

PLANNING STATEMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR DOG WALKING FIELD FOR USE BY EXISTING DOG DAY CARE SERVICE AND PRIVATE BOOKINGS, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS - PERFECT PETS, PIKE ROAD, PENHOW, NEWPORT, NP26 3AD

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This planning application seeks to regularise the use of the land off Pike Road, Penhow, Newport, NP26 3AD as a commercial dog walking field and associated works and is submitted on behalf of Mr R Gill (the applicant). The site location is shown below at Figure 1. The dog walking facility is an expansion of the applicant's existing business adjacent to the site, known as Perfect Pets Services.

1.2 This statement will take the following structure:

- Site Description and Context
- Description of Development
- Planning Policy
- Planning Appraisal
- Conclusion

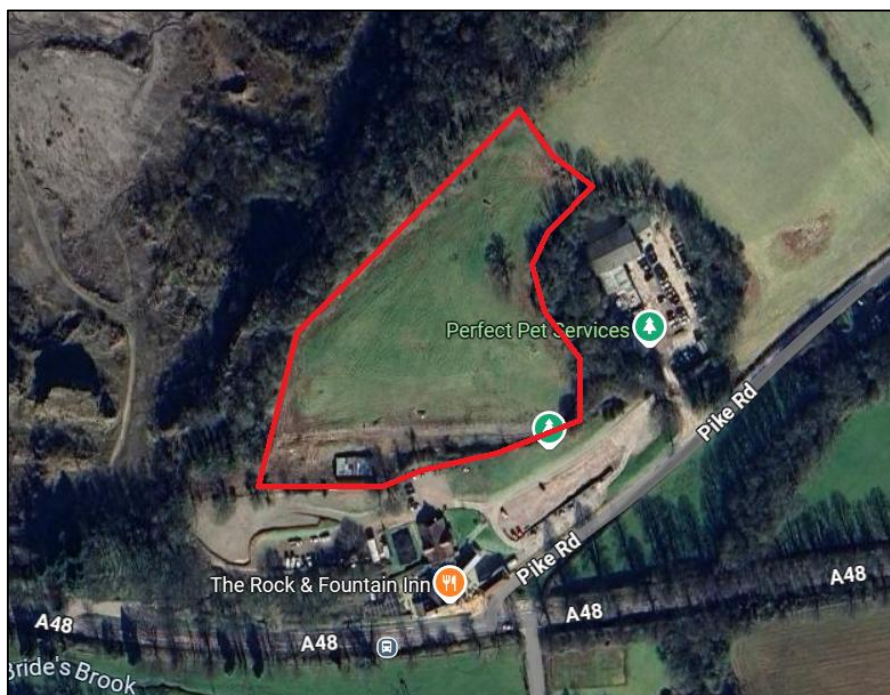


Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

2.0 Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The application site comprises a field parcel located to the north of the Rock & Fountain public house and to the east of Perfect Pet Services. The site is located off Pike Road and short distance from the junction with the A48, which is major strategic route. It comprises well-maintained grassland and is currently being used as a secure commercial dog walking field, without the benefit of planning permission.
- 2.2 The site is bounded to the west, north and east by mature woodland aside from a section of boundary in the north-east corner of the site. The southern boundary contains no mature green infrastructure assets of note. The site is relatively flat and gently rises from south to north.
- 2.3 Whilst there is no recent planning history relevant to the application site, the applicant operates the existing business adjacent to the site at Perfect Pet Services which is primarily a dog day care centre. The applicant did recently submit a pre-application enquiry in relation to the use, and the issues raised in the response from the Local Planning Authority are addressed in the planning statement below as well as in the supporting survey work that has been submitted with the planning application.

3.0 Description of Development and Management Plan

- 3.1 The use of the application site for a commercial dog walking enterprise is an extension to this existing operation and is utilised by the dog day care use as well as being available to be booked by the general public.
- 3.2 It is acknowledged the current use as a secure commercial dog walking operation is a material change of use that requires planning permission. Operational development associated with the use includes secure 1.8m high galvanised metal mesh boundary fencing to ensure dogs do not escape, and a small area of hardstanding for customer car parking, accommodating four spaces. An extract of the site layout, details of boundary fencing, and proposed customer parking is shown below at Figure 2.



