HOWKINS & HARRISON

Business Plan for Dog Walking Park

FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM AGRICULTURAL LAND TO SUI GENERIS FOR AN ENCLOSED DOG WALKING FIELD

Prepared by Howkins & Harrison LLP – 06.02.2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This business plan forms part of the full planning application for the change of use from an agricultural field to form a secure dog walking paddock on behalf of Simon Hewitt and has been prepared by Howkins & Harrison LLP.

1.2 This document supports the planning application providing details of the proposal and business plan.

2.0 Location

2.1 The site is located off Dunsmoor Lane, Hartshorne which is approximately half a mile from the centre of Hartshorne, 1.5 miles from Midway and 2.5 miles for Woodville

Please see Appendix 1 for location plan.

2.2 The land parcel is located on a local dog walking route and has a high level of footfall from dog walkers from Hartshorne and the surrounding villages.

2.3 The site is surrounded by farmland to three sides and National Forest planting to the fourth, this makes it an attractive site to dog walkers. This rural location means the proposed use will have minimal impact on properties in the locality.

2.4 The site forms part of an arable field, the application is to include hedge planting to the boundaries of the dog walking paddock. Photographs are included in Appendix 2.

2.5 The site is accessible by car from the local villages and towns.

3.0 Site Consideration and Competitor Location

3.1 The site is within walking distance of the nearby housing which allows residents to walk to the dog walking paddock without the need for a car. This ensures that the site is accessible to all.

3.2 The proposed dog walking paddock borders a public footpath, this allows people to enter the dog walking park directly from the public footpath allowing an entrance directly from the footpath.

3.3 The paddock is situated on the edge of the farmyard, this is to minimise development outside of the properties curtilage and ensure that it is easily accessible from the existing farm drive.

3.4 The carparking will be on existing hardstanding.

3.5 Consideration has also been given to existing secure dog exercise fields and their distribution through the district and surrounding area, in relation to whether there is an opportunity for the dog park to be viable with regarding to competition with these existing businesses.

3.6 Please see the plan overleaf demonstrating the nearest dog parks in each direction of the application site.



Image: Google Earth Pro

3.7 As such it is clear there is a physical gap in the distribution of the site that the park is able to fill.

3.8 Only other secure dog exercise paddocks/fields have been assessed, as parks and open spaces that do not have secure fencing do not provide the same service. Secure dog fields provide locations for dogs requiring an increased level of care (such as rescue or reactive dogs) to be allowed to exercise off lead in a secure environment.

4.0 Proposal

4.1 This proposal is for the change of use from agricultural land to a secure dog walking paddock in the area shown in red on the site plan included in Appendix 3. The area of the proposed dog walking paddock is 1.5 acres.

4.2 The proposed parking area is alongside the paddock on the existing hardstanding. The parking area provides 1 space but can accommodate more. There is ample space for vehicles to turn around and leave the site in a forward gear.

The parking area proposed is an extension of the current hardstanding making use of the sites existing features. The parking is shown in the site plan in Appendix 3 outlined and hatched in black.

4.3 It is proposed a 1.8m security fence will be installed this height is recommended for dog paddocks, this will be green in colour to minimise the impact on the area and surroundings. There will be a

vehicular and pedestrian gate installed, again this will be sympathetic to the local surroundings to minimise impact. Fencing description and photograph in Appendix 4.

4.4 The proposed opening hours are:

Monday to Friday		Saturday to Sunday	
07:00am to 19:00pm	1st March to 29th September	08:00am to 19:00pm	1st March to 29th September
08:00am to 17:00pm	1st October to 30th November	08:00am to 17:00pm	1st October to 30th November
08:00am to 16:00pm	1st December to 31st January	08:00am to 16:00pm	1st December to 31st January
08:00am to 17:00pm	1st February to 28th February	08:00am to 17:00pm	1st February to 28th February

4.5 The proposals financing and expected return is as follows:

4.7 The applicant already owns all the necessary installation equipment, and the posts are 'hammer in' therefore concrete is not required to set the posts, and there will be no financial outlay with regard to their installation. The land is already sown with a grass ley.

4.8 On the basis of the authors knowledge of other Dog Exercise Paddocks in the local area (having acted as agent for several), they generally work at a 50% occupancy rate. With the prime hours either side of the standard working day Monday-Friday usually being 100% booked, and hours in the middle of the day when most people are at work to not be booked. Any discrepancies are averaged out, and therefore an assumed 50% occupancy is a considered a reasonable and conservative figure. It is noted application DMPA/2024/0425 for a dog exercise paddock was considered acceptable on the premise of a 90% occupancy rate.

