Design & Access Statement relating to resubmission of planning application no. 07/00772/COU to erect 2 single storey buildings for use as a boarding cattery at Elm Farm, Ratcliffe Lane, Sheepy Magna, Atherstone, Warks, CV9 3QZ

DESIGN

Introduction

There is presently a great demand for good quality boarding catteries throughout the country due to the fact that cats are now the most popular pet in the UK (there are over 1 million more cats than dogs) and their prominence comes at a time when many established catteries are closing for the simple reason that their premises (i.e. the cattery buildings themselves) no longer meet the licensing requirements of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.

Use

A boarding cattery must be established on a site where an existing dwelling exists for obvious reasons and the property at Elm Farm is considered suitable because of its rural location – i.e. the establishment of a boarding cattery will have little or no impact on the occupants of neighbouring properties and, in terms of the welfare of the boarded cats, fresh air and open space that attracts wildlife will provide visual stimulation to help combat boredom and depression.

Boarding catteries should not be considered in the same context as boarding kennels in terms of noise and smell: there is little or no noise from a cattery as cats are, by nature, generally quiet and contented animals particularly if they well cared for (i.e. fed and warm) in a cattery built to the highest standards. The chalets/sleeping areas are insulated with 60mm fibreglass and whilst its primary function is its thermal qualities, it also acts as a sound insulator. Most boarded cats are neutered and therefore, do not attract 'outside' cats and the operation of a boarding cattery does not involve any machinery. Unlike dogs, cats are clean animals and always use a litter tray that is cleaned and emptied regularly – the used/soiled cat litter is placed in sealed bags and retained in a bin for collection/disposal via a licensed/registered commercial waste contractor.

Amount

The site in question is of sufficient size to accommodate a 19-unit cattery and a cattery of this size is approaching the limit (in terms of the number of units) to be operated and managed by the proprietor only.

Layout

The proposed 'U' shaped building is sited within close proximity to the dwelling on site and has been re-positioned to ensure that the view from Ratcliffe Lane is restricted as far as possible albeit the view, in the main, is of the solid boarded

sections forming the perimeter of the building (i.e. the residents of nearby properties in Ratcliffe Lane will not be able to see directly into the cattery.

Scale
The size of each individual unit (i.e. the combined sleeping area and exercise area) is intended to comply with the minimum dimensions stipulated in the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health publication entitled 'Model Licence Conditions and guidance for Cat Boarding Establishments' and this is obviously essential so as to ensure that a licence is issued under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963. The maximum height of the building is approximately 2.1m and should not, therefore, be considered intrusive.

A level path with will be provided for all potential customers linking the proposed car parking area to the main entrance to the cattery building.

Landscaping
The proposed cattery will be screened by the perimeter landscaping that already exists on-site.

Appearance
The proposed cattery will be as per the submitted plans.

All exposed timber from which the proposed building would be constructed would be treated with 'Golden Brown' Cuprinol and this will ensure that it blends in with the garden as well as the principal dwelling. The solid boarded roof over the sleeping areas would be clad with green mineral felt.

ACCESS

The normal traffic flow would not involve any light or heavy goods vehicles – any supplies/consumables are collected direct from a local wholesaler or 'cash and carry' by the proprietor. All cats would be transported to and from the cattery by car – given that cats are notoriously poor travellers, it is virtually impossible for customers to use any form of public transport or travel by foot.

Most existing/established catteries plan their businesses based on an average of 75% occupancy during each year. It should also be remembered that many pet owners will only place their cats in a boarding cattery when they are absent from home for an extended period such as a week or fortnight's holiday – the feeding and care of their pets during a short term absence of a few days is often the responsibility of a friendly neighbour or relative. Many catteries also accept 'long-term boarders' which, once again, reduces the amount of traffic flow.

Given the above, it is estimated that the extended cattery would generate a flow of traffic equivalent to approximately 2-4 cars per day.

Although some of the traffic may be concentrated into certain days and/or times, it is rare for more than one customer to be visiting the cattery at the same time – cats are delivered and collected by their owners via a strict appointment system as the cattery proprietor cannot cope with more than one customer at once and customers would not

expect to wait for 20 minutes or so before being attended to (it can take up to 20 minutes to receive or return a cat due to the completion of the necessary forms, record sheets, forms of consent and dealing with payment etc.).

All catteries restrict the times during which customers can deliver and collect their cat(s) cats and these are rarely before 8.30am or later than 6.30pm during weekdays. The opening times for weekends and bank holidays are generally more restricted.

Generally, customers are not permitted to enter the main part of the cattery without being accompanied by the cattery proprietor so as to ensure the safety and security of the boarded cats (i.e. to prevent escape).

Statement produced by Welland Timber Products Ltd.
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