



PLANNING STATEMENT

LP Planning, 31 Market Place,
Chippenham, SN15 3HZ

Change of use to dog walking
field and associated works.

Land at Winsley Road, Bradford
on Avon, BA15 2HL

Applicants: Mr and Mrs Dustan

June 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 LP Planning Consultants have been instructed by Mr and Mrs Dustan (the Applicants) to prepare and submit this Planning, Design and Access Statement in support of a full planning application seeking the change of use from agricultural to a dog walking field and associated works at Land at Winsley Road, Bradford on Avon, BA15 2HL.

2. Description of Site and Context

2.1 The site relates to an existing parcel of land extending to 1.04 hectares, located on the northern side of the B3108 (Winsley Road), between Winsley and Bradford on Avon.

2.2 The site perimeters are formed by a mixture of features, stone walling, post and rail fencing and planting and trees on the northern and eastern boundaries. Beyond the field boundaries, to the immediate north and east the site borders agricultural land, to the west the site borders residential garden and an art gallery, and to the south are large residential/equestrian properties.

2.3 The site is within designated West Wiltshire Green Belt but is not within a Conservation Area and there are no nearby listed buildings. In terms of other planning designations the site is fully within Flood Zone 1 (where there is the lowest risk of flooding) and is outside of but adjacent to the boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape (to the south, on the opposite side of the road).



Figure 1: View towards the site's access from Winsley Road



Figure 2: View towards the site from the road



Figure 3: Photograph taken with the site facing north

3. Planning History

3.1 There is no planning history for the land.

4. Description of Development

4.1 The description of development is as follows:

“Change of use to dog walking field and associated works”.

4.2 The associated works for the proposal comprise:

- Adjusting stone wall at site entrance to improve access visibility
- Provision of access track (permeable surface), gates, car parking and turning space
- Installation of fencing
- Landscaping (provision of a hedgerow and associated biodiversity benefits)
- Installation of a storage container to house equipment essential for the maintenance of the land as a dog walking field as well as the adjoining retained agricultural land)
- Small timber shelter to be used in association with the use of the dog walking field and to provide shelter from the elements.

