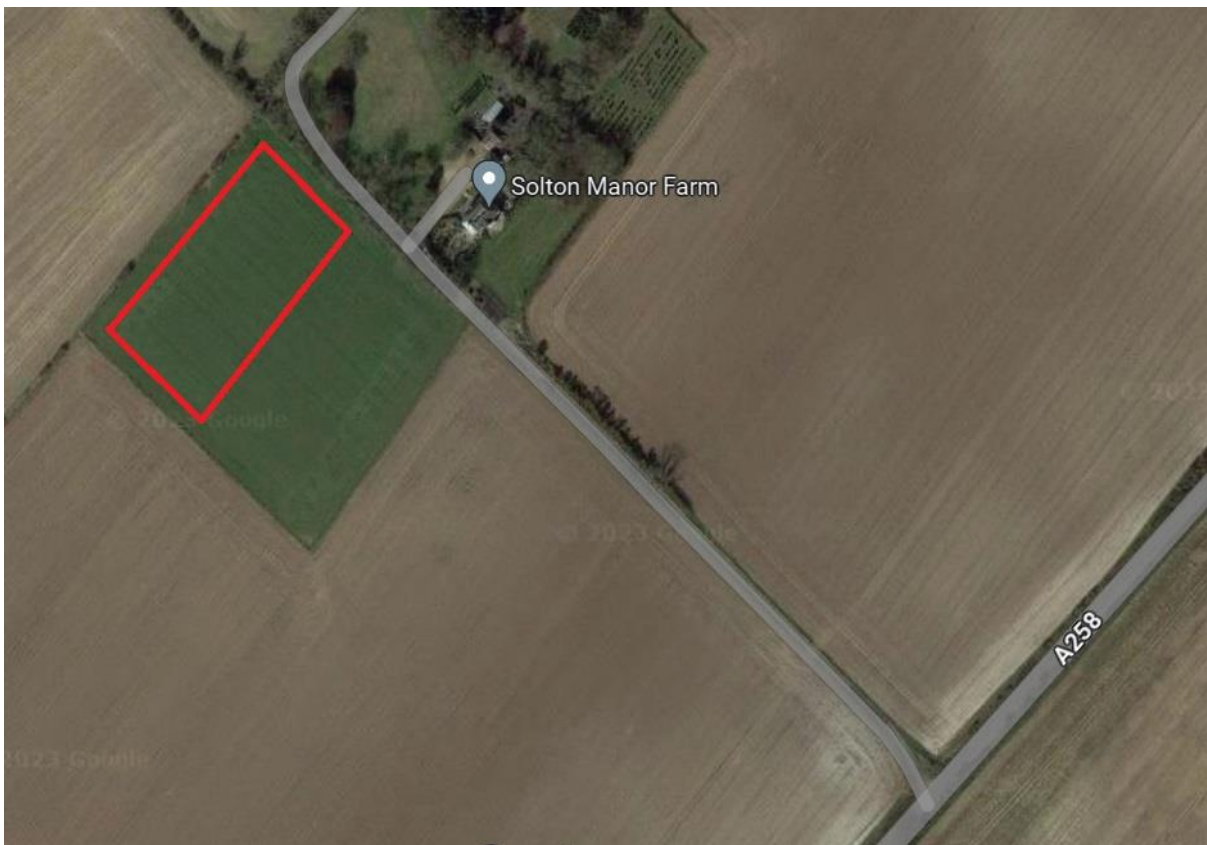


Planning Statement

Dog exercise area at
Solton Manor Farm



Introduction

This application pertains to the change of use of an agricultural field to accommodate a secure dog exercise area. This would involve the creation of a small rural business to enable dog owners to book a one hour time slot to safely exercise up to 6 dogs at a time. This proposal will provide a safe, secure area away from roads, buildings or public rights of way for people to exercise their dog 'off lead' in confidence. This also enables those who may be less mobile to enjoy the countryside and allow their dog to exercise off lead without fear of poor recall, reactivity to other dogs or livestock. Due to the increased popularity of this locally and nationally, this has been assessed to be a viable business operation.

