



Reference: Document 3

Design and Access Statement to support Planning Application to erect a single storey timber building for use as a boarding cattery at Upper Park Cattery, Llangarron, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 6PH

Applicants: Mrs Fiona Wilkins & Mr Mark Wilkins

Planning Ref Number: PP-01596521

Design

Introduction

With pet ownership on the increase in the UK comes an increase need for high quality boarding catteries. There is presently a great demand for good quality boarding catteries throughout the country, with Herefordshire being an area with a lower number than average. Cats are now the most popular pet in the UK with over 10 million, and have now taken over from dogs as the most popular pet. In Britain, a quarter of all households own at least one cat, with approximately 26% of these households owning two or more. To find a high quality cattery some people are having to drive up to 50 miles to ensure their cat/s are boarded in a cattery that meets their standards and the requirements of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 and the Model License Conditions.

I have spoken to numerous residents around the local area, all of whom welcomed a new high standard cattery as they were looking for somewhere close to take their cat to be boarded. Advice has previously been sought by attending the planning surgery at Ross on Wye library. Planning officer in attendance was Mr Andrew Prior.

Use

A boarding cattery must be established on a site where there is a dwelling for the reason that there must be a responsible person on site to attend to welfare and security of the cats being boarded. Upper Park is considered a suitable site because of its location with no close neighbours; easy access to local villages and several large towns and proximity to local businesses/farms. Therefore the boarding cattery will have little or no impact on the occupants of close properties and in the terms of welfare of the boarded cats they will have fresh air and open space that attracts wildlife providing visual stimulation to help combat boredom.

Boarding catteries should not be considered in the same context as boarding kennels in terms of noise and smell, there is little or no noise from a cattery as cats are by nature quiet and contented animals. Boarded cats are normally shut away into their individual lined and insulated sleeping areas from between 7pm – 8pm each evening. Whilst the primary function of the insulation is its thermal qualities, it does also act as a sound insulator so in the unlikely event that a cat can meow loud enough for it to be heard at the nearest neighbours this insulation would combat any noise being carried that far. Most boarded cats are neutered and therefore do not attract 'outside' cats and the operation of the cattery does not involve any machinery that would create additional noise to that of any household.

Cats are clean animals and always use a litter tray that is emptied and cleaned on a regular basis. Any used/soiled cat litter (depending on the litter used) can either be composted or placed in sealed bags for disposal via the appropriate methods. All food cans/boxes will be re-cycled and all cleaning materials used will be environmentally friendly both for the welfare of the cats but also to protect our environment.

Amount

The site of Upper Park is of more than adequate size to accommodate a 22 unit cattery that will run along the one side of the one acre site. A cattery of this size would be easily managed by the proprietor (s) and a part time member of staff during peak business times and would accommodate a maximum of 52 cats.

Layout

The cattery building is positioned close to the north boundary of the property on an area of land at the rear of the dwelling. The building would be hardly visible, if at all, from the approaching roads or the majority of nearby properties due to the levels of the land and surrounding hedgerows. The area directly in front of the proposed cattery is currently planted as an orchard, which will be retained. This also gives a screen to the building thus helping it blend into the surroundings and mask it from view of the one property that could just see it.

The cattery is designed as a straight row of pens with a work area in the centre so it will not jut out into the open area of the garden impacting on the view or garden.

There is a public foot path that runs down the side of the garden on the opposite side to the proposed cattery (within the field). The height of the hedgerows and the lay of the land would mean that the cattery would be hardly seen from this pathway thus not spoiling the surrounding area and views for ramblers.

Scale

The size of each individual unit (i.e. combined sleeping area and exercise area) is intended to comply with the minimum dimensions stipulated in the Chartered Institute of Environment Health publication entitled 'Model Licence Conditions and guidance for Cat Boarding Establishments'. This is essential so as to ensure that a licence is issued under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963. The maximum height of the building is approximately 2.1m and therefore should not be considered intrusive.

Landscaping

The proposed cattery will be screened by the perimeter hedgerows to the rear of the cattery building. The front of the building will look out onto the current landscaped gardens which will be maintained in their current design and standards therefore it is not considered necessary for any additional landscaping as part of this project.

Appearance

The proposed cattery will be built of timber that is stained with a dark brown so as to blend in with the garden. The solid roof over the sleeping area will be covered in felt, with corrugated Perspex over the runs. The cattery units will be built on a concrete base that will be screed for easy cleaning. Hanging baskets will be maintained on the outside of the cattery to enhance the exterior of the building. Lighting will be provided in the security corridor and inside the sleeping areas. This lighting will be turned off after dark so as not to add any light pollution.

Access

The normal flow of traffic to and from a cattery would not involve any light or heavy goods vehicles. Any supplies will normally be collected from local wholesaler or delivered in quantities that would only use a standard van. All cats that are boarded would be transported to and from the cattery by car.

Most existing catteries plan their business based on an average 75% occupancy during each year and with many of the potential customers owning more than one cat the traffic flow is not expected to impact on the surrounding area/properties.

So that the proprietor can cope with the receiving and booking out of cats the cattery will operate on an appointment system so it is rare that more than one customer would be visiting the cattery at the same time. The cattery will have restricted opening hours during which customers can deliver or collect their cats. The cattery will not be open before 8.30am or later than 6pm during week days with weekends being more restricted.

With the above in mind, a cattery of 22 units would expect to generate a flow of traffic equivalent to 2-3 cars per day which would be spread through-out the opening hours. In the future, should it be deemed necessary and cost effective a collection and delivery service would be considered.

As most catteries are located in rural areas it is not unusual that Upper Park is situated a short distance along a single track road. The road is extremely quiet with on average 5 cars going past the property a day. The road on which the property is situated runs in a loop from the A44 Old Hereford Road. There are approximately 6 other properties along the road situated mainly at either end of the road. As the road travels in a loop it is rare that anyone other than residents use the road as there is no need for them to. The site is one of the first properties after turning off the A466 so very few properties will be passed on route to the site. We would advise and direct all customers to come to the site using the shorter distance from the main A466.

The property has wide entrance gates with an equally wide driveway that can easily accommodate additional cars. Normally our cars are kept in the garage leaving the whole drive way free for customers. There is an area directly in front of the garage that is currently laid lawn. This area will remain laid with grass, on top of which a ground stabilising matting would be laid so that cattery customers have the ability and room to turn around and leave the property forward so removing the need to reverse from the site. Please see block plan for location.

Date: 6th September 2011

Produced by: Mrs Fiona Wilkins