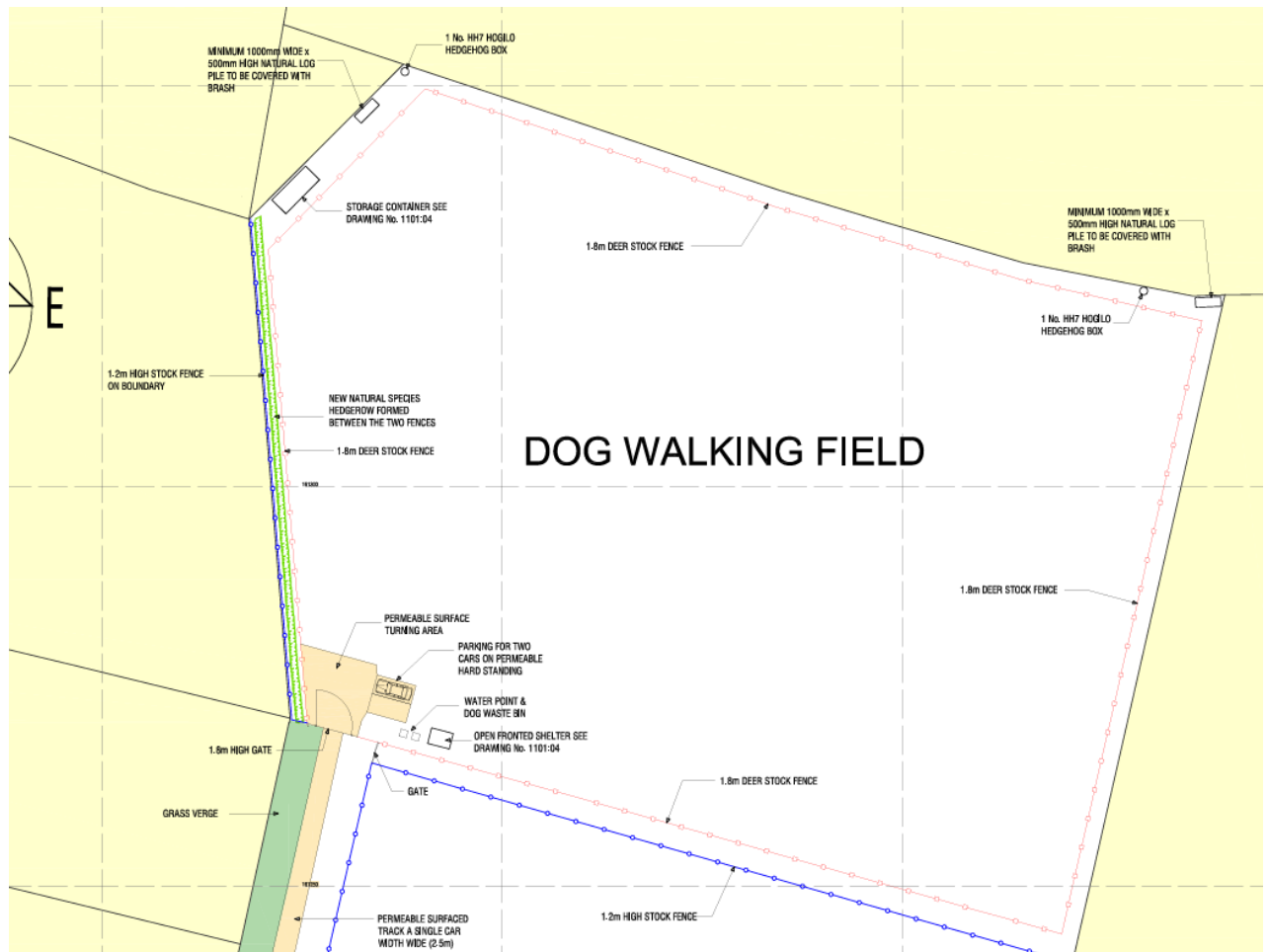


Figure 4: Proposed Layout

5. Background & Business Details

- 5.1 An enclosed dog walking field provides a safe space where dogs can play and exercise in a relaxing environment that supports the health and well-being of both dogs and their owners.
- 5.2 Demand for these spaces is at an all-time high as dog ownership continues to grow, with 1 in every 3 households owning at least one dog (Source: Statista). As a direct result of the pandemic, a significant proportion of young dogs are sadly poorly socialised and often anxious around other dogs and sometimes people.
- 5.3 Dogs need varied and regular exercise to stay healthy, as do humans. Dog walking has recognised health benefits, including increased physical fitness, better mental health, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease. An enclosed field offers a safe and controlled environment for dogs and their owners to enjoy the countryside. Having a range of designated areas for dogs can reduce the likelihood of them causing disturbances in other public spaces.
- 5.4 A well-managed and maintained dog field is an essential part of the local community, not only to provide a safe space for anxious or troublesome dogs but also to serve as a controlled environment to train and socialise the next generation of puppies that will find homes in our community. It's important to note that there are currently no secure dog walking facilities within the Bradford on Avon and Winsley neighbourhoods. The proposed dog walking facility would therefore cater to the needs of local dog owners within these areas.
- 5.5 Details of the management and operation of the dog walking field are set out in detail below. The field is for walking only, there will be no boarding of dogs:

Management of the Site

- 5.6 The paddock will be for private hire only and run on a self-service basis, requiring a key code to access the field. There will be only one booking per hour and will be a limit of eight dogs per booking (the average no. of dogs per booking likely to be one or two). There will be no WC facilities and **no lighting** provided to site users, however a water tap will be provided so that clients can clean their dogs/boots or give their dogs a drink.
- 5.7 There will be no onsite manager, however the paddock is located within walking distance of the applicants home so will be closely monitored and the site checked daily to ensure the paddock is clean and tidy. Online inductions will be carried out for clients before their first visit to the site, this will involve familiarising themselves with facilities and making them aware of the terms of use. CCTV will be in operation at the facility to ensure clients follow the terms and conditions of the site.

