South Tyneside Council

Reference:	260534
Location:	6 St Hilda Industrial Estate,South Shields,NE33 1RA
Ward:	Beacon and Bents
Description:	Change of use from Industrial (B2) to Pet Crematorium (Sui Generis). Flue to rear.
Recommendation:	Grant Permission with Conditions
Case Officer:	Adam Williamson
Case Officer Contact No.:	0191 4247434 or 07741120747

Description of the Site

The application site comprises an industrial unit located on St Hildas Industrial Estate, South Shields. The site is accessed via Henry Robson Way which connects to Station Road. The units have allocated parking bays to the front.

The nearest residential properties are located approximately 130 metres to the west (Aldwych House) and the properties on Mill Dam / Riverside Court approximately 170 metres to the west with highways and commercial building's intervening.

The site is not located within any landscape or ecological designations and there are no public rights of way within or in the vicinity of the site.

To the south of the site is the Grade II listed St Hildas Pit Head.

The site is entirely in Flood Risk Zone 1 as defined by the Environment Agency and lies within a Coalfield Development High Risk area

Description of the Proposal

This application is for the change of use of 6 St. Hildas Industrial Estate from B2 to sui generis pet crematorium and for the installation of an external chimney for the cremator.

The cremator itself and any other internal modifications that would be required for the unit would not require planning permission and are not part of this application.

The proposal would be used solely for the incineration of domestic pets. Clients will have the option of bringing their pets directly to the facility, while collection services will also be available from homes and veterinary practices. Use of the Farewell Room will be strictly by appointment.

Animals brought to the unit would be incinerated within 24 hours to avoid decomposition of the animal, or associated odour. Carcasses may also be refrigerated, if required prior to incineration (taking place within 24 hours). Once cremated the remains would be ground to ash, placed in an individual urn and the ashes returned to the owner. The proposal would only deal with domestic animals.

The proposed cremator would be capable of a maximum throughput of 7 animals per day with a nominal burn rate of <45kg per hour. The cremator would have a noise rating of 57dB.

The proposed flue would measure a total of 4.6m from ground level, and where externally it would extend a maximum of 1 metre above the roof and with a diameter of 0.5 metres.

Relevant Planning History

None relevant.

Summary of Consultation Responses

The following responses were received.

Historic Environment Officer: The existing industrial units do not contribute to the significance of the nearby Grade II Listed heritage asset or the ability to appreciate that significance and the addition of a chimney flue to the roofline is unlikely to detract or enhance the significance of the asset.

Transport Development Officer: No objection

Contaminated Land officer: No objection

Public Protection (noise): The submitted manufacturer noise data is sufficient to demonstrate the likely magnitude of noise emissions from the cremator. Having regard to the character of the surrounding area and the absence of nearby residential receptors, I do not consider that a detailed noise assessment is necessary in this instance and raises no objection on noise grounds with regards to the crematory equipment.

I do note that there are no further noise output details received in terms of external equipment, such as refrigeration, although the planning statement does advise that refrigeration equipment is proposed. I will assume that this equipment will not be significant enough to cause disturbance to surrounding uses, if this is likely to be incorrect however, please can the applicant provide further details on this.

Environmental Health (odour): Information has however been provided on the equipment that will be used and the methods of mitigation odour from that equipment.

The document includes measures for the prompt cremation of animals, refrigerated storage where necessary, cleaning and disinfection procedures, equipment maintenance and complaint handling procedures. Having regard to the scale of the operation, the low-capacity nature of the cremator and the predominantly industrial/commercial character of the surrounding area, I consider that the submitted information to be sufficient to demonstrate that odour can be adequately managed. No objection is therefore raised on odour grounds.

Environmental Health (air quality): The unit is fuelled by kerosene and incorporates a secondary combustion chamber operating at approximately 850°C in accordance with DEFRA/APHA requirements for animal remains incineration. This ensures the effective

oxidation of combustion gases, volatile organic compounds and odorous compounds before discharge to atmosphere.

The emissions testing undertaken on the same model demonstrated emissions of particulate matter, carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, volatile organic compounds, hydrogen chloride and sulphur dioxide at the concentrations detailed within the submitted report.