Site Analysis

The proposed site sits to the north-west of the A258 Dover-Deal road at Solton Manor Farm and is approximately 300m from the highway. The site is relatively flat grassland which is currently used for hay production. The site currently has a 1.2m standard livestock fence around $\frac{3}{4}$ of the perimeter and a hedge along the remaining perimeter. There are no public rights of access adjoining the site. The site is accessed by a private track. To the North-West is the neighbouring recently approved new solar park.

Proposal

This application seeks the change of use from agricultural to an enclosed dog exercise field over an area of 1.52ac.

The site is currently grass, which is used for hay production, and the grassland will remain in a managed manner for this application. The anticipated hours of operation will be 6am-8pm during the summer months, and 8am-4pm during the winter months to match daylight hours. There will be no artificial lighting as part of this application. The number of dogs will be limited to 6 during any one session. A public liability insurance policy will be in place before the start of operation. If the use of this site as a dog exercise park were to end, the use of the site will revert only to agricultural use.

This dog exercise field will be run by the family, and it would be us who will perform checks, maintenance, providing water and the locking & unlocking of the site each day.

Whilst additional noise is judged to be low, the impact of any potential noise is assessed to be negligible; there are no neighbouring residential properties in the immediate vicinity.

Design and Access Statement

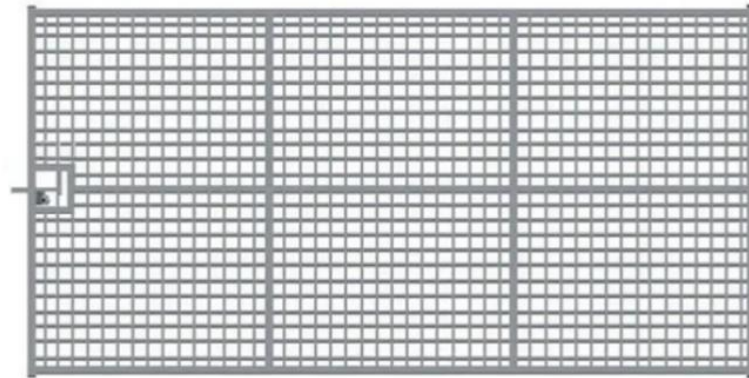
The proposed site is set within a 1.2m high livestock fence around the majority of the perimeter. The fence for the dog exercise area will be made up of 1.9m high netting specifically made for dog proofing. This will be mounted on chestnut posts at a 3m spacing interval. Intermediate posts will be driven in to 2ft deep and strainer posts to 4ft deep. This fencing will follow the red line on the site map. All fencing works will be carried out by a professional contractor. This fence will be set 4m within the current boundary allowing machinery access around the area. This 4m grass boundary will be allowed to grow with the addition of wildflowers and limited mowing, increasing the biodiversity of this area and encouraging pollinators.

An example of the wire netting pattern is shown below:

