

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

**Full planning application for the change of use of existing scrubland
to secure canine exercise field (including associated works)**

**Land adjacent to Deerhurst Road, Thornton-Cleveleys, Blackpool,
FY5 3HG**

Prepared by Ian Turnbull

Date: 21st June 2022

CONTENTS

1.INTRODUCTION

2.THE PROPOSAL

3.SITE & LOCATION

4. FLOOD RISK

5.ACCESS AND HIGHWAYS

6.AMENITY

7. ECOLOGY

8.PLANNING POLICY

9. CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application by Mr N. Crane for the change of use of land from scrubland to a secure dog exercise field, including associated works in the form of fencing around the site running parallel with Deerhurst Road and along the boundary with Hallowed Golf driving range.
- 1.2 The objective is to create a secure dog walking / exercise field where people can exercise their dogs off the leash in a secure manner without worrying about other dogs or livestock, or the dog running away from their owners.
- 1.3 Many dogs have behavioural issues which require them to be exercised in a secure environment, the proposed facility would provide a safe and secure place for owners and their dogs to exercise safe in the knowledge that the site is fully secure. The field will also provide a secure environment away from public highways for rescue dogs and puppies to be taught recall without the fear of them being struck by a vehicle or running away.
- 1.4 There has been a well-documented rise in dog ownership during the recent pandemic and with that has arisen the need for facilities such as this. There is a distinct lack of options for people with dogs that cannot be allowed to walk without the restraint of a lead and so this secure field would enable them to exercise freely which will have direct benefits to canine health.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application seeks to obtain planning permission for the change of use of the land shown on the attached plan to a secure dog walking / exercise field. The proposal includes the erection of a 2m high mesh fence around the site which contains a padlocked gate near to Deerhurst Road which is the sole access point to the field. The fence is a proprietary green powder coated metal fencing system which has purposely been chosen to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- 2.2 Access to the site would be via a coded entry system which affords maximum safety for the dogs and their owners, an aspect which is of particular importance when the ever-increasing numbers of dog thefts are considered. The remote issuing of the access code also results in there being no requirement for a constant presence on-site, as such when the field is not being used it will be completely unoccupied.
- 2.3 Bookings are allocated in 1 hour slots with 50 minutes for exercise and 10 mins for any cleaning up that may be required. It is a condition of use that any dog waste is cleared from the site prior to departure.
- 2.4 There is a maximum of 4 dogs per person to allow for adequate supervision with a limit of 12 dogs on the field at any one time. This condition is for the benefit of the dogs themselves as well as to limit the possible noise issuing from the field

- 2.5 There is a minimum age limit of 16 years in order to ensure dogs are properly and responsibly supervised.
- 2.6 The proposed operating hours for the field are 08:00 until 20:00 which is within the current opening times of the 'Tee-Time' driving range during which the area is continually active.
- 2.7 There is no additional lighting proposed for the field.

3. SITE & LOCATION

- 3.1 The site is approximately 0.6ha in size and is bounded by Deerhurst Road to the east, a driving range to the west, golf course to the south and a wooded area containing numerous pathways to the north. The visual amenity of residents living on Deerhurst Road will not be affected by the proposal as there is dense bushes / tree growth along the western side of the road which completely shields the site from view. Access to the site will be via a path leading from Deerhurst Road, on-road parking is plentiful along the street as there are houses along one side only.
- 3.2 The past use of the land is unknown but was most likely pasture / grazing land prior to the development of the golf course. The last use of the land was scrubland which was infrequently used by local residents.
- 3.3 The entrance to the field off Deerhurst Road is in between existing bushes which will be maintained by the applicant to ensure safe access and egress.



Location plan (not to scale)



Aerial view of site showing dense undergrowth fronting Deerhurst Road



Entrance to field showing fencing / gated access



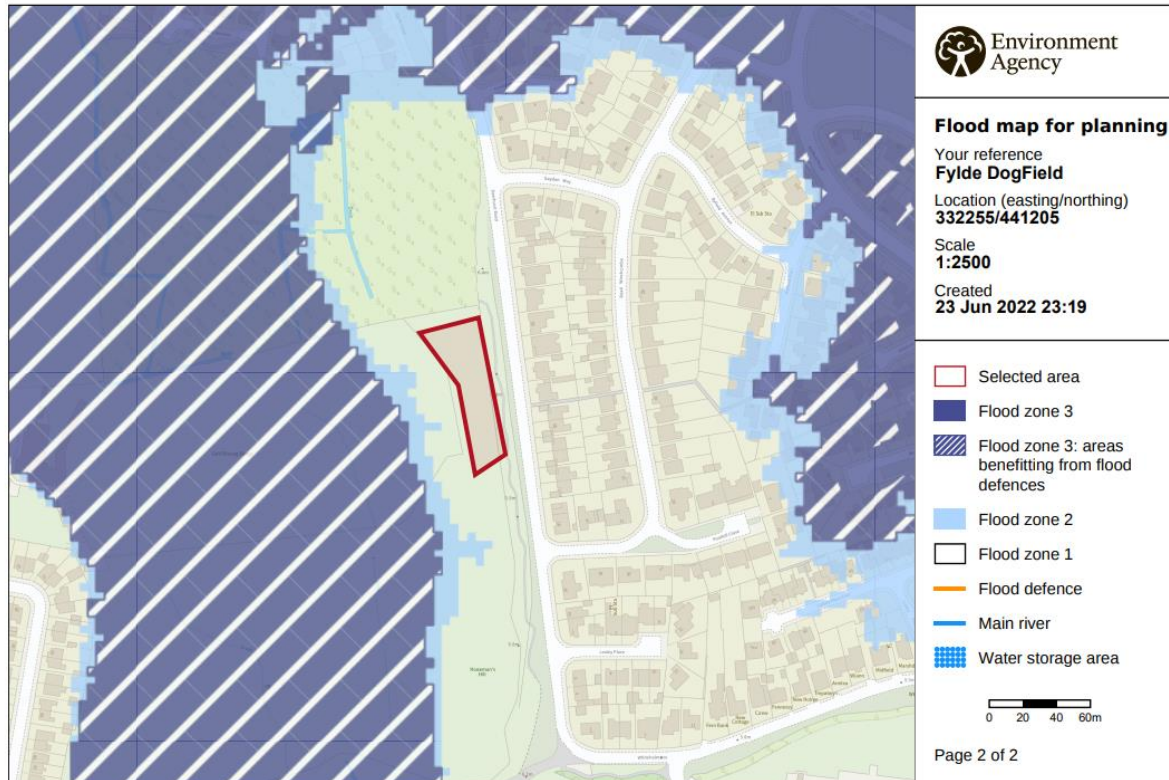
Interior of field showing planting which is maintained by the applicant