The discharge stack extends to approximately 4.6 m above ground level and is fully insulated. The site is located within an established mixed commercial/industrial estate.

The nearest sensitive receptors are located some distance away from the installation and, given the relatively small throughput of the cremator (20 kg/hr), the combustion controls incorporated within the design, the secondary chamber operating temperature and the elevated discharge point, significant impacts on local air quality are not anticipated.

The installation is designed and approved for the cremation of animal remains and includes automatic process controls, safety interlocks, emergency shut-off functions and emergency stop facilities to ensure safe operation.

I therefore consider that the proposed installation would not give rise to significant adverse effects on local air quality, amenity or human health.

Business Investment Team: No objection.

Summary of Representations

One letter of support has been received.

The comments received state that the business will be an asset to have this facility in South Shields.

Relevant planning policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory development plan comprises the Council's adopted South Tyneside Local Plan 2023-2040. Relevant policies are listed below:

Policy SP1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
Policy 1: Promoting Healthy Communities
Policy 2: Air Quality
Policy 3: Pollution
Policy SP19: Strategic Economic Development
Policy 22: Protecting Employment Uses
Policy SP26: New Development
Policy 43: Development Affecting Designated Heritage Assets
Policy 47: Design Principles
Policy 56: Waste Facilities

National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW)

National Planning Policy for Waste sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. Waste Planning

Authorities should only expect a demonstration of need where proposals are not consistent with an up to date Local Plan and should not consider matters that are within the control of pollution control authorities. Waste proposals should not undermine the objectives of the Local Plan and should be environmentally sensitive and well designed.

Of further relevance is the Waste Management Plan for England, which also advocates the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy in line with the requirements of the European Waste Framework Directive (WFD). One such requirement is the 'proximity principle' (Article 16) which stipulates self-sufficiency; an 'integrated and adequate network of waste disposal installations' and that waste management should be at the nearest appropriate installations.

Assessment

The key issues in the assessment of this planning application are as follows:

Principle of Development

Policy 56 of the Local Plan supports the development of new waste management facilities in South Tyneside where applicants can demonstrate a clear need for the facility, including evidence that appropriate waste management capacity elsewhere in the North East has been utilised. Proposals for waste disposal facilities must show that the identified need cannot be met through treatment methods higher up the waste hierarchy, with an emphasis on waste prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery before disposal.

Part 6 of Policy SP19 of the Local Plan seeks to attract new businesses and encouraging existing businesses to grow through:

> i. Supporting the provision of appropriate accommodation for new and growing business service companies and digital and tech companies
> ii. Seeking to ensure businesses and entrepreneurs are given the best possible chance to access funding opportunities for businesses to start-up and to scale-up

Whilst it is accepted that the proposed development does not fall within the B1, B2 or B8 use classes it would not be materially distinct from similarly sized industrial developments and would still provide employment. The development would not have any sensitivities or peripheral impacts that would compromise the main St Hildas Industrial Estate for B class uses.

National and local planning policies are generally supportive towards sustainable waste management initiatives and seek to promote the movement of materials up the waste hierarchy. The NPPW sets out in the waste hierarchy that prevention of waste and re-use of materials should be considered before recycling, recovery and final disposal of waste. Paragraph 7 of the NPPW says that applicants should only be expected to demonstrate the quantitative or market need for new waste management facilities where proposals are not consistent with an up-to-date Local Plan.

The proposed development would provide a facility for the incineration of animal carcasses that sit outside of the food chain, or that are managed by rendering or animal by-product facilities. More specifically, the facility would provide a cremation service for domestic or 'pet' animals. This type of facility is more appropriate for private customers who would seldom require the service and where a larger rendering or incineration facility would not be appropriate. Due to the small-scale nature of the proposed facility energy recovery from the process would not be efficient or useful. Limited alternative pet crematorium facilities are located within South Tyneside. The proposal would therefore continue servicing an existing

local need for this type of facility. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not conflict with the requirements Local Plan policies 56 or SP17.

Highway Safety

Policy TR6 (4) of the NPPF states that Development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.

Local Plan Policy SP26 states that the transport implications of development must be addressed as part of any planning application to ensure the highways network continues to operate efficiently.

