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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNER

Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex BN17 5LF

Friday, 11 May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Continuation of use of land for dog training and exercising

**Land to East of Windmill Shopping Village, Parsonage Farm,
Barnham**

I have been instructed by the owner of the site to act on their behalf and submit a retrospective planning application for the change of use of land to the east of the shopping area for dog training and exercising, a use being carried out by 'Clix and Trix Training Club'.

This letter comprises my design and Access Statement supporting the application and deals with other matters as well.

Description of Site

The application site comprises a field to the east of the shopping village which was previously used as a mini pet farm, but apparently had no planning permission.

It comprises 0.23ha in area and is divided into two smaller areas. The area is enclosed by fencing from the previous use which has been repaired and replaced where necessary.

Description of Locality

The area is part of the Windmill Shopping Village and access to the site is approached through the car park and the uses of the site use part of the shopping village car park.

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Planning Policy

I can find no specific policy for this type of use.

The nearest policy would appear to be one that relates to rural uses, since by its very nature the use needs to be carried out on open land. The land also needs to be enclosed so parks and recreation grounds within built up areas are not appropriate, thus it is considered that the use requires a countryside location.

In this respect Policy GEN3 'Protection of the Countryside' would appear relevant. Criterion (ii) permits development in the countryside where it is for quiet, informal recreation.

Nature of the Use

'Clix and Trix Training Club' moved onto the site some 15 months ago to replace a former pet farm use on that parcel of land.

The land is split into 2 paddocks. 1 paddock is named 'The Dog Garden' and is used for owners to walk their dogs off lead in a safe environment away from the public, from other dogs, cars, bikes etc or because the dog has no recall, too high a chase drive or perhaps a young puppy with selective hearing.

The Dog Garden is also used by 'Yappy Days Doggy Daycare' twice a day (three times if needed) - they too have existing premises on The Windmill Shopping Village. This allows them to give their dogs in daycare a good run, fresh air and toilet breaks etc.

The Dog Garden has its own waste collection by a private company who recycle the dog waste into reusable energy.

The Dog Garden is only open during daylight hours as there are no floodlights so currently their latest visitor has the 3-4pm slot during the week and sometimes 4-5pm on a weekend.

The Dog Garden is also hired out once a month to a local 'Pug Club' who hire it for 2 hours on a Sunday 2-4pm when most of the shops on the complex are closed proving no problems with parking, noise wise, Pugs snuffle, they don't bark so regardless of how many turn up each month you wouldn't actually know anyone was there.

The earliest visitor to The Dog Garden which would be 8-9am is the Doggy Daycare and that's only if they need it.

Most of the time the occupier of the land - Clix and Trix Training Club - is the first one there at 9am to run her two dogs. She has one client who hires it now and again on Sunday morning 8-9am, the reason she books so early is to reduce/eliminate any noise her dogs may make. Her dogs are very nervous and will bark at people so she uses the Dog Garden before the other traders arrive to open up. This is done with their neighbours interests at heart, they reduce

any barking as much as they can and especially during what I would class as 'unsociable' hours. In the summer months she does allow clients to use the Dog Garden later in the evening, this is purely due to high temperatures during the day and the evenings being much cooler, but it's only hired out to quiet dogs as again she does not want to upset her dwelling neighbours who may be out in their gardens etc.

The second paddock is called 'The Training Paddock', this is where she holds all of her classes - again this is a secure environment full of fantastic distractions to help condition the dogs to the world around them.

She runs 1 training class on a Monday morning 10-11am (most of the traders are closed on a Monday). She also runs 3 individual play/socialising sessions (11-2pm), again these were planned for a Monday because everyone on the complex was closed apart from Doggy Daycare and the Pet Shop now.

She runs 1to1 Training sessions as and when she can book them in and have time (normally a Thursday), these are her and 1 other person, so low key, for example she has done an assessment for the Arun Dog Warden on a stray dog that was handed over because she failed the Dogs Trust Assessment.

Thursday she currently runs three classes: at 10-11am; and two in the evening, 4 to 5 and 5 to 6; Friday she has 2 classes 11-12 and 12-1pm; Saturday 2 classes 11-12, 12-1pm and Sunday is her busiest teaching day where she's teaching from 10-3pm. Occasional there is a behavioural 1-2-1 class on a Thursday evening between 6 and 7 when the shopping village is closed as the dog at that class needs a very quiet environment.

Her classes are kept small to allow the dogs to be less stressed, give her time to teach and offer advice where needed and because it is calmer. The most she has in any one class is 10 dogs. However most of her classes average at 5 dogs per class, so again low key.

The car park has ample parking available, so regardless of how many people she has in her class there has always been enough for both her clients and other visitors to the complex. She tends not to run classes on Bank Holidays, not because generally because people are away.

Dogs are dogs, so yes they may bark, the dogs bark when visiting the Dog Groomer who is also on the premises. Dogs may bark when using the Doggy Daycare, but they have dwelling neighbours who also have dogs who bark and there is a farm next door with a particularly vocal little dog who does like to shout rather a lot.

With regards to whistles, she does not use whistles in her classes. Clients wishing to use the Dog Garden for some recall training may occasional use a whistle but this is discouraged.

She does not have a set open/close day/time for The Dog Garden, as she allows people to use it as and when they wish, IF, their dog is suitable for that particular time slot.

Overall, the hours of use of both paddocks are 08:00 to 18:00.

In the evenings over the summer last year she did run 'Wild2Mild' Classes,

these classes are designed for dogs who are reactive towards people or dogs. These classes were held in the evening to prevent the dogs coming into contact with members of the public because the rest of the complex is closed. These classes have no more than 4 dogs in each class, but as indicated this was last summer, as of right now she has no intention of running these again this year.

Neighbour Amenity

Arun District local Plan Policy GEN7 indicates development will be permitted if it takes into account impact on adjoining occupiers, land, use or property.

In this case, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties with the hours of use currently carried out.

Importantly I am not aware of any complaints to Environmental Health in respect of alleged noise disturbance arising from dogs barking. This demonstrates that the use is low key and well controlled.

Dog Waste Storage

As indicated all dog waste is collected by a private company who recycle it.

The waste is collected every week by PAWS Ltd and when awaiting collection the dog waste is stored in 'poop' waste bin.

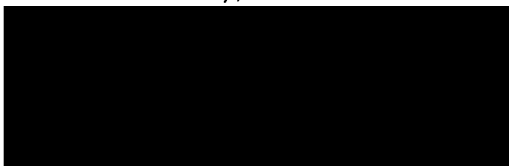
Noise

As indicated above the owner running the business is very aware of neighbouring properties and seeks to ensure that dog barking any any other associated noises are kept to a minimum. To date she is not aware of any complaints specific to disturbance from dog barking.

Conclusion

Based on the above submissions I conclude that this retrospective application for planning permission should be granted conditional approval.

Yours sincerely,



STEPHEN JUPP
BA(Hons), LL.M, MRTPI
Chartered Town Planner



The Northern Paddock



The Southern Paddock