Figure 2 – Proposed site layout (including proposed boundary fencing and dedicated parking area for customers)

Management Plan

- 3.3 Since the field is used for a dual purpose, supporting the existing dog day care and also available for public use, it is bookable through the days for 50 minute sessions with a cross over period between each booking of ten minutes to enable users to leave the field in advance of the next booking commencing. The field has capacity for up to four users at one time, with only four cars being allowed at the site at one time. There is also a maximum of 12 dogs allowed in the field at one time, including when used by the dog day care.
- 3.4 The booking process is online via an automated service, with the staff reviewing bookings to avoid potential issues. Customers enter the field via a secure gate with a lock code.
- 3.4 Due to there being no artificial light at the field it will only operation during day light hours which will typically with the longest hours being approximately 6am to 9pm during the summer, which much reduced hours during the rest of the year, particularly the winter months. The field will only be bookable to the public when it is not in use by the dog day care, which will use the field on average for three hours per day.
- 3.5 The dog waking use will employ one person full time who will deal with all bookings, which whilst the booking system will be automated, it has become clear through the operation to date that a staff member needs to be available to answer queries, check field security and ensure the it is free from dog fouling at the end of each day, as well as emptying the on-site bin as and when necessary, usually daily when checking for dog fouling.
- 3.4 The use also requires regular maintenance and will require a part time employee to maintain all landscaping, particularly during the summer months. The proposed use also ensure the dog day care service remains competitive and a high quality service, offering pets, mainly dogs, outside space when being looked after.

4.0 Planning Policy

- 4.1 National guidance comprises Planning Policy Wales (PPW): Edition 12 as well as supplementary Technical Advice Notes (TAN's). At the local level the Newport Local Development Plan (LPD) 2011-2026 provides the local planning policy framework for Newport adopted in January 2015.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

- 4.2 PPW offers support for rural enterprise states (at paragraphs 5.6.1 and 5.6.2) that the rural economy must develop a wide base if it is to be adaptable and resilient. It states that planning authorities should plan positively to meet rural employment needs and that by supporting a broad range of employment opportunities in rural areas planning authorities can increase economic prosperity and help address the effects of rural decline or depopulation where it occurs. Paragraph 5.6.3 adds that micro and small enterprises have a vital role to play in the rural economy, and that new development will be required in many areas.
- 4.3 PPW is clear at paragraph 5.6.4 to unlock the full potential of rural areas, planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to employment arising from various sectors including leisure. Proposals for new start-ups and micro-businesses should also be encouraged, where appropriate, to generate new job and wealth-creating opportunities.
- 4.4 It goes on to say at paragraph 5.6.6 that the absence of allocated employment sites should not prevent authorities from accommodating proposals for appropriate small-scale enterprises in or adjoining rural settlements, including small rural settlements. However, PPW recognises that whilst the protection of the open countryside should be maintained wherever possible, **the expansion of existing businesses located in the open countryside should be supported provided there are no unacceptable impacts.**
- 4.5 PPW seeks to conserve best and most versatile agricultural land and that considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development.

Technical Advice Notes (TAN)

- 4.6 The following Technical Advice Notes (TAN) are also relevant:
- TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (July 2010)
 - TAN 11: Noise
 - TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space
 - TAN 23: Economic Development

Newport Local Development Plan (LDP)

- 4.7 The following LDP policies are relevant:
- Policy SP1
 - Policy SP2
 - Policy SP5
 - Policy SP9
 - Policy GP1

- Policy GP2
- Policy GP4
- Policy GP5
- Policy GP6

5.0 Planning Appraisal

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Policy SP5 states that development in the countryside will only be permitted where the use is appropriate in the countryside. PPW is clear that the expansion of existing businesses should be supported provided there are no unacceptable impacts. There is clear in principle national policy support for the development, subject to all other material considerations being acceptable.
- 5.2 PPW also encourages the support of the rural economy and the use will support the growth and competitiveness of the dog day care service as well as offering an expanded offer through the commercial dog walking field. Furthermore, the proposal will offer a full time and part time employment opportunity, which given the nature of the roles, as described above, will be required visit site sporadically so will not significantly impact on vehicular trip movements.

