

Retrospective Permission for a Dog Exercise/Training Area
Caia Farm, Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, Wrexham, LL12 8UA.

Explanatory Note on Details Required by Conditions 2, 6, 7, and 9
and variation for the implementation of condition 10 of Appeal
Permission APP/H6955/A/20/3258360 [dated 29th January 2021]



Report by: Peter Jones-Hughes
MIHBC; BSc Hons Town Planning; PG Dip Blg Cons [RICS]
19th April 2021

1. Introduction:

1.1 The permanent use of the field at Caia Farm, [known as Ryecroft Meadow] Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, was allowed on appeal by decision letter dated 29th January 2021. Eleven conditions were imposed on the consent and five of these conditions require the submission of details to be agreed and implementation with Wrexham County Borough Council within a period of the date of the appeal decision. These conditions are:

- Condition 2 – [Within one month of the date of decision] – *Submission of details of seven aspects of a management scheme for the dog walking and exercise/training area.*
- Condition 6 – [Within 12 months of the date of decision] – *Provision of visibility splays at the entrance to the site from the Old Wrexham Road.*
- Condition 7 – [Within 12 months of the date of decision] – *Surfacing of the first five metres of the access drive behind the highway with a hard bound material.*
- Condition 9 – [Within one month of the date of decision] – *Submission of full details of a tree and hedge planting scheme and an acoustic boundary treatment.*
- Condition 10 – [Within one month of the date of decision] – *Implementation of tree, hedge planting and acoustic boundary treatment.*

1.2 This application is for the discharge of conditions 2 and 9 of appeal decision APP/H6955/A/20/3258360. [Wrexham planning reference number: P/2020/0218]

1.3 This application also clarifies the time scales now proposed for the required elements indicated in above conditions 6, 7, and 10 relating to the setting out and implementation of visibility splays onto the Old Wrexham Road; hard surfacing the first 5.0 metres of the entrance drive and the implementation of the new planting and construction of the acoustic fence respectively.

1.4 The owner of the dog walking/exercising operation, Miss Rhian Williams received the appeal decision on the 31st January during pandemic lockdown restrictions. Rhian has struggled to prepare the information to comply with the requirements for submission of details within the tight specified deadlines. It has been agreed with the LPA that an extension of time is given for the submission of these details.

1.5 The periods specified in conditions 6 and 7 are achievable but compliance with condition 10 for implementation of tree and hedge planting works will be restricted by the current February to August bird nesting season. It is anticipated that the work to the existing Old Wrexham Road hedgerow and tree will need to be delayed as a result, until September of this year. The erection of the acoustic fence should go ahead within four weeks of the date of LPA approval of the fence details.

2. Condition 2: [Management Scheme for the dog walking operation – Details and implementation]



Existing Information Sign Board for dog owners.

2.1 The operator has already erected an information board at the entrance to the field containing important advice and guidance for users.

2.2 The purpose of the Management Scheme is to outline how the facility will be managed in line with planning conditions for the Appeal decision APP/H6955/A/20/3258360. Condition 2 of the appeal consent requires details of the following site management elements:

- a) The booking system with a strict appointment only system and appropriate buffers between users.
- b) Maintenance of an appointment diary, available on request to the LPA.
- c) Site rules.
- d) Pre- and post-appointment rules for dogs.
- e) Rules for refusing dogs with a record of poor behaviour.
- f) Incident reporting procedures.
- g) Details of biosecurity measures.

2.3 The following details are presented to meet the above requirements:

a) Booking system

The booking system is run through Acuity Scheduling, Inc. (see <https://acuityscheduling.com/>). There are 10-minute gaps between each and every appointment type to avoid crossover of people/dogs. (See appendix A). The field cannot be booked without a prior appointment as per our rules.

b) Maintenance of an appointment diary, that shall be made available for viewing by the local planning authority on request

Should the LPA wish to request a viewing of the diary, they should email: contact@ryecroftmeadow.com during hours of operation. An appointments diary will be provided that will show the names/addresses/contact information of users and the time slot/date and number of dogs attending the site in any time slot.

