

Planning Statement

Change of Use from commercial unit to Dog
Day Care Centre

Unit B, Foxhunters Industrial Estate,
Foxhunters Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 8UG

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Project Title:

Change of Use from commercial unit to Dog Day Care Centre

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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1. SHEN has been instructed by the applicant to submit this Planning Statement to support and accompany the planning application documents for 24/00050/FUL.
- 1.2. The applicant is seeking consent under the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)* for the development.
- 1.3. This Planning Statement accompanies the application and provides an assessment of the acceptability of the development considering the relevant national planning policies, Development Plan policies and other material considerations which should be considered in determining the application. It also:
 - 1.3.1. Describes the Site at Unit B, Foxhunters Industrial Estate, Foxhunters Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 8UG;
 - 1.3.2. Provides details of the land use and suitability for a dog day care centre;
 - 1.3.3. Explains the characteristics of the development with emphasis on the suitability of the Site bearing in mind key factors including the quality of the Site in land use and accessibility terms;
 - 1.3.4. Assesses the development against relevant planning policy and other material considerations.
- 1.4. The purpose of this Planning Statement and supporting documents is to demonstrate that the extant development is acceptable in planning terms, taking account of the policies within the Development Plan and any material planning considerations.
- 1.5. This Planning Statement details how the proposal accords with both national and local planning policy, is an appropriate location, and has no environmental or technical constraints preventing the proposed development of the site.

Proposed Development – Dog Day Care Centre

- 1.6. The primary objective of the development is to facilitate the growth of The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd., with a new location based at Unit B, Foxhunters Industrial Estate, Foxhunters Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 8UG.
- 1.7. Additional documents available to accompany this Planning Statement include the following company documentation, guidance, and handbooks relative to the current operating sites of The Doggy Day Care Ltd;
 - (i) *Employee Handbook The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd.pdf (Appendix 1.)*
 - (ii) *Health and Safety Policy The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd 30.11.21.pdf (Appendix 2.)*
 - (iii) *Company Operational Procedures.docx (Appendix 3.)*
 - (iv) *Staff Training Module.docx (Appendix 4.)*
 - (v) *Visit Form.docx (Appendix 5.)*

- 1.8. The Doggy Day Care Ltd at the Whitley Bay site is a commercial unit comprising a design specific Dog Day Care Centre within an existing unit, 280 square metres total area.
- 1.9. The proposed site will additionally offer two indoor areas, each fully enclosed and heated, providing ample space for exercise, play and relaxation. The exterior of the site will offer two all-weather outdoor spaces.
- 1.10. The Doggy Day Care Centre offers a safe and caring environment, where pet owners can bring their dogs for the day to be cared for and entertained while they are at work, away from home, or other needs.
- 1.11. The activities at the Doggy Day Care Centre include, but are not limited to:
 - a) **Socialisation:** Dogs can interact with other dogs in a safe and supervised environment, which can help with their social skills and overall, well-being.
 - b) **Playtime:** There are designated play areas where dogs can socialise in a play environment, the centre providing exercise to burn off energy and stay active. Different activities include indoor and outdoor dog agility, toy time/play time, mental stimulation time, scent work sessions, basic training, ball pools, dog and puppy crafts, dog puzzles, outdoor pools in summer and very importantly dog sleeping areas for downtime.
 - c) **Rest and relaxation:** There are also quiet spaces where dogs can rest and relax, especially after play sessions.
 - d) **Basic training:** The Doggy Day Care Centre offers basic training activities and reinforcement of obedience commands. The Centre has a very strict positive only reward-based training rule.
 - e) **Supervised outdoor walks:** Each centre has external adjoining exercise areas where dogs are taken out in small manageable groups throughout the day.
 - f) **Human Interaction:** The Centres provide all dogs with beneficial human interaction, which is documented daily. The Doggy Day Care Centre, with permission from owners, posts videos and pictures of all permitted dogs on each visit to demonstrate the care and interaction provided daily.
- 1.12. This Planning Statement is designed to act as an overarching document which brings together the findings and conclusions from the other relevant studies, and the 3 current operational sites of Doggy Day Care Ltd and presents them in line with the relevant planning policy guidance.

