



Design Statement

1.0 Introduction:

This Design Statement has been prepared in support of the full application for the following works at the Frances Hay Centre, Blacklocks Hill, Banbury OX17 2BS.

- To bring the existing residential bungalow on the site into the same use classification as the main site (sui-generis). Internal alterations are also proposed to this building but no extensions.
- To create a small new single storey extension to form a new main entrance on the existing Reception and Administration building.
- To demolish an existing single storey Kennel and Storage Building in the south eastern corner of the site and create a new Puppy Training Facility.
- To alter and refurbish the existing Kennel Block (Dog Welfare) to create an improved dog welfare facility and new flexible office space.
- To remove an existing timber kennel block and Portakabin and make good external landscape finishes.

2.0 The Existing Site:

2.01 The site lies within the district of West Northamptonshire Council but immediately adjacent to the boundary with Cherwell District Council.

2.02 Dogs For Good is a national charity who have had a presence on this site since 2000. The site has seen development at various times during the last 23 years with the most significant changes taking place in 2005 with the construction of a new headquarters office building and kennel block.

2.03 There is a significant level change across the site with the northern boundary (adjacent to the A442) being approximately 4.5m higher than the southern section of the site next to the reception and administration building.

2.04 The existing buildings are all single storey with shallow pitched roofs. The existing bungalow building in the north eastern corner of the site is probably the oldest building and appears to have been constructed in the 1930's.

The main body of the buildings on the site were constructed around 2005/6 and are grouped together on the eastern half of the site. The western half of the site is largely occupied by areas of car parking and soft landscaping.

2.05 There are 3 defined areas of car parking on the site, these are:

- A main car park for staff and visitors which is located immediately opposite the vehicular entrance to the site and close to the reception and administration building. This car park has a tarmac surface and is the area where most visitors to the site will park.

- There is a staff parking area adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. this parking area has a more informal surface than the main car park but provided a convenient location to park for staff who more frequently use the buildings on the northern part of the site.
- There is an additional overflow car park on the western side of the site which has a gravel finish. This car park is generally used by staff and some visitors. This car park is slightly more remote from the main group of buildings on the site than the other parking areas.

In total there are approximately 80 designated parking spaces across the whole of the site.

2.06 Photographs of the existing site and buildings on the site are provided as an appendix to this document.

3.0 The Proposals:

3.01 In 2022 Robothams Architects were appointed by Dogs for Good to assist with a review of the buildings which make up the Francis Hay Centre to see how these could be adapted to enable them to be used more efficiently and effectively. Most of the buildings on the site have been in existence for at least 20 years and the way in which they are used is no longer the same as it was.

This document seeks to provide a description of the proposals however a separate document has also been prepared by Dogs for Good which provides some context to the development and explains how this will benefit the organisation.

3.02 There are 4 key parts to the proposals which form part of this application. A detailed description of each part is provided in the summary below:

3.03 Change of use to the existing bungalow:

It is considered by Dogs for Good that there is no longer a need to have residential accommodation on the site and that the accommodation provided in the bungalow would be better used as a 'home from home' training facility. It is therefore proposed that this building is brought into the same sui-generis use classification as the rest of the site and will be refurbished in order to create this new facility.

This new facility will be used to train and monitor dogs in a setting which replicates the home environment. It will contain a small apartment used for training (not for residential purposes) along with some small office and meeting areas.

There are no extensions proposed to this building and only minor external alterations. These proposals are shown on drawing 4451-27.

3.04 Demolition of existing kennel block and storage building and construction of new Puppy Training Centre.

The largest element of the scheme involves the demolition of the existing kennel block and storage building in the south eastern corner of the site. This building is a single storey building formed from painted blockwork with a corrugated cement sheet

roof. This building is no longer fit-for purpose and has only been used as a storage space in recent years.

It is proposed that this existing building will be replaced by a new single storey building specifically for young dogs.

The existing buildings, to be demolished in this part of the site including covered kennel areas amount in total to 189 sq.m.

The total proposed floor area of the new Puppy Training Centre is 148 sq.m. which amounts to a net reduction in floor area in this part of the site of 41 sq.m.

The new Puppy Training Centre has a simple rectangular footprint, and its simple mono-pitch roof form is designed to reflect the form of the existing buildings and the topography of the site.

The building is orientated so that the external exercise areas for the dogs are on the northern side of the building meaning that the dogs will benefit from the natural shadow which is cast from the building in the summer months. There is also a small covered area which will also offer protection from the sun in summer months and to some extent from the wind and the rain in the winter months. This same simple flat roofed canopy is also extended over the main entrance to provide protection to visitors of the building.

The mono-pitch roof is angled to face south so that it can be covered with a large array of PV panels. Drawing 4451-31 shows a section through the site and the relationship between the proposed building and the adjacent existing buildings. The drawing also shows the profile of the existing building to be demolished and how similar this is in size and scale to that of the proposed.

