

Andrew Large Surveyors Ltd

Planning Statement

Erection of boarding kennels and associated works, at Witherley
Boarding Kennels and Cattery, Drayton Barn Farm, Chapel Lane,
Witherley

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PLANNING STATEMENT

Including Design and Access Statement

1.0 Introduction

This statement has been submitted by Andrew Large Surveyors Ltd on behalf of the applicant *Witherley Boarding Kennels and Cattery*. This statement relates to a minor application for the erection of a new boarding kennels building and associated works at Witherley Boarding Kennels and Cattery, Drayton Barn Farm, Chapel Lane, Witherley. The associated works include external covered and uncovered exercise areas for each kennel, and pedestrian access from the existing kennel facilities, as well as landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

This Planning Statement is submitted alongside the following supporting documents:

- Site Location Plan
- Existing Block Plan
- Proposed Site Layout
- Proposed Elevations and Floor Plan
- Small Site Metric – Biodiversity NET Gain Calculation
- BNG Baseline Habitat Map Plan
- Biodiversity NET Gain Minimum Requirements Statement

2.0 Background

Witherley Boarding Kennels and Cattery was established in 1969. The kennels and cattery have a 5* rating and have been accredited and approved by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for over 50 years.

The pet boom during the lockdowns of the COVID pandemic, but the closing of boarding kennels and catteries during this period due to people not being able to travel and not using them, meant that the business that were able to weather the storm are now busier than ever.

Current occupancy rates for the existing kennel buildings are as follows:

- January – March: 40% capacity, except for half-term when occupancy rises to 100%.
- Easter holidays: 100% capacity
- April: 80% capacity
- May – September (school holidays): 100% capacity
- May – November (weekends): 100% capacity
- Christmas period: 100% capacity

Overall, the kennels operate at full capacity for approximately 175 days (48%) of the year. The occupancy rate varies mid-week during the autumn and winter outside of school holidays.

As such the business needs to invest in additional facilities in order to not turn existing and new customers away during busy periods. The new building will additionally be constructed with additional insulation so during winter months it will be filled first before the other kennel buildings in order to minimise running costs heating the building and also be of environmental benefit in doing so.

The design of the building is based on the existing buildings that operate successfully.

The business currently employs seven full-time members of staff and one part-time. The construction of the proposed development will create a further two full-time roles.

The business also provides volunteering, work experience and educational opportunities for Moreton Morrel College, Rodbaston College, as well as schools in Polesworth and Atherstone. The addition of a further building will allow the business to continue to support these roles and may lead to an increase in opportunities available.

The kennel building itself comprises a range of two-dog and single kennels, as well as a kitchen area. A kitchen is required for the safe storage and preparation of the boarding dog's food and medication. Adjacent to the kennels building the dogs have access to a covered exercise area which they have access to at all times, and also an uncovered exercise area. The exercise area and kennels building are surrounded by a 2.0m high metal mesh fence.

3.0 Site Appraisal

3.1 Physical and Environmental Context

Witherley Boarding Kennels and Cattery is located on the southern side of Drayton Barn Farm, a mixed livestock and arable farm. The nearest neighbouring residential properties not in control of the applicants are 250m to the south (accessed through the farm) and 444m to the northeast. The applicants are not aware of any complaints made by neighbouring properties for the during the existence of the business.

Drayton Barn Farm is located outside the village of Witherley, between Atherstone, Nuneaton and Hinckley. The location is rural; however, the existing business is set at the farm and the use as a cattery and kennels means that being located away from settlements is suitable to minimise impact on neighbouring amenity. In addition, the matter that a customer will bring their pet to the site with food and bedding, means that irrespective of the location there will always be a reliance on the private vehicle in order for the business to operate.

The proposed location of the new kennels within the site is situated outside the RPAs of any trees and in excess of 5m from the existing mature hedgerows, in order to impact their future integrity and allow for their maintenance with a tractor and hedge cutter.

The barn is located within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk from surface water flooding.

The intention is incorporate solar power to supply the new facility and these would be located to the south west of the proposed kennels with established mature hedgerow to the north and east.

4.0 Design Component

4.1 Use

The proposal is for the erection of a new boarding kennel block, of which there are several already on site which the existing business operates from. The applicants are not aware of any outstanding or historic complaints from neighbours, as such the location and the manner in which the business is run, makes the site suitable for further development.