Opening Hours

- 5.8 It is proposed that the paddock will be open during daylight hours all year round. Approximate opening hours are outlined below:
- Winter (1st October - 29th February): 07:00 - 17:00 (10hrs)
 - Summer (1st March - 30th September): 06:00 - 21:00 (15hrs)

Booking

- 5.9 The dog walking sessions will be pre-booked and paid for online. Site users will agree to terms and conditions as part of the booking process.
- 5.10 It is proposed that the paddock can be hired for a 50 minute time slot, with 10 minutes between bookings. This will allow time for pedestrians/vehicles to vacate the site before the next session.

Waste Management

- 5.11 As per the terms and conditions, site users will be required to collect all dog waste and dispose of it in the dog waste bin provided inside the paddock. This bin will be frequently emptied and stored appropriately in a larger waste bin onsite until it is collected and disposed of by an approved SafeContractor with a Waste Carrier Licence.
- 5.12 Site users will be asked to take their rubbish home, as they would if they were walking in the countryside. Daily site inspections will be undertaken to clear any uncollected rubbish or dog waste, ensuring no detrimental environmental impact.
- 5.13 Bio-degradable dog waste bags will be provided to site users.

Noise

- 5.14 The paddock will be situated 90m from the nearest residential dwellings, largely out of direct view, tucked behind hedgerows. The area surrounding the site is already subject to moderate levels of background noise due to the close proximity to the B3108. Any noise nuisance to neighbours from barking is likely to be infrequent, and the large majority of dogs using the paddock will make no noise whatsoever.
- 5.15 That being said, to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties, should any site user make excessive noise during their booking they will be excluded from using the field in the future, if this is shown to be a recurring issue with that user. (See supporting Noise Management Plan for detailed mitigation measures to be taken by the applicant).

6. Planning Policies

- 6.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The Development Plan in this case comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2011-2026 (January 2015) (the WCS). The following policies are relevant to this application:

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 7: Bradford on Avon Community Area Strategy
Core Policy 50: Biodiversity & Geodiversity
Core Policy 51: Landscape
Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping
Core Policies 60 - 64: Transport & traffic

6.3 The Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2026 also forms part of the Development Plan.

6.4 Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) is a significant material consideration in the determination of the application, and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) also provides relevant advice. In particular, it promotes sustainable development, delivering much needed new homes and making effective use of land and buildings.

6.5 Wiltshire Council's new local plan is currently submitted for examination and in accordance with paragraph 49a) of the NPPF, the more advanced a plan's preparation, the greater the weight that may be given to its relevant policies. It is noted that Inspectors have been appointed and hearing sessions are likely to take place in the coming months, with adoption anticipated (according to Wiltshire Council's timeline) to be by the end of 2025. Paragraph 49c) is also of relevance as it states,

“Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”.

6.6 The relevance of the above policies and the National Planning Policy Framework are set out in the detailed planning assessment below.

7. Planning Considerations

7.1 When assessing the proposed development against the relevant planning policies, the key issues in this case are limited to the following:

- The acceptability in principle of the development;
- The impact on the Green Belt
- Residential amenity;
- Ecology; and
- Highways.

Principle of Development

7.2 The site is within the open countryside and in the Green Belt in planning terms but the proposals relate to a change of use. A dog walking field (and the associated requirements for a storage container, shelter and parking area) falls within the category of outdoor sport/recreation purposes which is listed at para 154 of the NPPF. The relevant part of paragraph 154 states

“Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation... as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”..

7.3 Therefore, the key consideration is whether the proposals harm the openness of the Green Belt, or conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

7.4 In terms of the development proposed, the only physical works proposed are:

- The existing entrance wall is to be adjusted slightly to increase the visibility at the access.
- Creation of access track (wide enough for two cars to pass) with a grass verge along the western boundary of the new track.
- Permeable parking area for 2 vehicles (plus turning space)
- Planting of a new natural species hedgerow to the western boundary of the dog walking field
- 20ft shipping container to be discreetly located in north-western corner for agricultural tool storage
- Deer stock fencing to the perimeter (heights confirmed on site plan)
- Installation of small field shelter, water point and dog waste bin within dog walking field.