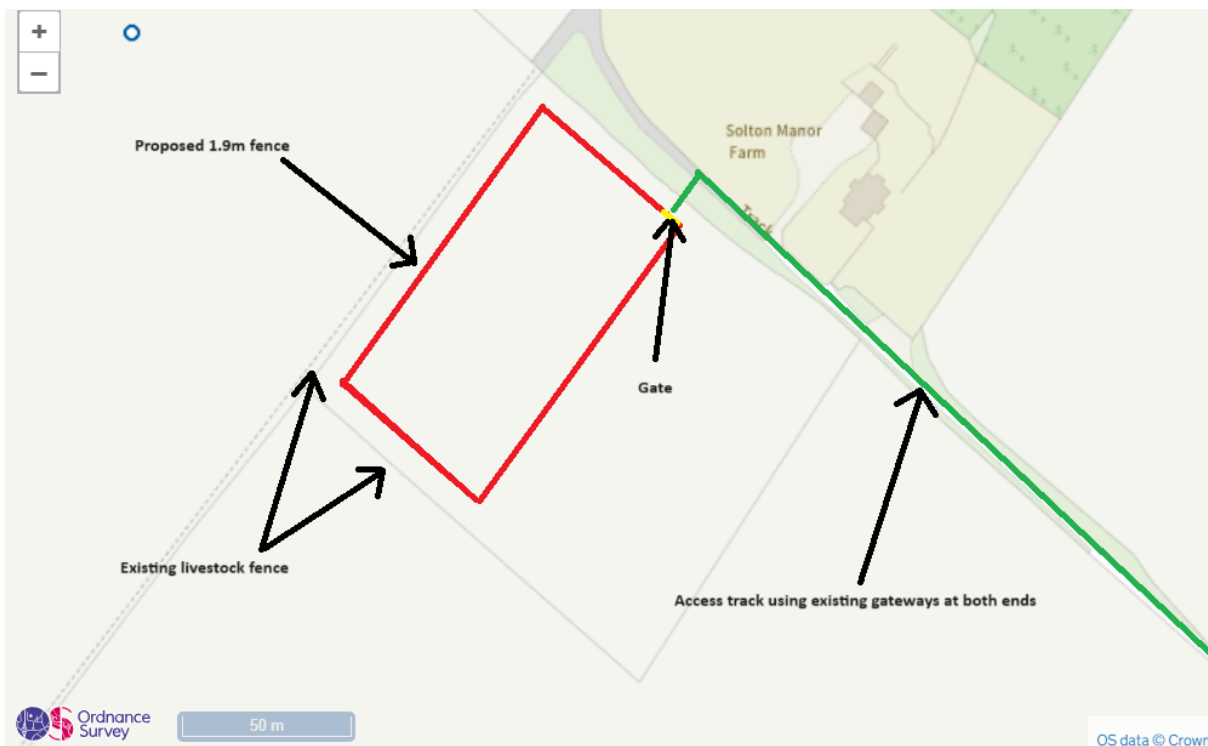


There will be no permanent structures or features placed anywhere on the site. This is to ensure that if there is an end to the area being a dog exercise area, the land will be able to revert directly to agricultural use. A 12'x9' timber mobile field shelter will be provided to give shelter to owners during inclement weather.

In the South East corner of the site will be a pair of 1.86m high by 1.83m wide fully meshed deer gates (construction as below) mounted on chestnut posts. These will be accessed via an existing field gateway.



Overall site map below



Access to the site will be using an existing access track directly from the A258 Dover-Deal road. There is good visibility in both directions when joining the A258. The first ten metres of the access road are tarmac; the remaining distance is a durable hardcore & tarmac planning track. There will be no gates near to the highway – these will be at point of access into the field itself, through an existing field entrance. The site will have parking for a maximum of 2 cars at a time, and a 15 minute buffer between time slots will ensure that there are no overlaps of visitors taking place. Access to the site will be managed via an online booking system – there will be

no attendance without prior arrangement. Parking will be just outside the proposed dog field gate, with a 4.5m x 3m area of wood chippings to facilitate this.

Waste removal

Owners using the field will be expected to collect any waste produced by their dog, and bags will be provided for owners to encourage this. A small bin will be provided inside the area itself. Daily inspections of the field will be undertaken to ensure the field is clear of waste, sanitary and secure. Waste will be collected from a larger bin at the entrance to the field by a specialist waste disposal company on a monthly basis, or sooner should the need arise.

Traffic

As part of this proposal there will be an online booking system offering one hour slots with a 15 minute gap between bookings to ensure there is one vehicle using the track at a time. This track is directly off the A258 Dover-Deal road and the traffic increase is judged to be negligible. In the unlikely event that one car will be leaving the site as one enters, the entrance is wide enough for 2 cars to pass safely, therefore traffic flow on the A258 will not be affected.

Archaeology

In this proposal there will be no excavations or construction taking place which would break the surface, apart from installation of fence posts.

Flood Risk

The site in question is less than 1ha, and sits within Flood Zone 1 – a site with low probability of flooding.

Conclusion

This proposal is to provide a safe and secure dog exercise area for use by people within the Dover District and surrounding areas. This would be on a pre-booked basis and so access and numbers would be sustainable and controlled.

The proposal will not alter the overall appearance of the field as it is currently grassland and will remain so, albeit on a managed basis. There is no requirement for lighting, excavation or permanent buildings/change to the area. The fencing proposed, using chestnut fence posts, is in keeping with the character of the site and existing fencing.

This is a positive opportunity to provide a space for dogs and their owners in the Dover District to enjoy the countryside in a safe, secure site, in turn helping to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for dogs and owners alike.