4.2 Amount

The proposed developments main kennel block building footprint comprises 126.6m², with a gross internal area of 117.9m².

4.3 Layout

The proposed building is located to the west of the existing kennels, in the most suitable spot for further expansion of the kennel facilities. Please see the submitted Proposed Site Layout for further details.

4.4 Scale

The proposed kennels match the scale of the existing kennels.

Eaves height: 2.242m

Ridge height: 3.670m

Length: 25.00m

Width: 16.10m

4.5 Appearance & Materials

Please see the Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans for further details.

4.6 Landscaping and Biodiversity

The proposal will impact in excess of 25m² of habitat, as such Biodiversity NET Gain applies to the development. The applicants have suitable land onsite in order to provide in excess of 10% biodiversity NET gain.

Incorporated into the landscaping and biodiversity enhancement scheme will be a native species hedgerow which will border the new kennels to the south, helping screen the kennels from the wider countryside. To the north and east is the existing farmstead and kennels, as such no additional screening is proposed in these directions.

BNG enhancement measures also include the planting of 14 trees.

4.7 Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk

The site is located in flood zone 1 and is not located in an area at risk of surface water flooding.

The proposals only foul drainage will be from a sink in the kitchen, which will connect to the existing foul drainage system for the existing kennels.

Surface water will drain into a SUDs drainage crate system prior to going into the farms existing surface water drainage system, in order to ensure there is no increase in greenfield surface water run-off.

5.0 Access Component – Transport Assessment

5.1 Traffic Generation

The proposal will generate additional vehicle movements through the creation of the new boarding kennels. The proposed kennel building comprises 17 kennels. Though 11 of the kennels are two-dog kennels, these two dogs will be from the same household. Each kennel generates one vehicle movements to drop the dog(s) off, and one to collect. The most common length of stays is either for a weekend or for a week.

Each kennel is let out approximately once per week in peak periods (when allowing averaging out of the occupancy rates in section 2.0). On this basis the new kennel building will generate 34 vehicle trips per week (17 to drop off, and 17 to collect, with 64 two-way vehicle movements total), equating to on average 4.9 vehicle trips per day.

The proposed development will also create two full-time job opportunities. Staff will travel to and from the site once per day and will remain onsite during their lunch break.

Customer vehicle trips per day: 5 (10 two-way movements)

Staff vehicle trips per day: 2 (4 two-way movements)

Total: 7 vehicle trips per day (14 two-way movements)

5.2 Site Access and Visibility Splay

The site is accessed from Chapel Lane. From the junction with Atterton Lane, only the first 36m of Chapel Lane is adopted and maintained at public expense. As such the development site is accessed off a private road.

The junction between Chapel Lane and Atterton Lane has recently been considered suitable to take additional traffic generation by the LHA through the approval (no objection) to the applications 21/01305/FUL 23/00311/FUL for five dwellings. As such the junction is also suitable to take the additional minimal traffic from the proposed development.

Chapel Lane runs to Drayton Grange Farm, and the section of Chapel Lane the site is accessed from is in the applicant's ownership. As such safe access can be achieved onto the public highway network from the application site.

5.4 Highway Safety

Crashmap indicates there have been no incidents on Chapel Lane, nor at the junction with Atterton Lane for the last 25 years.