Sustainability

- 5.3 Whilst it is acknowledged that a proportion of users will travel to the site by private motor vehicle, the site is not wholly reliant on this form of transport. Perfect Pet Solutions is located on Pike Road, which connects directly to the surrounding local highway network and nearby settlements, including Llanvaches and Penhow. The site is therefore accessible to users living within the surrounding rural communities who may choose to travel to the facility on foot, particularly for regular dog exercise activities where users may already be undertaking local walking trips with their pets.
- 5.4 The site also benefits from its proximity to existing rural roads and the wider network of local lanes and public rights of way, which provide opportunities for pedestrian access from the surrounding area. These routes allow local residents to reach the site without necessarily relying on a private vehicle and provide an opportunity for combined trips, such as walking directly from nearby residential areas to exercise dogs at the facility. The relatively small scale and appointment-based nature of the use also means that vehicle movements associated with the site are limited and spread throughout the day rather than concentrated during peak traffic periods.
- 5.5 Furthermore, the facility operates on a managed booking system which restricts the number of users present at any one time. This approach ensures that visits are staggered and that the overall level of traffic generated by the site remains low. Whilst some reliance on private vehicles is inevitable due to the rural location of the site, the proposal nevertheless provides opportunities for local users to access the facility on foot and ensures that transport impacts remain limited and proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.

Highway Safety Considerations

- 5.6 Access to the site will be off a gravel lane off Pike Road via the access that currently serves Perfect Pet Services. The access is already established and in use by the dog day care, the moderate increase in use of this access is not considered to result in a risk to highway safety. This is particularly since the vehicle movements associated with the dog day care are concentrated at the beginning and end of the day, so unlikely to take place when the field is in use. Furthermore, the staggered use of the field, namely the ten minute cross over period, ensures that there would not be more than four vehicles trying to access and exist the site around the same time. As per the Highways Authority request during the pre-application enquiry, it can be confirmed the gravel lane to the field is not shared.
- 5.7 The area dedicated to off-road parking measures 11m x 9.9m and is capable of accommodating up to 4 cars and this is the maximum number of cars which will be at the site at one time. There would be limited waste generation as a result of the development, which would be disposed of with the waste associated with the dog day care.

Visual Impact

- 5.8 Whilst it is appreciated that the application site is within the Wentwood Special Landscape (SLA), the overall rural appearance of the application site will be maintained. The site will visually remain a typical rural field. The 1.8m perimeter fencing is required to contain the dogs but will have rural appearance given its sympathetic, visually permeable material and will follow the existing field boundaries, which already includes post and rail/mesh fencing. The Council have requested reduced height fencing but, given the use, it is not possible to contain the dogs with fencing of a reduced height. Such stock proof fencing is typical where deer, etc. are being grazed.
- 5.9 The access gates are akin to a farm gate and also have rural appearance being of a traditional field gate style.
- 5.10 Fencing, gates and enclosures are considered typical agricultural paraphernalia that would be wholly characteristic in a rural location. Notwithstanding this, the existing vegetation on the majority of the site boundaries will be maintained and enhanced to strengthen the traditional field parcel boundaries whilst also offering some screening to the new boundary enclosures (please refer to landscaping scheme that accompanies this application).
- 5.11 The proposed parking area, although hardstanding, is modest in size and so has minimal visual impact.
- 5.12 Other than the fencing, gates and parking area, no other structures, including any buildings are proposed as part of the application for change of use.
- 5.13 On this basis the proposals will not have an adverse visual impact and will preserve the special qualities of the SLA in accordance with Policies SP1, SP5, SP9 and GP5 and GP6 of the LDP.

Ecology and Green Infrastructure, including trees

Ecology

- 5.14 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was undertaken to support the retention application. The assessment included a desk study and a Phase 1 habitat survey to identify

habitats present on the site, assess the potential for protected species, and determine whether the development would result in any ecological impacts. The site itself comprises improved grassland with scattered trees, while broad-leaved woodland lies outside the fenced area. The survey considered the site and surrounding land up to approximately 20 metres from the site boundary.

