

To:
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Planning and Service Development
Kirklees Council

The Barn
Scopsley Lane
Whitley, Dewsbury
WF12 0NG

Objection

Planning application: 2025/91606

Development: Change of use of outbuilding and land to dog hotel

**Location: Reservoir House, Whitley Road, Whitley, Dewsbury,
WF12 0NQ**

I write to make an objection to the above planning application for the reasons stated below, but would first point out that although the planning notice posted at the site is dated 10 July 2025 and states that representations may be made within 21 days of that date, inexplicably the relevant planning webpage states that the public consultation period ends tomorrow 18 July 2025, giving insufficient time for public response. A date of 31 July should apply, and the date stated online should be revised to reflect this.

Insufficient details re proposed use

The application site, Reservoir House, has never previously been used for commercial purposes, and is located in close proximity to other residential properties within the village of Whitley. As the application relates to a proposed change of use from long-standing residential use to new commercial use, within a green belt area, all relevant planning rules pertaining to a new commercial development, and to development within the green belt, should apply.

Though it's proposed that an outbuilding and land currently used for residential purposes be used as a dog hotel for up to 30 dogs, insufficient details of the proposed operation have been provided.

The application fails to provide such crucial material information as: -

- details of the barn outbuilding proposed to be used, including area, dimensions, construction materials, soundproofing, openings etc;
- details of exactly how 30 dogs would be housed - whether outdoors as well as indoors, in individual or shared spaces, size of spaces; construction materials etc;
- opening hours, including customer drop-off and pick-up times;
- trade dog waste management arrangements; and
- any licensing requirements that may apply.

Inadequate plans provided

The plans provided are not adequate to describe the proposed development.

The location plan (document 1092325) is so limited in area as to show only the application site. All residential properties within the village of Whitley that stand to be affected have been excluded - including the length of Whitley Road between the houses at Beebow and the former Woolpack Inn, and also along Scopsley Lane from its junction with the former Woolpack Inn.

Although the block/site plan (document 1092326) indicates the location on site of the existing barn outbuilding proposed to be used as a dog hotel, there are no elevations or other drawings illustrating the building concerned, to show its size, proportions, type of construction, materials, openings, lighting etc as well as relations between the building and proposed use of the land involved. And neither has an image of the outbuilding been provided in the Supporting Information (document 1092324).

Although the application refers to 4 existing car parking spaces and 4 additional car parking spaces to be created, no car parking spaces are shown on the plans. And though it is stated that the application site includes an area sufficient for safe vehicular turning, neither is this area designated on the block plan.

Full details of the proposed use are required to enable a proper assessment of the scale of the operation and its potential impact.

Noise nuisance

I attach a photograph showing the existing barn outbuilding, which has the appearance of being nothing more than a large timber shed, completely inadequate and unsuitable for the proposed use as a dog hotel for up to 30 dogs. The crucial details of this completely inadequate structure have obviously been withheld from the application for this reason, and due to the NPPF presumption against re-use of buildings in the green belt that are not of permanent or substantial construction.

Though no necessary details in respect of the outbuilding have been provided, the application makes clear that up to 6 dogs would be exercised at any one time within an exercise area surrounded by nothing more than a mesh fence (to retain an open aspect in the green belt), throughout the entire day between the hours of 8am and 7pm - a total of 11 hours daily, 7 days per week.

Noise carries across Whitley village and over the Whitley Reservoir, so that sound emanating from the Whitley Road tends to be audible along Scopsley Lane.

Dogs bark, and multiple dogs barking on this scale of intended use would cause considerable local / neighbourhood noise pollution that residents of Whitley village should not be subjected to on this scale on a daily basis day and night.

The intended provision of a 2m high timber fence along a single side of the development as the *only* provision for soundproofing from 30 dogs would do nothing to control the nuisance. The proposals as submitted are completely inadequate.

Traffic and parking issues

The block/site plan states that a new access and porous track to the building would be created, with a gate 10m into the site, having a 5m width for the first 10m. It's apparent from the plan that this new access would be at a different location than an existing unmade track currently accessed by a metal bar gate. It's not made clear whether the existing access would be retained and, if it would, whether there would be vehicular use of this existing access as well as the new access, with potential for conflicts.

As the proposed new access would be to/from a 30mph highway, the application should show how the developer would intend to ensure adequate sight lines. It's not sufficient to simply state on the block/site plan that the new access would be 5m wide for a length of 10 metres and make the unsubstantiated claim within the Supporting Information that there would be unobstructed visibility both ways for over 100m. A drawing has not been provided showing the 2.4m x 43m visibility splay applicable to a 30mph zone, and illustrating any changes needed at the boundary of the site to take account of this mandatory splay.

Details of the principle for opening and closing the proposed new entrance gate should also have been supplied, given the potential for vehicles to back up into the main highway.

And, if access to the proposed on-site parking (not shown on the plans) would be via the new access track through the new entrance gate, then drawings should also have been provided showing the provisions for vehicular turning - including turning for trade vehicles - within the site, and also provisions to prevent conflicts between vehicles entering and leaving the site via the same single narrow track.

Inadequate provisions on-site for vehicular access, egress, parking, and turning would more than likely lead to on-road parking by visitors to the development, on what is a relatively narrow country road used as a route not just for cars but also for heavy commercial vehicles travelling towards/from Dewsbury including buses, wagons, and farm vehicles. On the Whitley Road there is only one narrow pedestrian causeway on the same side of the road as the application site, which would be obstructed by any vehicles parked on that causeway.

Biodiversity

It's noted that KC Ecology has already made a consultation response without making any attempt to properly consider the application.

The applicant is relying upon the "de minimis" rule to obtain exemption from the otherwise mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement. The application claims that the exemption applies for the reason that the size of the site is under 25 square metres, and that there is less than 25 square metres of ecology as all other areas are surfaced. This is not factually correct.

As page 4 of the application states, the size of the site area is in fact 0.44 hectares. Much of this area is grassland, bounded to the highway by high hedgerow.

Any changes that may be required to the site in order to meet relevant planning rules - for example, to provide sufficient car parking spaces for the potential number of customers for 30 dogs (including any space required for a disabled vehicle), make sufficient provision for safe vehicular turning including turning for a trade vehicle, ensure sufficient width of the new access from the highway, and remove obstructions to vehicle sight lines at the new access etc - would likely result in an impact of greater than 25 square metres of non-priority habitat and/or more than 5 metres of linear habitat, so that the BNG requirement would apply.

KC Ecology should therefore be asked to comment again on this application, taking account of the above.

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In conclusion, the application is inadequate to show how the site would be proposed to be properly developed in order to meet the planning requirements relating to a new commercial operation of this nature in a residential area within the green belt, and minimise the impact on local residential amenity.

17 July 2025