4.9 At 50% occupancy of the proposed opening hours would equate to 1,977 hours (1 hour per timeslot) per year, on the basis of the proposed opening hours.

4.12 In terms of maintenance costs, these are expected to be minimal with the fencing having an expect lifespan of up to 20 years.

4.14 It is therefore considered that the business venture is financially viable, as it is highly likely to obtain a profit in year 1 and even more so from year 2 onwards with no set up costs. In the unlikely event it was not, the fencing could be easily removed and utilised elsewhere on the farm. Therefore, the cost-benefit risk of the enterprise is minimal also. In order to return the site to agricultural land the applicant would also not need to apply for planning permission, as agricultural use is not considered development under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

5.0 Access

5.1 The access for the paddock is from an existing entrance off Dunsmore Lane. This access is considered to be appropriate for the size and scale of the proposed change of use.

Due to the limit of dogs and handlers on the site at any one time it is not expected that traffic to the site should increase significantly. The booking system will limit the numbers of people coming to and from the site, bookings are on the hour to prevent any crossover.

5.2 The access is well established having been used by the current owners for agricultural, equestrian and personal use.

5.3 Dunsmore Lane has good visibility in both directions.

5.4 The parking on site will have space for 1 parking space, this would allow sufficient space for visitors to the dog paddock.

6.0 Site Use

6.1 The rules of use will be agreed by the user when confirming the booking, a copy of these rules is included in Appendix 5, users will not be able to proceed with the booking without agreeing to the rules.

6.2 Dog mess will be removed by users and no provisions for this will be provided by the owner, this will be clearly stated within the rules of use and through signage around the site.

6.3 The site will be checked daily for dog mess and any not picked up by those using the paddock will be collected and disposed of by the owners in their waste bin.

6.4 Access to water will be provided by the car park for filling water bowls and can be used to wash shoes and muddy paws. There will be a small trough that can be filled with water for dogs

APPENDIX 1 – LOCATION PLAN

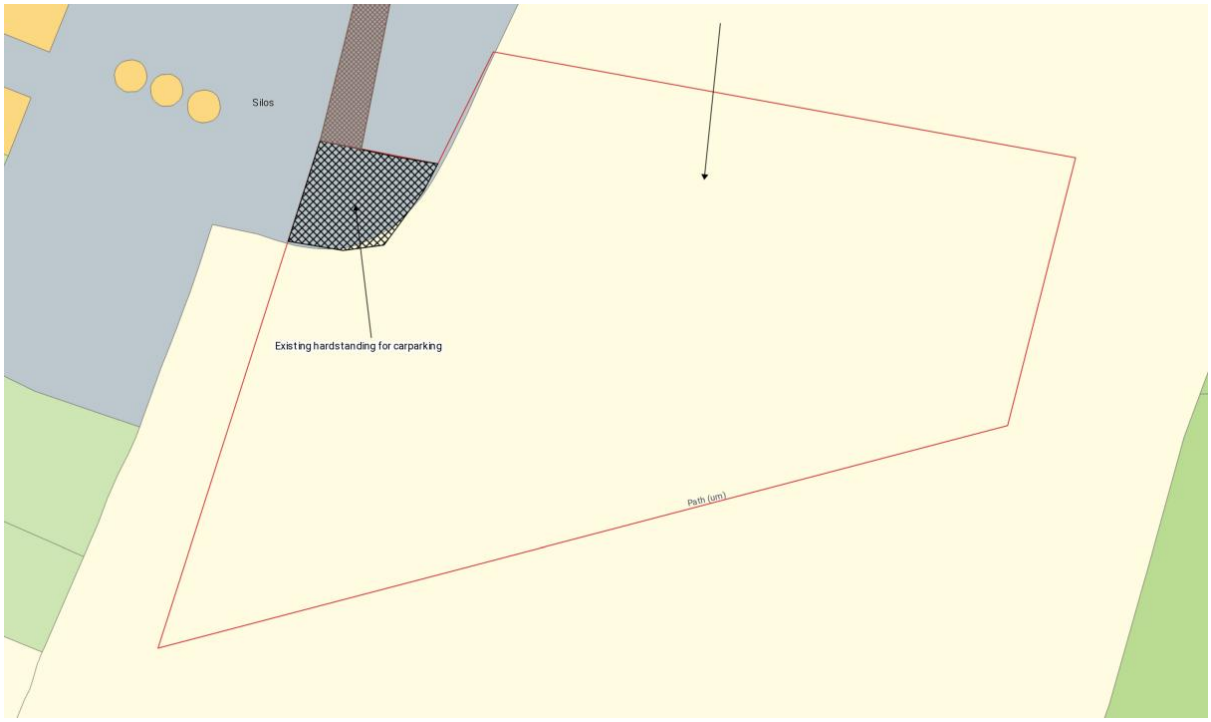


APPENDIX 2 - PHOTOGRAPHS





APPENDIX 3 – SITE BLOCK PLAN


Silos
Existing hardstanding for carparking
Path (um)