- 5.15 The habitat survey recorded improved grassland as the dominant habitat, which will be retained as part of the ongoing use of the field. Surrounding woodland and scattered trees will also be retained and are located outside the fenced dog field area. The assessment identified potential habitat for several protected species including bats, amphibians, badgers, reptiles, breeding birds and invertebrates, although the site itself offers limited suitable habitat due to its short grass sward and existing disturbance.
- 5.16 The ecological appraisal concluded that the retention of the dog walking field is unlikely to have significant impacts on protected species or habitats. There are no structures or trees on the site suitable for roosting bats that would be removed, and the grassland within the field is considered unsuitable for great crested newts due to the absence of breeding ponds and ongoing site disturbance. No badger activity was recorded on or immediately adjacent to the site, and the woodland and trees that could support nesting birds will remain unaffected.
- 5.17 The report concludes that the development has been undertaken conservatively with key ecological features retained. To support biodiversity and meet planning policy requirements, the report recommends ecological enhancement measures including native planting, installation of bat and bird boxes, provision of a reptile hibernaculum, and wildflower or shrub planting to provide a net biodiversity benefit. These measures, alongside ongoing site management, would ensure compliance with Planning Policy Wales requirements for biodiversity enhancement and ecosystem resilience

Trees

- 5.18 A tree survey was undertaken in January 2026 to assess the condition, quality and retention value of trees located on and around the dog walking field site. The site is largely open improved grassland with woodland groups mainly along the northern and western boundaries, including species such as Ash, Willow, Hazel, Oak and Black Poplar. In total, two individual trees and four woodland groups were surveyed and assessed in accordance with BS5837:2012. The survey categorised the trees by quality and retention value, identifying one woodland group as Category A (high quality), one as Category B (moderate quality) and two as Category C (low quality).
- 5.19 Of the individual trees, one Ash tree (T1) was assessed as Category U and unsuitable for retention due to poor condition, ash dieback infection and evidence of trunk and basal decay. The second tree (T2), an Oak, was classified as Category B, meaning it has moderate landscape value but requires management due to structural issues including trunk decay and bracket fungus. The report concludes that the existing 1.8 m boundary fence and proposed parking area are unlikely to have caused damage to retained trees.

Landscaping

- 5.20 The Landscape Specification and Management Plan that accompanies this application sets out the proposed landscaping works and long-term management measures for the dog walking field. The document specifies that all soft landscaping works will be implemented during the first suitable planting season following completion, using British Standard

compliant materials and methods. Proposals include native tree planting, native hedgerow planting, and the establishment of wildflower areas to enhance biodiversity. The specification outlines planting methods, soil preparation, sourcing of locally appropriate nursery stock, and protective measures such as mulch, rabbit guards and appropriate planting pits to ensure successful establishment of vegetation.

- 5.21 The management plan provides a framework for the long-term maintenance of the landscaped areas to ensure ecological benefits are achieved and maintained. Management will be undertaken by a qualified contractor responsible for maintaining planted areas, replacing any failed planting within five years, and managing habitats such as wildflower areas and hedgerows. Existing trees will be monitored by an arboricultural consultant, while newly planted trees will receive regular watering, pruning and maintenance during their establishment period. Wildflower areas will be cut periodically and hedgerows managed on a two-year cycle, ensuring the site continues to support biodiversity while remaining safe and well maintained.

Residential Amenity

- 5.22 The nearest property to the site is approximately 150m away at Hollybush House, separated from the site by the A48 a busy strategic route which links to the M4 at the Coldra, and generates significant road traffic noise. Although it is accepted the application site is in a rural location, it is not accepted the noise profile of the area is low since road traffic noise is clearly audible from the site, as can be assessed during a site visit.
- 5.23 Based on the extensive separation distance combined with the road traffic noise, it is unlikely the use of the field would result in significant noise, particularly in the context of the immediately adjacent dog care centre and also vehicle repair centre, which are likely to generate far greater noise levels. Additionally, the minimal traffic generation associated with the use and no artificial lighting is unlikely to be have a perceivable impact on the nearest residential receptor.
- 5.24 On this basis the proposals are in accordance with the PPW and Policies SP1, SP5, SP9, GP1, GP2, GP5 and GP6 of the LDP.

