 PLANNING HISTORY**

**4.1** A planning search of Lewisham Borough Council’s online planning system does not reveal any recent / relevant planning history for the premises in question.

### **5.0 PLANNING POLICY**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021**

**5.1** Para. 81 of the NPPF states that “*Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development*”. Para 82 also states “*Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology Industries...*”.

***The proposed development, a new business, is considered in compliance with the above NPPF policies.***

## The London Plan (2021)

5.2 Policy E8 of the London Plan (Sector Growth Opportunities and Clusters) seeks to ensure “...the availability of suitable workspaces including:

1) start-up, incubation and accelerator space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises”.

*Titan Business Estate is home to many start up and small businesses, and the proposed development would add to this network in a modest but important way. It is not considered contrary to London Plan policies.*

## Lewisham Core Strategy (2011) & Lewisham Development Management Local Plan (2014)

5.3 Para 2.22 of the Core Strategy recognises that ‘Town centres are key locations of economic activity and employment in the borough’. The premises is within a designated ‘Major and District Town Centre’.

5.4 As can be seen in Figure 1 below, the property is not affected by any planning designations other than being within a ‘Major and District Town Centre’, and just within a conservation area.



Figure 1 – Extract from Lewisham Local Plan Policies Map (2015). Part of site is Indicated by Red Circle.

**5.5** DM Policy 11 (Other Employment Locations) states regarding sites in town centres:

*“The Council will seek to retain employment uses (B Use Class) on sites and buildings in Town Centres, and Local Hubs where they are considered capable of continuing to contribute to and support clusters of business and retail uses, and where the use is compatible with the surrounding built context. A number of site characteristics and factors will be taken into account when reaching this assessment. This will include whether sites:*

- a. are well located in relation to the highway network*
- b. are well located in relation to town centres and public transport.*
- c. offer the potential for the expansion of existing in-situ businesses.*
- d. offer the potential for the provision of workshop/industrial units for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) serving local residential and commercial areas, particularly where there is little alternative provision in the local area or*
- e. provide lower cost accommodation suitable for small, start-up businesses”.*

*The proposed development is not considered contrary to this policy. The nature of Titan Business Estate, being very close to residential dwellings, is such that it lends itself to small and start-up businesses like that which is the subject of this planning application. The Business Estate is not an industrial or typical B1 type estate as it hosts a range of businesses from personal training, event management, coffee roasters, catering, and costume / set creation.*

*The proposed development would create more employment than the extant B1 / B8 use for the premises. As per the Employment Density Guide (Homes & Community Agency, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2015) the extant use would typically provide employment for just 1-2 persons. The proposed use will employ 1 full time member, two part time members, and an apprentice.*

**5.6** Policy DM19 relates to shopfronts, signs and hoardings and requires that shopfronts be designed to a high quality. *The proposed alterations to the front elevation are modest in scale and not out of keeping with the variety of building frontages in the immediate vicinity.*

**5.7** Policy 26 relates to noise and vibration and seeks to avoid noise pollution. *In this regard it is pointed out that the premises has natural sound attenuation characteristics being an archway under a railway line and of block construction. In addition, the premises has no outside curtilage, and is only to be used during typical working hours.*

**5.8** Policy 29 relates to parking. All development schemes are expected to provide appropriate levels of parking. *One car-parking spaces is allocated to Unit 5 in the estate. The area has a high*

***PTAL rating of 5 and it is expected that staff and customers will in the main attend on-foot and/or public transport.***

**5.9** Policy 31 (alterations and extensions to existing building) and Policy 30 (urban design & local character) seek high quality development throughout the borough. ***Only minimal alterations are proposed to the front elevation and in any case the premises is largely screened from the public realm by virtue of being within a private business estate.***

## **Heritage**

**5.10** Unit 5 is just within the Deptford High Conservation Area. DM Policy 36 relates to development affecting heritage assets and sets out that planning permission will not be granted where new development or alterations and extensions to existing buildings is incompatible with the special characteristics of the area, its buildings, spaces, settings and plot coverage, scale, form and materials.

**5.11** According to the Deptford High Street & St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (December 2019), the special character of the conservation area is multi-faceted but is derived in large part from its historical origins and links with Broadway and naval dockyard, large number of modest but architecturally notable buildings, and its vibrant land use character.

**5.12** Ffinch Street, Titan Business Park, nor the arches in question are referenced in the Appraisal. Given the modest nature of the works i.e. essentially a change of use with simple and sensitive alterations to front elevation, it is not considered there would be any adverse impacts to the special character or appearance of the conservation area. The premises has minimal visibility in the public realm by virtue of being within a private business estate.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

**6.1** The application site is within walking distance of necessary day to day shops, services and facilities. The site is accessible and sustainable in terms of access and transport being within walking distance of bus routes and within walking/cycling distance of a train station.

**6.2** The proposed development would make efficient use of the existing vacant premises through provision of a modest dog day care facility. There would be no adverse impacts to the character of the area in terms of design and appearance.

**6.3** The proposed development is considered to be in compliance with NPPF policies, as well as the Lewisham Core Strategy and Local Plan, and Residential Standards Supplementary Planning Document.