

Supporting Planning Statement

Application to change the use of a field
to a Dog Park Exercise Area (Retrospective)

at

Land off Leicester Road (A47) Earl Shilton LE9 7EE

Prepared by:

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Ref. AVD-LRE-PS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This supporting statement has been prepared by Architectural Vistadesigns Ltd in support of an application for the change of use of a field to a dog exercise park area at Land off Leicester Road (A47) Earl Shilton.

1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with other supporting information supplied as part of the planning application including:

- Application forms;
- Location Plan;
- Existing Site Plan;
- Proposed Site Plan;
- Dog Management Plan.

1.3 The following sections of the statement provide a description of the site and context of the surrounding area; details of the proposal, alongside an overview and assessment of the planning policy context relevant to the proposed development.

1.4 This statement demonstrate that the proposal fully complies with all relevant local and national planning policy.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site is located off Leicester Road (A47) with an established wide vehicle access to the field already in the village of Earl Shilton, in the administrative boundary of Hinckley and Bosworth.

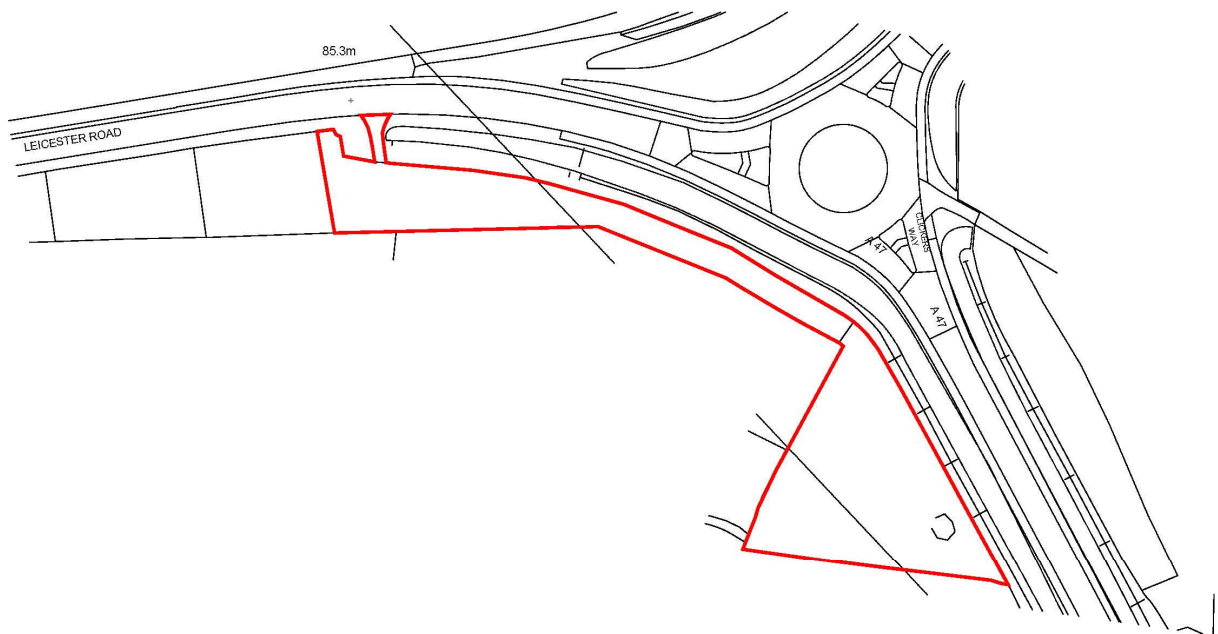


Fig. 1 Location Plan

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2.2 The site is a dog leg formation of land with triangular section towards the south east part of the land, greenfield and approximately 1.6 acres in size. The field has existing post and rail timber fencing to majority of the field, which is secure with access and entrance gates.

2.3 The site benefits from an existing access off the Leicester Road (A47), therefore benefiting from a safe access.

2.4 The site is located in a countryside location, does not fall within a Conservation area and no heritage assets are close to the application site.

2.5 The land in its use as a dog exercise park area is not affected by any flooding that would impact on its use or proposals.

2.6 There is no relevant site-specific planning history.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The area is approx. 1.6 acres in size and proposes 2m high metal mesh fencing and 0.9m high timber post and mesh wired fencing to parts of the boundaries, which to date has been erected already to secure the boundary treatments.

3.2 The existing inner access field gate will be replaced with a 1.8m high metal Deer Gate to further secure the site for its intended purpose.

3.3. A timber Field shelter is also proposed for the site, which users of the site can take refuge on bad weather days as shown on drawing No. AVD-LRE-PL05. This has not been installed to date.