APPENDIX 4 – FENCING DETAILS

1.8m High 'V' Mesh Security Fencing Kit

SKU: WEB-00001



Each Kit Contains: 1x Panel, 1x Post, 7x M8s Bolts, 7x Clips, 1x Ribbed Insert



Height	1800mm [Above Ground Incl. Clearance]
Total Post Length	1800mm [Bolt Down], 2400mm [Dig In]
Width	3000mm
Thickness of Wires	4mm
Mesh Aperture	200mm [H] x 50mm [W]
Weight	12.8kg
Number of 'V' Beams	3
Material	Pre-Galvanised Steel
Finish	Powder Coated
PPC Colours	Green & Black as Standard, Others Available On Request
Compliant to	BS 10244-2:2001 Class D (Galvanised Wire)

APPENDIX 5 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SITE USAGE

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

We very much hope that you and your dogs enjoy your visit to the Dog Paddock. Please be aware that by visiting the field you are agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions outlined below.

The field is to be used solely for the purposes of exercising and training dogs. Entry to the Paddock is strictly by appointment only. Opening times vary depending on the time of year. The Paddock is only open during daylight hours.

Dogs

The maximum number of dogs per booking is five. Please contact us if you wish to exceed this number. Dogs that appear unwell, are coughing, have sickness or diarrhoea, an infectious disease, or have been in contact with an infected animal are not permitted to attend the field.

Please ensure your dogs are vaccinated and wormed regularly and treated for external parasites if needed.

Bitches in season are not permitted to attend the field unless prior permission has been granted.

Children

Children are very welcome to attend the field with a responsible adult. They must be supervised by, and are the responsibility of, their parent or carer.

Please be aware that there are no toilets or changing facilities on site.

Booking

All bookings should be made in advance. Appointments start on the hour and last 50 minutes to allow 10 minutes for each dog owner to vacate the field ahead of the next person arriving. Payment will be through the Paddocks booking site in advance. You will be informed of the padlock code for the pedestrian gate ahead of your booked appointment.

All field users will be required to confirm they accept the Terms and Conditions when making the booking and will be advised to check the field to ensure it is suitable for their use before letting their dog/s loose.

Parking

Parking is provided on site on a hardstanding area. Please keep to your allocated time slot and leave promptly to avoid clashing with the next visitors.

Entering and Exiting the Paddock

Please keep dogs on leads in the car park as it is not secure. Enter the secure field through the pedestrian gate (you will have received the lock code in advance) and close it behind yourselves. You may then release your dogs.

Please leave the field promptly at the end of your visit. Allow yourself time to get your dogs safely on their leads before opening the pedestrian gate. On exiting the field please close the gate an lock the padlock behind you.

During your Visit

We suggest that on arrival to the field you walk your dogs around the perimeter to allow them to become familiar with their boundaries and for you to inspect the fencing and assess suitability for your dog. We have tried our utmost to make the field secure but cannot guarantee that it is absolutely secure for every dog. We inspect the fencing daily to ensure it is secure but please notify us immediately if you have any concerns.

Fresh water is available for your dogs.

Please clean up after your dogs. Please also dispose of other litter such as broken dog toys, uneaten treats or picnic leftovers.

In the interest of our neighbours please do not allow your dogs to bark excessively, or your children to make too much noise.

Please do not allow dogs to dig.

As with any area of countryside, there may be natural hazards in the field such as stinging nettles and uneven ground. Please wear appropriate footwear for the weather conditions on the day of your visit. The grass may be slippery and muddy at times.

Rights and Responsibilities

Please be aware that the law regarding responsible dog ownership states that you should be in control of your dog at all times. This law still applies during your visit to the paddock.

A first aid kit and emergency contact numbers can be found on site.

The paddock owners do not take any responsibility for any loss, injury or accident that occurs to dog(s), owner, property, or other family or friends or for any vet bills arising from any incident that occurred during your visit.

Attending the field does not create any rights over the land, and the person hiring the field accepts that the landowner maintains control and possession of the field at all times.

All dog trainers must provide a copy of their Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance prior to using the field. Dog walkers are also required to show their Public Liability insurance before using the field.