The building will contain a number of simple spaces including a reception, a small handover/meeting room, an office space and 4 holding pens for dogs.

The building will have the same finished floor level as the adjacent buildings which are all served by a ramped approach. The new puppy block will also be served by the same ramped approach however a stepped connection to the 'Plaza' area will also be provided as a more direct alternative.

Most of the existing buildings across the site are finished with white render and sections of timber cladding and it is proposed that the new building will be finished in a similar palette of materials. This building will however, be finished almost entirely with timber cladding with small sections of render which will give the building a unique appearance and soften the building when viewed from beyond the site boundaries.

Details of the elevational treatment and the materials which are proposed are shown on drawing 4451-28.

3.05 To create a small single storey extension to form a new main entrance on the existing Reception and Administration building.

Upon arriving at the site all visitors are required to report to reception to register their arrival. Currently the main reception area is located on the eastern end of the Reception and Administration building and the 'front door' is located in a recessed section of the building with a small pitched roof canopy over the top.

The proposed scheme seeks to improve the visual prominence of the main entrance by constructing a small pitched roof glazed lobby on the front of the building. The aim of the scheme is to ensure that all visitors understand where the main reception is located and that all visitors report to reception before moving on to other parts of the site.

One minor but important change to the external layout is to separate the main car park from the area noted as 'Plaza' with a new hedgerow. This simple change means that visitors to the site cannot easily walk straight to one of the many building entrances without passing through the main reception space.

In combination, the two changes described above aim to ensure that visitors to the site have a clear understanding as to where they need to go and Dogs for Good will be able to manage and control the way visitors use the site in a much more effective way.

Internally, minor alterations are proposed to the layout to make the building more suitable and very minor alterations are also proposed to the external façade. All of these changes are shown on the proposed drawings 4451-25.

In total the new entrance lobby to the reception building will create a floor area of 10 sq.m.

3.06 Alterations and refurbishment to existing Kennel Block (Dog Welfare) to create improved Dog Welfare facility and new flexible office Space.

Dogs for Good have identified that there is no longer a demand for large numbers of Kennels and as a result there is a large amount of space within the existing Dog Welfare block which is considered to be redundant.

The proposals as shown on drawing 4451-26 show how this space is to be re-purposed to create an improved Dog Welfare facility with fewer Kennels and a new flexible office space.

The layout shows the new office space on the western half of the building with views out over the rest of the site and the dog welfare area in the eastern half of the building with access to the secure exercise enclosures at the rear.

It is considered that removing the galvanised steel fencing to the front of the building and installing new doors and windows in existing openings will enhance the appearance of these buildings without affecting the character or significantly changing their overall appearance.

Drawing 4451-31 shows how the external changes to this building will look alongside the new single storey Puppy Training Centre.

There will be no additional floor area generated as part of the alterations to the Dog Welfare building.

3.07 To remove the existing single storey timber kennel block and Portakabin.

As previously noted there is no longer a demand for large amounts of kennels on the site and therefore it is proposed that the single storey timber kennel block on the northern half of the site will be removed and the external finishes made good.

The floor area of the existing Kennel block to be removed is 95 sq.m

Behind the existing Reception and Administration building is an existing Portakabin which is to be removed. Making more efficient use of the space available within the existing buildings will mean that this building is no longer required. Removing the building will also mean that views from the rear of the main reception area are improved and the overall appearance of the 'Plaza' which is to become more of a focal point within the site will also be improved.

The floor area of the existing Portakabin is 31 sq.m.

- 3.08 The total amount of floor area to be demolished across the whole site is: 315 sq.m.
The total amount of new floor area proposed is: 158 sq.m.

There will be a nett reduction in floor area of 157 sq.m across the whole site.

4.0 Car Parking.

- 4.01 The changes which are proposed on the site have no effect on the operations on the site have no impact on the number of people which are employed on the site or the number of people who have access to the site.

Currently there are approximately 80 car parking spaces provided in various areas around the site and there are approximately 43 full time members of staff and 15 part time members of staff. This would mean that there are a minimum of 22 available spaces for visitors at any one time.

5.0 Ecology.

- 5.01 A ecological survey has been undertaken by Ridgeway Ecology and a copy of their report forms part of this application.

6.0 Arboriculture

- 6.01 There are existing trees around the perimeter of the site but no trees on the site should be affected by the works. For this reason an arboricultural survey is not considered necessary.

7.0 Drainage

- 7.01 The proposals will reduce the amount of floor area which is provided on the site and also the amount of hardstanding. It is therefore considered that there will be no significant increase in the amount of foul or surface water generated by the proposals.

It is proposed that any new buildings/extensions will connect into the existing foul and surface water drainage systems which already exist on site.