Appendix A shows details of the electronic appointment system that allows appropriate buffers to be maintained between different bookings for customers requiring different periods for dog exercise.

c) Site rules and how these will be communicated to site users

The site rules can be viewed on the operator's website. They are also within the company's terms and conditions that can also be accessed on the website. The rules are also included on the booking form that each and every user has to agree to upon booking. The most important rules are also reiterated within the field on the noticeboard located next to the site entrance. The company's terms and Conditions and the Rules for Site Use are included in **Appendix B and Appendix C** respectively.

d) Dogs must stay in the car until their appointment slot and/or the previous users have put dogs into their vehicles

Along with there being specific rules on our website and in our terms and conditions, there is a sign up to remind users at the parking area that dogs must stay in their vehicles until the previous users have put their dog(s) back into their vehicles.

e) Right to refuse any dog or owner who displays excessive noise, aggressive, destructive or unreasonable behaviour

Within the Terms and Conditions it is stated that -

"Although Ryecroft Meadow is intended to be a relaxing, fun and safe facility for all dogs, including those with behavioural issues, we ask that dogs who exhibit excessive, persistent patterns of barking behaviour will be restricted from using the facility for both private hire and events. Dogs who display aggressive, destructive or unreasonable behaviour will also be restricted from using our facility."

f) Reporting procedure of any site issues/incidents

As per the terms and conditions -

"Users must report any accident, incident or injury to us immediately by contacting us. There will be local emergency vet numbers in the field should you require them."

An incident report must be completed by means of filling in a form and where possible photographs will be taken of the incident. The form will require details of owners' names /addresses and the time and details of the incident where applicable. CCTV footage will also be downloaded if cameras are in use in the area. In addition, the operator will continue to routinely carry out risk assessments.

g) Biosecurity measures

Within the terms and conditions it is have stated –

“Do not bring to the facility any dog that appears unwell, dogs who have a cough, sickness or diarrhoea, have been in contact with an infected animal, have any undiagnosed medical conditions or are known to have an infectious disease. Please leave at least 48 hours before bringing your dog after they have been unwell. This ensures other dogs are not put at risk.”

Rules have already been instituted regarding COVID-19. These state -

“Follow current WELSH government guidelines regarding who you are allowed to visit with. If you have any symptoms indicative of or suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19 please reschedule your session. We recommend bringing gloves/ hand sanitiser/ wipes to use for gate handles and water tap or use a dog poop bag. You may also wish to bring your own dog water bowl and dog toys.”

Also, dog poop bags are provided inside the field. There are disinfectant and hand sanitiser products provided at the gateway.

3. Conditions 6, 8 & 9: [Hedgerow location and planting scheme to create visibility Splays at entrance – Details and implementation avoiding adverse impacts on nesting birds]

3.1 The requirement for a 2.4 metre by 43.0 metre visibility splay to the west of the site entrance drive can be provided without the need to remove existing hedges and trees. [see plan reference: PJH/24/2021/GRES/03] There is a small corner of the hedgerow measuring approximately 1.00-2.00 metres in length immediately to the west of the entrance/exit that will require minor cutting back and this will be maintained in the future by cutting at least three times during the growing season.



Left: View looking eastwards from the entrance, ash tree in the foreground. Right: Looking to the west on Old Wrexham Road at the existing grass bank and hedgerow with the mature ivy-covered sycamore in the background.



Left and right: Close up views of the grass bank and hedgerow to the east of the entrance showing the existing post and rail fence and gaps in the hedge.

3.2 The splay to the east of the entrance/exit is currently partially infringed by a semi-mature ash tree and a hedgerow and bank. A length of approximately 28.0 metres of existing bank and 12.0 metres of hedge come within the splay area. [see plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/02] There has been an agreement that the mature sycamore tree positioned about 15.0 metres to the east of the entrance will remain. The proposals are to set back the bank and hedge behind the visibility splay and to level and surface the ground within the splay to ensure clear and unobstructed vision.

3.3 The proposal is to remove the ash tree and carefully move the existing bank and hedge southwards into a new position that is clear of the south side of the required splay. The existing hedge is bounded by a post and rail fence and is made up primarily of hawthorn. The existing hedge is patchy in places and will need replanting when the proposed scheme is implemented.

3.4 The proposed planting scheme for the re-positioned length of field boundary to the east of the entrance will be carried out in compliance with condition 8 and within 12 months of the date of the appeal decision as specified by condition 6.