2. SITE CONTEXT

Site & Surrounding Area

- 2.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides a description of the application site and its surrounding environs and topography together with the main uses in the area surrounding the application site.
- 2.2 The application site is located within Foxhunters Industrial Estate, Foxhunters Road, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear.
- 2.3 The site to which the application relates is a commercial unit, within the southern area of the Foxhunters Industrial Estate in Whitley Bay.
- 2.4 The site is bordered by existing commercial uses, with further commercial uses to the north, and to the south by a strip of grassed open space that separates the industrial estate from the housing on the Marden Farm Estate to the south.
- 2.5 To the direct South of the site are shrubs bordering grassland, to which Hampton Road and residential properties are situated.

Transport & Accessibility

- 2.6 The site has on-site parking, adjacent access from the public highway, pedestrian access, and a large public car park in proximity to the site. The car park provides 79 spaces, for a (free) 2hr period and is a 2-minute walk to the development site.
- 2.7 The site and local area have good links to existing services, facilities, and infrastructure with a short drive providing links to Whitley Bay, surrounding Towns, North and South Shields, and the local/regional/national road infrastructure.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

- 3.1. This section provides a description of the development, providing details regarding the operations / scale / mass of the Dog Day Car Centre.

Dog Dare Care Centre – Whitley Bay

- 3.2. The proposed site will operate as described, and mirror the three well-established operational sites in Morpeth, and Alnwick. The operation aims, objectives, and methods include:
- a) The site will operate between the hours of 07h30 and 17h45.
 - b) There will be no overnight boarding.
 - c) The site will not operate on Saturdays, Sundays, or Bank Holidays, and closes for a period of 14 days over the Christmas and New Year period.
 - d) All dogs are registered via The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd online registration system.
 - e) Proof of up-to-date vaccinations are required with all registrations.
 - f) The Doggy Day Care requires registration of all dogs' health, behaviour, and vet history. Additionally, all customers are required to sign to give permission to administer first aid to a dog if required and attend a Veterinary Surgery if deemed necessary.
 - g) The Doggy Day Care Centre explicitly does not accept dogs with any behavioural difficulties, ie. attention barking, separation anxiety, aggression These behaviours are deemed as disruptive to all environments, employees, and other dogs on site.
 - h) Each Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd. site has a licenced and insured company purpose-built van which collects and returns registered dogs to and from the Dog Day Care Centre. The transport offered at each currently operational site transports an average of 15-20 dogs per day.
 - i) In addition to the company transport, employees (fully insured by the company and following our transportation of dog's policy (Appendix 6.), transport to the centres additional dogs in their vehicles.
 - j) The Doggy Day Care Centre operates a strict booking system to ensure that the Centres are correctly staffed.
 - k) All operating sites and the proposed Whitley Bay site are split into multiple sections where the Centre mixes the dogs appropriately. The decision on the mix of dogs is made by a qualified member of staff/site manager and is based on the size/breed/temperament of the dog.

- l) Regular and constant daily assessments are made to ensure dogs are mixed appropriately and to ensure that all dogs thrive in the care of each Centre. Each Centre section has a designated staff member, dogs are at no time left unattended.
- m) The Centre operates a higher than recommended staff to dog ratio level of 1:8. This ensures that all dogs are closely monitored and correctly stimulated throughout the day. (Defra and Council licensing requires a 1:10 ratio)
- n) No dogs are ever left unattended whilst in attendance at the Centre. This company procedure ensures a proven reduction in noise and disruption.
- o) The Doggy Day Care Centre sites operate with a fully qualified member of staff on-site at all times. All Centre employees are required to attend a canine first aid course prior to commencing their employment with the Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd., are competently trained following The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd. Staff Training Module (Appendix 4.).
- p) Each Doggy Day Care Centre is registered with a local veterinary surgery for emergencies and prior permission is gained from the customer during the registration process.
- q) The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd., all sites, and the proposed Whitley Bay site contract Citation Health and Safety / HR Consultants, Head Office, Kings Court, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AR to perform annual building and site inspections. All sites have current documentation available for inspection on request.
- r) The Doggy Day Care Centre Ltd., all sites, and proposed Whitley Bay site contracts Tyne & Fire Safety, (British Fire Consortium Audited Member) to perform annual inspections and provide checks on all fire equipment on site.