5.5 Parking Requirements

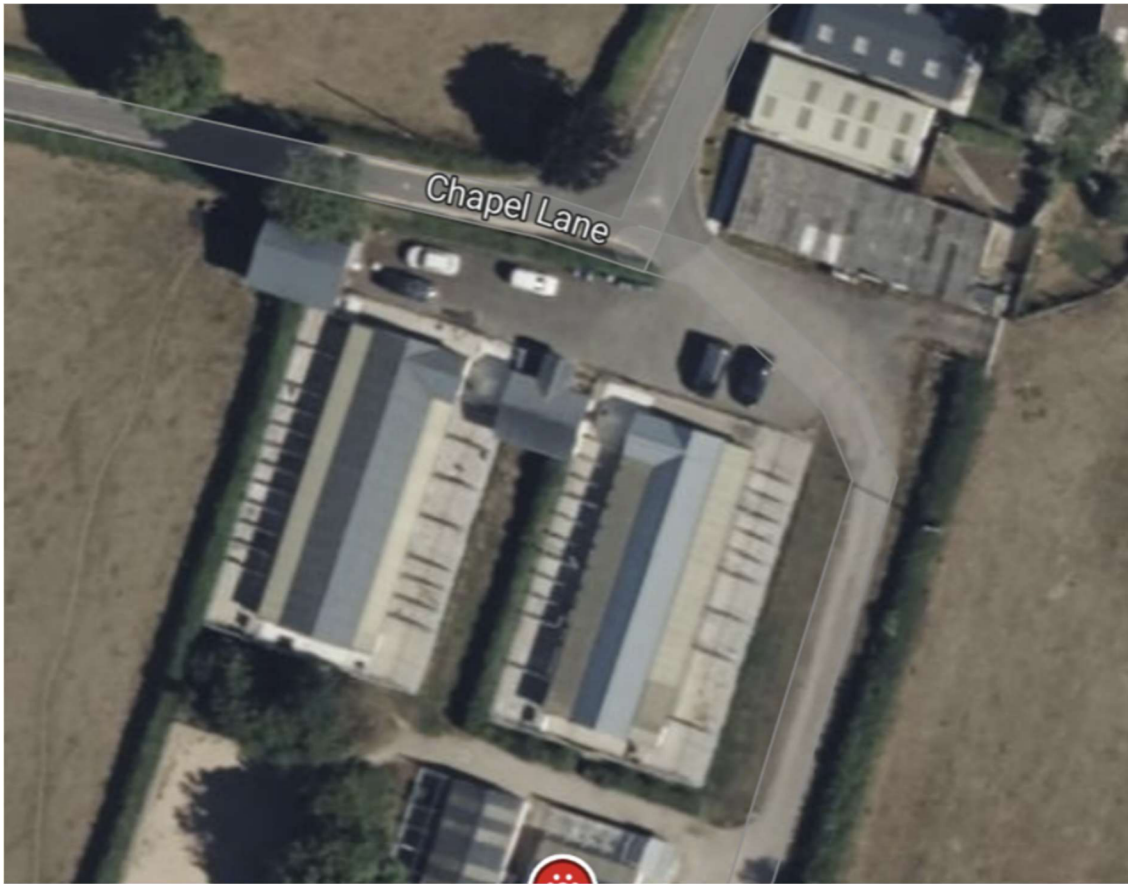


Figure one: Existing parking arrangements

Parking is provided within the existing facility.

5.6 Impact on Highway Safety

The proposal will only lead to a minimal increase in vehicle movements, and safe access can be taken from the proposed development site onto the public highway network. The impacts of the development on highway safety would not be unacceptable, and when considered cumulatively with other developments, the impacts on the road network would not be severe. Based on the information provided, the development therefore does not conflict with paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

6.0 Planning Policy

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

89. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

The proposed development is located in a rural area and meets criteria a), in that the proposal is for a new building which will allow the expansion of an existing business located at the site. The development of the building will create further job opportunities, though in a rural location, located in proximity of a range of larger settlements. The design of the proposed building matches two existing kennels buildings at the site that currently operate successfully and under a 5* rating.

88. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

The site is not well served by public transport, however, uses such as kennelling are best suited to more rural locations without nearby residential neighbours, in order to minimise the risk of impact neighbouring amenity. The business also provides an important service for many households within the district. The nature of the use means that customers would always travel to the site by private vehicle irrespective of the location, due to the need to bring their pet, the pets bedding and food, in order for them to stay at the facility. As such the location of the existing business, and the proposed building is appropriate.