3.5 The proposed hedge and tree planting scheme is as follows:

The existing ash tree positioned to the east of the site entrance will be removed to include its roots and this will be replaced by a standard 12–14 centimetres diameter lime [Tilla Cordata] in the position shown on plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/03.

The existing bank and hedge to the east of the entrance as shown on plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/03 will be moved back to the rear [south] and clear of the visibility splay shown on the above-mentioned plan. The bank immediately adjoining the mature sycamore tree shown on plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/03 shall be retained and its root protection area shall be protected during this operation. Only digging with hand tools will be allowed during this * operation. The bank, hedge and splay area shall be implemented in accordance with the typical cross section drawing shown in plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/05.*

Lengths of hedge that are poorly vegetated or have gaps shall, within the next planting season, be planted in well mulched soil after mid-November in two staggered rows 250mm apart of hawthorn, [40%] Blackthorn, [20%] dog rose, [20%] and honeysuckle. [20%] at 300mm centres. [60-90cms high stock] A post and wire fence of 1.20 metres in height shall be erected on the south side of the new hedgeline to safeguard the planting from damage.

The owner agrees to comply with the provisions of condition number 11 of the appeal decision to maintain the hedge in healthy condition.

4. **Condition 7:** [Hard surfacing of site entrance drive for a length of five metres from the highway carriageway - Implementation]

4.1 Within the specified 12 month implementation period the owner proposes to surface the first 5.0 metres of the entrance drive off the Old Wrexham Road as shown in plan reference number: PJH/24/2021/GRES/03. The proposed surface material within this area will comprise a compacted hardcore subbase with a surface of heavy-duty concrete to prevent material being deposited on the highway and to cater for heavy farm vehicle traffic.

5. **Condition 9:** [Acoustic boundary treatment – Details and implementation]

5.1 Plan reference numbers: PJH/24/2021/GRES/04 and PJH/24/2021/GRES/05 show the proposed position, height, design and materials of the acoustic boundary treatment.

5.2 The photographs below [page 8] show the boundary along which the acoustic fence will be erected. The LPA case officer has requested that the fence is coloured dark brown on the side facing the exercise field. The proposed details have been examined by a noise consultant who confirms the fence will provide the sound attenuation specified in paragraph 9 of the appeal decision letter. [see **Appendix D**]

5.3 The proposed fence will be constructed of tanalised green/brown natural timber. An illustrative example of its appearance is included in **Appendix E**. It is considered that this type and treatment of timber will weather over a period of time and will prove to be an attractive feature that will blend into the locality. The appeal inspector address the appearance in paragraph 15 of the appeal decision letter and concluded –

“....due to the private nature of the site and its alignment preventing views from the public highway, overall, its visual effect would be extremely localised and it would have little or no effect on the character and appearance of the wider area. In local views it would appear as a rear garden fence.”

5.4 An examination of the site and its surroundings reveals that there are no publicly accessible views if the acoustic fence boundary. From the residential gardens of substantial size to the north of the boundary the fence will be screened by perimeter planting. There are no highways or public footpaths that give views of the south face of the proposed fence. The tanalised green/brown finish will allow the fence to ‘sit’ discreetly when viewed in the landscape which, due to the existence of intervening bunds and mature hedges will be confined primarily to the field itself.



Above: The entrance gate and sections of the fence boundary travelling from east to west. [left to right on each row]



Views of the south boundary that enclose the site.

6. Conditions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 11: [Use as described in the approved plans/documents, Hours of operation, maximum number of dogs, provision of vehicle parking on site and planting/boundary treatment maintenance]

6.1 The owner agrees to comply fully with these conditions.

7. Request for a Variation of Condition 10:

7.1 There appears to be a discrepancy between implementation periods for the planting/visibility splays as specified in conditions 6 and condition 10. The owner is aware that we are presently within the nesting season for birds and therefore requests that the works to the existing hedge and bank and the new planting should be completed within the 12 month period as specified in condition 6 of the appeal decision. This would allow the works to be carried out during the next available planting season. The implementation of this work within one month of the date of decision was virtually impossible to comply with during the present pandemic circumstances.

7.3 The owner is agreeable to complete the construction of the acoustic fence within four months of the date of LPA approval and discharge of the relevant condition. This is considered to be a reasonable period to procure and receive delivery of the fence materials and to arrange for a contractor to implement the scheme.