Agricultural Land

- 5.25 The site comprises predominantly urban and category 3A land which is classed as good to moderate quality agricultural land. PPW and Policy GP5 seek no unacceptable loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. Again by virtue of its nature, the proposed change of use would not result in the loss of BMV agricultural land. The field will remain a field with the proposed activity being the only change whilst not requiring any excavation or removal of soils. Should the operation of the dog field ever cease then the land could easily be farmed for arable or pastoral use, or the grazing of horses. On this basis the proposals are in accordance with the PPW and Policy GP5 of the LDP.

Example of recently approved dog walking field in Newport CC (LPA Ref: 24/0475)

- 5.26 The proposal is materially comparable to application 24/0475 at Graig Wood House, Caerleon, which was granted planning permission for the change of use of pasture land to a secure dog walking field in the open countryside and within a designated Green Wedge. The approved scheme included the

erection of approximately 1.9 m high post and mesh deer fencing, the provision of a small grasscrete parking area and access, and associated landscape mitigation including native hedgerow planting. The development was assessed by the Local Planning Authority as a “light touch” form of development which preserved the open character of the countryside and did not conflict with the purposes of the Green Wedge designation. The officer report also recognised that the site was located outside of the urban boundary and would largely be accessed by private vehicle, but nevertheless concluded that the scale, nature and management of the use rendered it acceptable in planning terms.

- 5.27 The proposal subject to this application is similar in scale, physical form and operational characteristics. The development involves the use of an existing grass field as a secure dog walking area with perimeter fencing and a small parking area, but no permanent buildings or structures are proposed. As with the approved Caerleon scheme, the use is intended to operate on a controlled booking basis with limited numbers of users at any one time, ensuring that activity levels remain low and predictable. The physical works associated with the proposal are modest and reversible in nature and would not materially alter the underlying agricultural character of the land. The scale and appearance of the fencing and associated works are comparable to those approved elsewhere in the authority area and can be further mitigated through landscape planting and management if required.
- 5.28 In planning terms, there is therefore no substantive distinction between the operational characteristics or physical impacts of the Penhow proposal and those associated with the approved Caerleon development. Both schemes represent low-intensity leisure uses which require open land and a degree of separation from residential areas, and both involve minimal operational development that can be effectively controlled through conditions and management measures. Having regard to the similarities in scale, form, location and operational management, the Penhow proposal should reasonably be assessed in a consistent manner to application 24/0475. In the absence of any clear material planning difference between the two developments, it is considered that the proposal should likewise be regarded as an acceptable and appropriate use of land in the countryside.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This planning application seeks to regularise the use of land at Perfect Pet Services, Pike Road, Penhow as a secure commercial dog walking field associated with the applicant’s existing dog day care business. The proposal represents a modest expansion of an established rural enterprise and comprises a low-intensity use of an existing grass field with minimal operational development limited to boundary fencing and a small parking area. National planning policy contained within Planning Policy Wales supports the growth and diversification of rural businesses where proposals do not result in unacceptable impacts, and the development will support the continued viability and competitiveness of the existing business while providing additional employment opportunities.
- 6.2 The planning appraisal demonstrates that the proposal will not give rise to unacceptable impacts in relation to landscape character, highway safety, residential amenity, ecology, or trees. The site will retain its appearance as a typical rural field and the limited physical works proposed are characteristic of agricultural or rural land management infrastructure. Supporting ecological, arboricultural and landscape assessments confirm that the development has been undertaken conservatively with key features retained and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement incorporated through native planting, wildflower areas and long-term habitat management. The use operates through a controlled booking system which limits the number of users present at any one time, ensuring that vehicle movements and activity levels remain low and proportionate.

- 6.3 The proposal is also consistent with a recently approved dog walking field within the Newport City Council area and there are no material planning differences between the two developments. Having regard to national and local planning policy, the supporting technical evidence, and the limited and reversible nature of the development, it is considered that the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable use of land in the countryside. The development accords with the relevant policies of Planning Policy Wales and the Newport Local Development Plan and should therefore be supported.