7.5 In the case of an appeal elsewhere (reference 3264866) for a dog walking field in the green belt, the Inspector considered the amount of use and the associated traffic impacts of such a proposal, paragraphs 9-11 of the decision, included at Appendix 1 state:

9. It is proposed that booking will be required to utilise the facility, in hourly slots, of which 50 minutes would be for exercise, and the remaining 10 minutes to be used to ensure customers did not attend and leave at the same time. Bookings would be for a maximum of one car, two people, and a maximum of four dogs. Such comings and goings, and the parking of vehicles, could give rise to visual impact, which in turn would affect openness.
10. However, the field could reasonably be used for the grazing of animals on a permanent or regular basis. I would consider that vehicle movements associated with the appeal proposal would be similar to the movements associated with the agricultural use as the use of land for livestock could entail a number of daily visits at various times and would involve vehicles or agricultural machinery.
11. On balance, I therefore conclude that the use of the site for dog walking purposes would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

7.6 The appeal mentioned above also confirms that the proposal for a dog walking field is supported by the NPPF that supports sustainable growth of ALL types of business and enterprise in rural areas, and so the proposal is entirely consistent with the Framework in this regard. Policy E1 of the BoA Neighbourhood Plan also states that sustainable business and employment development within or adjacent to Bradford on Avon will be supported. In this case the new business will provide full time employment for one person.

7.7 There are also other approved dog walking fields nearby in Wiltshire that are located in both Green Belt areas and adjacent to more sensitive locations, such as designated Conservation Areas. One particular example is PL/2022/03680 which approved a dog walking facility in Holt.

- 7.8 Given it is established by the Planning Inspectorate that the use of the land for dog walking would preserve the openness of the Green Belt it is necessary to consider the associated buildings/structures that are also required to safely facilitate the use and ongoing maintenance of the land, allowing it to function as a dog walking field business.
- 7.9 The storage container measures 6.05m (l) x 2.44m (w) x 2.59m (h) and to help it blend into its setting it will be clad with timber to the sides (except for the door). It's proposed location is adjacent to the site boundary where a new hedgerow is to be planted. The smaller timber shelter is simple in design and open fronted, allowing users of the park to take shelter from the elements if necessary.
- 7.10 Neither structure is considered to conflict with the 5 purposes of the Green Belt set out at 143 of the NPPF:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 7.11 Overall, the principle of the development is supported by local and national policy and the establishment of a new rural business that will support the health and well-being of people and dogs, in a safe environment, should be welcomed by the Council.

Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.12 Policy BE2 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out how development requiring planning permission should make efficient use of land and integrate with its surroundings by respecting the overall character of the area.
- 7.13 The nearest public footpath is over 200m to the north but given the site will not become urbanised and will remain undeveloped there will not be a significant change in views from the nearest public viewpoints.
- 7.14 The small shelter and storage container associated with the change of use (both of which will be either timber or timber clad) will be minor in the overall view and would not be out of character for the rural area, many farms and rural businesses require similar small structures. Moreover, the proposed native hedgerow along the western boundary will further minimise any minor impact associated with them.