Appendix A

Online system for appointments of different booking periods showing 10 minute buffers between bookings.

10-minute padding/buffer between each appointment.

[< Back](#) **Ryecroft Meadow - The Meadow 50 minutes**

NAME ⓘ

[Show a message after scheduling...](#)

DESCRIPTION ⓘ

DURATION ⓘ
 minutes

ALSO BLOCK OFF ⓘ
 minutes before and minutes after the appointment

[< Back](#) **Ryecroft Meadow - The Meadow 30 minutes**

NAME ⓘ

[Show a message after scheduling...](#)

DESCRIPTION ⓘ

DURATION ⓘ
 minutes

ALSO BLOCK OFF ⓘ
 minutes before and minutes after the appointment

Appendix B

Terms and Conditions of the Operation



We want you to enjoy your time at Ryecroft Meadow, however, we must put some rules in place to ensure your time here runs smoothly. By using our facilities and services you accept the following terms and conditions.

Terms and Conditions (Updated January 2021)

GROUND RULES & INFORMATION

1. Use of our facility is by appointment only. If you turn up unannounced you will be turned away.
2. Your dog must be on lead ANYWHERE outside of the field. We are based on a working farmyard with heavy goods vehicles moving around. There are also horses, hens and other dogs present on the farmyard.
2. Please leave promptly at the end of your session; any user who overstays will be restricted from using our facility in the future. Please do not arrive more than 10 minutes early to your appointment and you and your dogs must remain in vehicles until your appointment starts. If the field is clearly in use during your booked time, do not enter and contact us.
3. Failure to pick up dog waste, rubbish or toys will lead to the refusal of future use. The bin is for dog waste only, please take all other rubbish home. If you find dog waste or toys left by a previous user, please help us out by picking it up.
4. We do not require dogs to be vaccinated, however, we do ask that they are regularly treated for flea, tick and worm prevention. Please do not bring your dog to the field if they are presenting any signs of being unwell.
5. Never leave dogs tethered or unattended in the field, likewise, dogs must not be left in vehicles whilst you walk another dog.
6. The gate must be left shut once you leave the field, even if another user arrives.
7. Please give other people and dogs plenty of space. Any rude or disrespectful behaviour will lead to refusal of future use.
8. We ask that you carry a mobile phone at all times (using the same number you put on booking forms).

Appendix C

List of Rules for Users of the Operation

General Field Rules

We want you to enjoy your time at Ryecroft Meadow, however, we must put some rules

in place to ensure your time here runs smoothly!

● **Users must book prior to using the field at any time.**

- Please ensure the field is suitable for your dogs.
- No dogs should be left in cars while owners walk others.
- Field equipment is for dogs ONLY. Humans should use the benches provided.
- All dog waste must be collected and taken home or put in the bin provided.
- Rubbish must be taken home, it could cause serious harm to dogs or wildlife.
- Dogs must be on a lead before entering the field until the gate is safely closed, likewise, leads must be attached before leaving the field and until your dog is safely in your vehicle.

● The gate must be left shut once you leave the field, even if another user arrives.

● Please respect other dog owners and wait in your vehicle until their dogs are back in

their vehicle. Please do not assume other dogs will be ok with your dog(s).

● Please respect other dog owners, we do not tolerate disrespectful or argumentative behaviour.

● The field is located on a working farmyard so please do not assume the workers here

can help you. If you have any issues please ring **07590928894** or email contact@ryecroftmeadow.com

● Please do not walk anywhere that is not signposted for Ryecroft Meadow. Failure to

comply with this will lead to an immediate ban unless there is an emergency.

A list of local emergency vets will be on-site, just in case of an emergency.

Please carry your mobile phone whilst walking in the field.

Appendix D

Conclusions of the Noise Attenuation Consultant



19 April 2021

RE: Caia Farm, Ryecroft Meadow, Wrexham, LL12 8UA

Peter / Rhian,

As recently discussed and concerning the proposed fencing, this standard of fencing would be sufficient in reducing the sound levels by the required amount.

The proposed fence is 2.1 Meters high, and close boarded with no Gaps and should give a minimum reduction of 10dB just due to the loss of line of sight of the dwellings.

Kind Regards
John Ashe
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Appendix E

Illustration of the type of Proposed Fence