3.4 The car parking area can be shown on drawing No. AVD-LRE-PL04. The proposed hardstanding area has been reinforced with gravel and shall be reseeded with grass, which maintain a permeable surface and utilised for vehicles to park and turn, ensuring the vehicles enter and exit the site in a forward gear.

There is a considered degree of separation from the exercise area and parking zone.

3.5 Items/obstacles shall be placed on the exercise area, these will not be of permanent nature and shall be moveable structures.

3.6 The business operation can take place whilst the land remains open without any building development within the countryside.

3.7 The proposals blend into the landscape and not impacting negatively or causing any harm to the openness of the countryside.

3.8 The field visually will appear no different to an agricultural field from view.

3.9 The proposed seasonal opening times are to be:

- Spring and Summer opening times- 6am-8pm
- Autumn Winter opening times- 7.30am-5pm

3.10 The business seeks to offer private sessions and run back to back in 30 minutes and 1 hour sessions with a maximum of two cars at one time. This can be adjusted if needs be to omit crossover of users attending the Dog Park.

3.11 Bookings shall be made through an online booking system. The booking system enables identification of who should be on the field at any one time. If any issues were to arise it enables easy traceability for these to be resolved.

3.12 The area is fully secure and 'dog-proofed'. There is an area to dispose of waste and to keep the area clean and tidy. Please see attached Dog Management Plan for further details relating to the operation of the area.

3.13 The area is secure and provides dog owners with confidence their animal is safe, especially with dog thefts increasing. Similarly providing areas such as this provides comfort to local farmers that potentially dangerous dogs are away from public footpaths which go through their land and which increases the chance of dog attacks on sheep.

Access and Parking

3.14 Access directly onto the field shall be sought off Leicester Road (A47).

3.15 This access road is existing and suitable for the users attending site.

3.16 A small area of hardstanding has already been laid, which maintains permeable and it is yet to be grass seeded and will be seeded in spring of 2026, therefore there will be no visual change as you enter the field. This shall provide informal parking for the users and enable to enter and exit in a forward gear.

Ecology

3.16 The ecology of the site shall remain unchanged and therefore no impact and harm shall be caused in the change of use to exercise dogs.

3.17 The report is submitted alongside this planning application and concludes the proposal has no adverse impacts on the local ecological network. The area will remain as a field only for the purposes of dogs exercising rather than livestock grazing.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations state otherwise.

4.2 Related Planning policies:

DM4 Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

DM6 Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological Interest

DM9 Safeguarding Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces

DM17 Highways and Transportation

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in February 2019 and provides over-arching guidelines for the planning system.

4.4 Paragraph 83 recognises that decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas.

5.0 ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The application seeks a change of use of an agricultural field to a dog exercise area. The proposal seeks no built development on the land, and simply a use which would enable the field to provide farm diversification, whilst still appearing as an agricultural field In the Open Countryside.

5.2 The proposals are not impacting on the openness of Open Countryside, or the landscape.

5.3 The car parking area is proposing a very small area of permeable hardstanding and shall be accessed off Leicester Road.

5.4 The volume of dogs on the field can be controlled through the online booking system but at present the system only allows one users to attend the site at one time. Any issues will be easily identifiable to who was in the field at any time.

5.5 The area provides a business which provides for the local economy. It enables a form of visitor attraction to the local area, and subsequently can enable visitor expenditure at the local facilities and services through simply visiting a dog exercise area.

5.6 The National Sheep Association (NSA) conducted a survey earlier this year (April 2025), 87% of respondents have seen a rise in these attacks with an increase in dog ownership and puppy training. 78% of farmers cited dogs not being on a lead as the primary cause of incidents. Only 20% of respondents were directly alerted by the offending dog owner, leading to potential prolonged suffering for the animals.

This resulting in financial losses for the farmer and increased mental health issues as a result.

5.7 There is a need for a business like this in this location, especially to enable exercising and training of dogs to meet their needs in a safe and secure manner. Farmers would rather dogs were trained in a safe secure area, rather than out in their fields with the increased numbers of attacks they are witnessing.

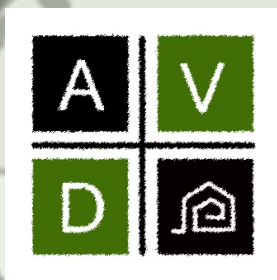
5.8 The area will have a positive impact on the well-being and mental health of dog owners too, providing a countryside location and a safe place to exercise dogs.

5.9 The change of use has no implication on the countryside location, providing no permanent fixture or development on the land, and therefore no encroaching on the openness of the countryside.

5.10 There will be no negative impacts on the local ecological network as a result of this proposal.

5.11 The proposal complies with national and local planning policy and is considered development which is not inappropriate to a countryside location.

5.12 Therefore, it is respectfully requested that full planning permission is to be granted without delay.



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