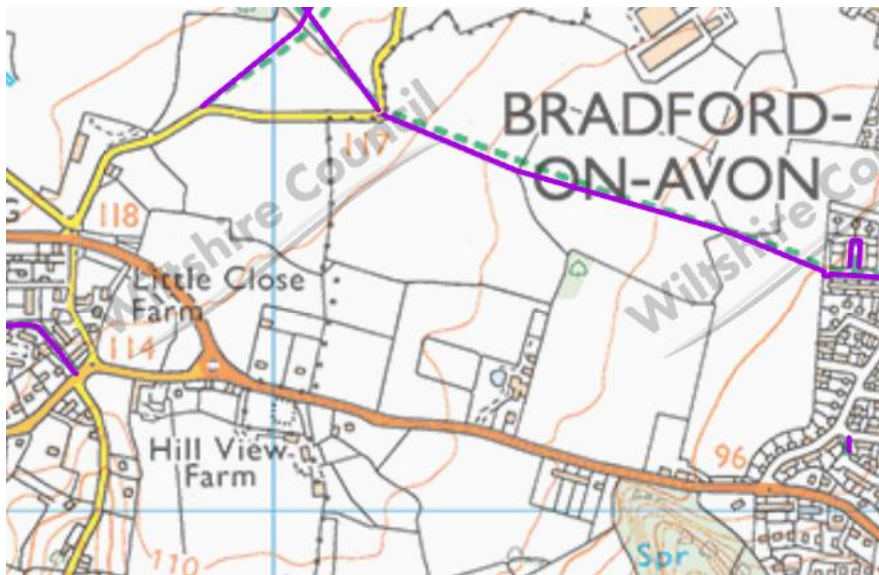


Figure 5: PRow map extract

7.15 The change of use is suitable for the rural character of the area, it is logical that facilities such as dog walking fields are typically located in rural areas where there is more open space for dogs to be exercised safely. There will be no adverse effects arising on the character of the area that would be deemed capable of warranting refusal of the application.

Residential Amenity

7.16 Core Policy 57 sets out the general principles for the design of development, including impacts on neighbours:

“vii. Having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration and pollution”.

7.17 The parking spaces for users of the dog walking field will be situated 75m from the nearest residential dwellings, largely out of direct view, tucked behind the planned native species hedgerow and in a natural dip in the lay of the land. The area surrounding the site is already subject to moderate levels of background noise due to the close proximity to the B3108.

7.18 Noise disturbances from barking are expected to be rare, as most dogs visiting the paddock are unlikely to make any noise. However, to safeguard the comfort of neighbouring properties, any user causing excessive noise during their booking will be prohibited from accessing the field in the future. Detailed mitigation measures are explained in the supporting Noise Management Plan that can be conditioned to any forthcoming planning permission.

Highways Considerations

- 7.19 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.20 As set out earlier, the business model, it is proposed that the paddock can be hired for a 50 minute time slot, with 10 minutes between bookings. This will allow time for pedestrians/vehicles to vacate the site before the next session. Given that likely users will arrive in a single car there is plenty of space off the public highway to ensure that no queuing occurs in the very unlikely event that there is a crossover (this will be avoided by having the 10 minute gap between bookings).

Ecology

- 7.21 National policy requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including through minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity. Core Policy 50 ‘biodiversity and geodiversity’ requires developments to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity whilst also incorporating measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.
- 7.22 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment and BNG report have been prepared by Luscinia Ecology. The PEA confirms that the development proposal limits the loss of habitats of ecological importance. Only 0.09ha of grassland will be removed and all other green infrastructure will be retained. New landscaping and structural planting are proposed, including a new native species hedgerow and a re-wilding wildflower strip. These measures will increase the overall species diversity at the site.
- 7.23 The ecological impacts (and associated mitigation and compensation) associated with the development is limited to the implementation of precautionary measures at construction to protect badgers, bat flight-paths and foraging habitat, and hedgehogs.
- 7.24 Enhancements will also be provided within the site in the form of 2 x log piles and 2 hedgehog boxes.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of agricultural land to a dog walking field at Land at Winsley Road, Bradford on Avon, BA15 2HL. The proposal:
- Is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt
 - Will preserve the character of the area
 - Will provide biodiversity net gains
 - Will provide a safe facility for the exercise of dogs locally
 - Will not give rise to harm to the nearest residents
 - Can be accessed safely from the public highway
 - Will provide local employment opportunities
 - Will support the physical and mental health of the dogs and their owners
- 8.2 It is respectfully requested that Wiltshire Council approves the application without delay.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Appeal Decision 3264866