6.2 Hinckley and Bosworth Adopted Local Plan 2006 - 2026

6.2.1 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2006-2026

DM4 Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

To protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where:

- a) It is for outdoor sport or recreation purposes (including ancillary buildings) and it can be demonstrated that the proposed scheme cannot be provided within or adjacent to settlement boundaries; or*
- b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting; or*
- c) It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or diversification of rural businesses; or*
- d) It relates to the provision of stand-alone renewable energy developments in line with Policy DM2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development; or*
- e) It relates to the provision of accommodation for a rural worker in line with Policy DM5 - Enabling Rural Worker Accommodation.*

The proposal is for the expansion of an existing business located within the countryside, as demonstrated in the assessment of national planning policy, the rural location is the most appropriate for the proposed use, as is demonstrated by the lack of complaints. The business was started originally as a farm diversification project and has become successful in its location, being run for over 50 years. The proposal will contribute towards job creation, and the expansion of the business will create an additional two full-time roles.

and:

- i. *It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside; and*
- ii. *It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements; and*
- iii. *It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development;*
- iv. *If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line with Core Strategy Policies 6 and 9; and*
- v. *If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy in line with Core Strategy Policy 21*

The proposed development is not located within the National Forest, not a Green Wedge and would not comprise Ribbon Development. The proposed development is located adjacent to the existing farmstead and kennels, in the next most logical location for expansion of the kennels. Mature hedgerows border the proposed building to the north and east, and new hedgerows are proposed to be planted to the west and south of the building. The building itself from the majority of viewpoints will be seen along the backdrop of the existing built form of the site and therefore will not have significant adverse effects, and what effects it does have will be mitigated by the proposed landscaping scheme.

DM6 Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological Interest

Development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve and enhance features of nature conservation and geological value including proposals for their long term future management.

Major developments in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services.

Proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity or geological interest will be permitted where they comply with other relevant policies in the plan.

On site features should be retained, buffered and managed favourably to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. The removal or damage of such features shall only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated the proposal will result in no net loss of biodiversity and where the integrity of local ecological networks can be secured.

If the harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against or appropriate compensation measures provided, planning permission will be refused.

As it demonstrated by the submitted Small Site Metric, the proposed development will result in a biodiversity net gain above the legislative minimum. The proposed development is located on an area of pasture field that is not of significant value, and the minimum amount of hedgerow is proposed to be removed to only provide pedestrian access to the building (as opposed to vehicular access which would require more). As such the proposed development has been designed to minimise any negative impacts for the loss of biodiversity, and those that are lost will be suitably mitigated in line with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

In addition to the above, where specific identified sites are to be affected the following will be taken into account:

Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites

International and Nationally Designated Sites will be safeguarded. Development which is likely to have any adverse impact on the notified features of a nationally designated site will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, a proposal may be found acceptable where it can be demonstrated that: is not available; and

- a) A suitable alternative site with a lesser impact than that proposed*
- b) The on-site benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on the notified features of the site and where applicable, the overall SSSI or habitat network; and*
- c) All appropriate mitigation measures have been addressed through the development management process; and*
- d) Development likely to result in a significant effect on internationally designated sites will be subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations and will not be permitted unless adverse effects can be fully avoided, mitigated and/or compensated.*

The site is in excess of 500m from any designated site.

Irreplaceable Habitats

Proposals which are likely to result in the loss or deterioration of an irreplaceable habitat would only be acceptable where: outweigh the loss; and, cannot be retained with the proposed scheme; and

- e) The need and benefits of the development in that location clearly*
- f) It has been adequately demonstrated that the irreplaceable habitat*
- g) Appropriate compensation measures are provided on site wherever possible and off site where this not is feasible.*

There are no irreplaceable habitats onsite or adjacent to the site.

Locally Important Sites

Development proposals affecting locally important sites should always seek to contribute to their favourable management in the long term.

Where a proposal is likely to result in harm to locally important sites (including habitats or species of principal importance for biodiversity), developers will be required to accord with the following sequential approach:

- h) Firstly, seek an alternative site with a lesser impact than that proposed;*
- i) Secondly, and if the first is not possible, demonstrate mitigation measures can be taken on site;*
- j) Thirdly, and as a last resort, seek appropriate compensation measures, on site wherever possible and off site where this is not feasible.*

The proposed development will not impact any locally important sites.