4. PLANNING POLICY

Introduction

- 4.1 This section outlines the policy and guidance contained within the Local Plan that is relevant to the site and the development, in the context of the statutory planning policy framework, and any relevant material considerations.

Planning Policy Context Overview

- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*¹ requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Development Plan relevant to the proposed development is *North Tyneside Local Plan (Adopted July 2017)*
- 4.3 It is also necessary to appraise the development in the context of other material considerations. There is no strict definition of what constitutes a material consideration in planning legislation, although case law indicates that any consideration, which relates to the use or development of land, is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.
- 4.4 Material considerations can include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)², emerging and saved planning policies, government policy and strategy, and Neighbourhood Plans.

North Tyneside Local Plan (NTLP)

- 4.5 The Local Plan is consistent with the national policy taken from the NPPF that has been used to inform the Local Plan strategy, objectives, policies and supporting guidance, following the needs of the locality.
- 4.6 The relevant policies have been identified in the NTLP and listed below.
- Policy S4.3
 - Policy DM2.4
 - Policy DM3.6

¹ [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)

² [\[Revised December 2023\] NPPF](#)

5. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Planning Policy Appraisal

Policy S4.3

- 5.1 The Local Plan Policy S4.3 allocates the application site and the wider Foxhunters Industrial Estate as a mixed-use housing site with a potential capacity for 61 residential dwellings.
- 5.2 The Foxhunters Industrial Estate is a well-established commercial site providing a range of industrial, commercial, retail, and mixed-uses. In this instance, whilst the site and wider area are allocated in the NTLP for mixed-use housing, the land use remains that of the Foxhunters Industrial Estate. In land use terms the proposed development is a use accepted on industrial and commercial sites in North Tyneside and across England and Wales.
- 5.3 In policy terms, the NTLP allocates the site and wider land for mixed-use housing. The site and wider area do not include housing development and remain a location for industrial and commercial businesses. In terms of Policy S4.3, the policy seeks to establish a mixed-use at the Foxhunters location, and the delivery of the development for the Dog Day Care Centre is consistent with the aims of Policy S4.3 in terms of a mixed-use at the location.

Policy DM2.4

- 5.4 Recognising the NTLP allocates the site and the Foxhunters Industrial Estate for mixed-use housing (See Para 5.2 to 5.5) the site is not an allocated employment site within the NTLP.
- 5.5 The Foxhunters Industrial Estate remains a well-established employment site, and as it is not allocated for employment, the development is therefore on "*Employment Land Development Outside Available or Existing Employment Land*". The development accords with the four criteria of Policy DM2.4 and will contribute to job creation, and diversification of the economy, has an existing and appropriate vehicle access, is accessible by public transport, and would not be detrimental to local amenity.

Policy DM3.6

- 5.6 The aim and objectives of Policy DM3.6 seek to support "*Small-scale out of centre facilities serving local retail and leisure needs...*". The policy includes four criteria, the Dog Day Care Centre is an appropriate size and function to meet the specific day-to-day needs of the neighbourhood, will not have an adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring uses, will contribute to social inclusion and sustainable development, and will safeguard the retail character of existing centres and not detract from their vitality and viability.

Summary

- 5.7 In summary, the development is demonstrated to accord with the appropriate planning policies in the NTLP. The development for the change of use re-sources an existing building in a sustainable location, promoting a local facility, generating employment, and remains consistent with the policies of the NTLP.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The development, a change of use of existing commercial premises, is located within a well-established industrial estate and the development provides the direct opportunity for inward investment, delivery of commercial accommodation, and provide for direct/indirect increase of employment.
- 6.2 The benefits of The Doggy Day Care Centre operating from this site, will provide a valuable service to dog owners in the area and will repurpose an existing space, bringing new life and community engagement to the area. Additionally, it has the potential to create jobs and contribute to the local economy, including the secondary supply chain.
- 6.3 The Dog Day Care Centre will be a positive addition to the area, adding vibrancy and support for pet owners in the local community.
- 6.4 Accordingly, this proposal represents an acceptable use for the site and, as such, the LPA is respectfully requested to approve the application without delay.
- 6.5 Where the LPA requires further information, the LPA is requested to contact the Planning Agent and a prompt response will be sought.