Interior of field looking towards Deerhurst Road

4. FLOOD RISK & DRAINAGE

The site falls within Flood zone 1 which means that it is an area with a low probability of flooding. Notwithstanding this, should any accumulation of surface water pose a problem then the applicant will take measures to deal with it.



5. ACCESS & HIGHWAYS

The site is accessed off Deerhurst Road using an existing access leading to paths in the fields. The proposed use is not considered to have any material impact on highway safety. On-street parking is readily available for those arriving by car. The applicant has included specific instruction to those using the field to avoid parking in such a manner as to cause obstruction or difficulty to residents.



Street scene along Deerhurst Road demonstrating availability of parking

6. AMENITY

The site sits borders a residential area to the west and a golf course to the east. The visual amenity of nearby residents will not be affected by the proposal due to significant screening afforded by the quite dense growth of bushes / small trees along the eastern side of Deerhurst Road. It is not considered that the noise generated by people exercising their dogs would be any greater than that which is generated by the previous use of the land.

The proposed development seeks the change of use of a field at the site. The main visual impact is the erection of fencing to the perimeter of the site. The proposed use of the site would remain as large open green space and would not have an unacceptable impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding area.

7. ECOLOGY

There is no reason to suggest that the change of use would have any discernible impact upon the local ecology. No development is proposed which could cause harm to either wildlife or flora / fauna and no trees will be removed as a consequence of this change of use.

8. PLANNING POLICY

National planning guidance and Local planning policy dictates the principle of development and the features of the dwelling houses proposed and associated works on the site.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)

This sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Paragraphs 7 and 8 define the commitment to sustainable development based on three dimensions:

"An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

"A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

"An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

This is followed by a commitment to a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 11 states that "for decision-taking this means:

- c) Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay, or;
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 11 states that for 'plan making' this means:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For decision-taking this means:10

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Blackpool Council Planning Policy:

Planning policy BH8 as taken from the Blackpool Local Plan published by the Council states:

BH8 Open Land Meeting Community and Recreational Needs

Development of land shown on the Proposals Map as other open land meeting important community and recreational needs will not be permitted unless:

- (a) the development only covers a small part of the site and enhances community or recreational use; and
- (b) the development maintains the open character of the land.

6.44 Other urban greenspace, even if not generally accessible to the public, is an essential feature of the urban environment. It contributes to the character and amenity of the different parts of the town and helps to meet the community's recreational needs. This land also contains areas of nature conservation value protected under Policy BH8.

6.45 These other lands include substantial open lands owned by or on long-term lease from the Council comprising golf courses, cemeteries and other uses. Sites within the urban area are shown on the Proposals Map, with those sites outside the urban area protected by Policy NE2. Development of these sites will be resisted except where redevelopment of a small part of the site will enhance sports or recreational provision whilst maintaining the open character of the land.

This proposal accords with policy BH8 in that it covers a small part of the land on which it is sited, it meets a community recreational need and it maintains the open character of the land.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposed use would comply with Policy BH8 of the Local Plan which supports development where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits. The proposed development would provide the economic benefit of employment for the operator of the site. It also has the social benefit of the

provision of a safe walking environment for dogs with behavioural issues and support for a local small business.

The majority of visitors would be walking or travelling a short distance by vehicle to the site. The access would be via an existing access onto the field and due to the nature of the proposed use would not create an unacceptable level of additional traffic.

There would be no detrimental impact upon residential or visual amenity due to the proposed use of the field and number of visitors to the site at any one time and it is considered to be at a sufficient distance from existing residential properties to have minimal impact by way of loss of privacy or noise.

We hope that the Council can support the proposed development which would be of public benefit, providing a professionally run, safe and secure site for owners to exercise their dogs.

I trust that I have identified the planning merits sufficiently for the application to be looked upon favourably and respectfully request that Planning Permission be granted.