DM7 Preventing Pollution and Flooding

Adverse impacts from pollution and flooding will be prevented by ensuring that development proposals demonstrate that: drainage function of water bodies in the borough; provided;

- a) It will not adversely impact the water quality, ecological value or*
- b) Appropriate containment solutions for oils, fuels and chemicals are*
- c) All reasonable steps are taken through design, siting and technological solutions to ensure the abatement of obtrusive light to avoid sky glow, glare and light intrusion;*
- d) It would not cause noise or vibrations of a level which would disturb areas that are valued for their tranquillity in terms of recreation or amenity;*

- e) Appropriate remediation of contaminated land in line with minimum national standards is undertaken;*
- f) It will not contribute to poor air quality; unstable land; and*
- g) It will not result in land instability or further intensify existing*
- h) The development doesn't create or exacerbate flooding by being located away from areas of flood risk unless adequately mitigated against in line with National Policy.*

The proposed development is located in Flood Zone 1 and is not in an area noted as at risk of surface water flooding on the Environment Agency Flood Maps.

DM10 Development and Design

Developments will be permitted providing that the following requirements are met:

- a) It would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion;* - The nearest neighbouring residential properties not in control of the applicants are 250m to the south (accessed through the farm) and 444m to the north east. The applicants are not aware of any complaints made by neighbouring properties for the duration of the existence of the business.
- a) The amenity of occupiers of the proposed development would not be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site;* - The site is suitably located away from nearby dwellings and has operated successfully for in excess of 50 years, without complaint.
- b) It complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features;* - The proposed development is designed to match the existing kennel buildings at the site and will be screened from the surrounding landscaping by existing and proposed landscaping.
- c) The use and application of building materials respects the materials of existing, adjoining/neighbouring buildings and the local area generally;* - As per criteria c)
- d) It incorporates a high standard of landscaping where this would add to the quality of the design and siting;* - A comprehensive landscaping scheme will help screen the building.
- e) It maximises opportunities for the conservation of energy and resources through design, layout, orientation and construction in line with Core Strategy Policy 24;* - The proposed building will be insulated and be more energy efficient than the existing kennels buildings, such as in winter month the proposed building will be filled first prior to the existing buildings to minimize energy consumption.
- f) Where parking is to be provided charging points for electric or low emission vehicles are included where feasible;* - Customers do not stay long enough at the site to warrant EV charging points.
- g) An appropriate Sustainable Drainage Scheme is submitted to and approved by the relevant Authority. Schemes should incorporate wildlife areas, ponds, swales and permeable paving where appropriate;* - Please see submitted Proposed Site Layout.
- h) It maximises natural surveillance and incorporates the principles of Secured by Design and has considered the incorporation of fire safety measures.* - The proposed developments construction will meet current fire safety standards.

In exceptional circumstances where outstanding, innovative design is demonstrated (particularly where high levels of sustainability are an integral feature), applications will be considered favourably, even where this may result in some limited conflict with the above criteria.

DM 17 - Highways and Transportation

Development proposals will be supported where they:

- a) Seek to make the best use of existing public transport services and, where appropriate, provide opportunities for improving and sustaining the viability of those services;*
- b) Seek to ensure that there is convenient and safe access for walking and cycling to services and facilities;*
- c) Demonstrate that there is not a significant adverse impact upon highway safety; and in the case of development that generates significant movements;*
- d) That the development is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised; of development on the transport network are not severe.;*
- e) Where it can be demonstrated that the residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe.*

Where appropriate, improvements will be required to be undertaken to the highways and transportation network to limit any significant impacts arising from the development (taking into account cost effectiveness).

All proposals for new development and changes of use should reflect the highway design standards that are set out in the most up to date guidance adopted by the relevant highways authority.

Please see section 5.0.

DM18 Vehicle Parking Standards

All proposals for new development will be required to provide an appropriate level of parking provision justified by an assessment of the site location, type of housing, other modes of transport available (e.g. public transport and cycle provision) and appropriate design. Any development will be expected to provide disabled parking provision.

Developments within Hinckley Town Centre should demonstrate that they would not exacerbate existing problems in the vicinity with increased on-street parking.

Please see Section 5.0.

8.0 Conclusion

Witherley Boarding Kennels and Cattery have operated successfully from the site since 1969. The business represents a successful farm diversification enterprise that provides rural employment opportunities, and the approval of the application will create a further two full-time roles. The business is well located away from residential properties, minimising the risk of impact on residential amenity, whilst proving an important service to the district.

The proposed development has been designed to minimise any visual impact and also loss of biodiversity, which will be mitigated through the proposed landscaping and biodiversity enhancement schemes. The proposed development therefore adheres to both local and national planning policy and should therefore be approved.

Signed



Andrew Large MRICS FAAV