The site is accessed from Station Road via Henry Robson Way, which connects the site to the A194 to the south. Traffic movements to and from the site would typically be limited to the operator's vehicle used for collecting animal carcasses from the catchment area with some customers choosing to bring their pets to the site themselves. The application site has 4 no. allocated parking bays directly to the front of the building and all neighbouring units have their own allocated parking.

The Highway Authority (Transport Development Officer) has assessed the proposals and raised no objections noting that development does not raise any highway safety concerns. As such it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to any highway safety concerns in accordance with Local Plan Policy SP26 and the NPPF in this regard

Amenity

Part 17 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.

Paragraph 7 of the NPPW states that when determining waste planning applications, waste planning authorities should consider the likely impact on the local environment and on amenity against the criteria set out in Appendix B (of the NPPW) and the locational implications of any advice on health from the relevant health bodies.

Policy 1(2) of the Local Plan seeks to Ensure that pollutants, including noise and air pollution, and hazards detrimental to public health and residential amenity are addressed prior to development.

Policy 2 of the Local Plan seeks to improve air quality in the Borough.

The nearest residential properties to the proposed development are located approximately 130 metres west from the application site.

The development would be contained within the existing Unit 6 St. Hildas Industrial Estate with the only external change being the addition of the chimney stack for the incinerator. The proposed working hours for the facility would be 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 8am - 12pm on Saturdays.

The key issues in respect of residential and neighbouring amenity relate to the noise, air quality, odour and health.

Noise

The cremator specification sets out that, while in operation, the proposed cremator has a noise level of only 57dB. This noise level would be further attenuated by the structure of the existing industrial unit that it would be located within. The applicant has specified the proposed workings hours which are considered to be acceptable, however given the nature of the site and distances to the nearest residential properties, so restrictive working hour conditions is considered to be reasonably or necessary.

The Environmental Health (Noise) officer has raised no concerns in respect of noise. It is therefore considered that the development would not create noise pollution detrimental to amenity in accordance with Policy 1 of the Local Plan, Part 17 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW in this respect.

Air Quality and Odour

The proposed development would operate by incinerating animal carcasses at high temperature within a sealed cremator. The cremator would have a 4.6 m tall chimney stack to exhaust waste gases, so they are not harmful to air quality. The application states that the proposed incinerator is an Addfield PET-200 unit, which complies with relevant Defra and EU standards.

The Environmental Health (Air Quality) officer has confirmed that the information that it is not anticipated that emissions from the flue would impact on the amenity of the surrounding area and confirmed that no further mitigation measures to control smoke emissions or odour from the flue are required.

With regard to statutory nuisance from Odour, the Environmental Health team is satisfied, based on the information submitted with the application, that the development is unlikely to cause a statutory nuisance.

An Environmental Permit from the Council would typically be required when an incinerator is installed with a treatment capacity of over 50kg/hour and less than 1 tonne/hour. It is considered that the development would not produce emissions or detrimentally impact on air quality in accordance with Local Plan Policies 1, 2, and 3, Part 17 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW in this respect.

Health

The Council's Environmental Health Team have assessed the application and raised no concerns in respect of emissions. Public Health concurs that the proposed incineration process is the safest disposal method for animal remains.

The assessment of the application has shown that there are no impacts to human health, and it is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with Local Plan Policy 1, Part 17 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW in respect of health.

Design and Heritage

In assessing the proposed development regard must be had to the statutory duty imposed on the Local Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the

character and appearance of a conservation area. In addition, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also imposes a statutory duty that, when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, the decision maker shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. If harm is found this gives rise to a strong (but rebuttable) statutory presumption against the grant of planning permission. Any such harm must be given considerable importance and weight by the decision-maker.

Local Plan Policy 43 seeks to protect and enhance designated heritage assets in the Borough.

Local Plan Policy 47(iv) seeks to ensure that developments should contribute positively to the built and historic environment and seek opportunities to enhance and, where appropriate, better reveal the significance and understanding of heritage assets.

The nearest heritage assets within the vicinity of the site are the Grade II St. Hildas Pit head approximately 50 metres south east of the application site.

The site is not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area.

Due to the very limited changes to the external appearance of the building, separation distance between the application site and intervening screening it is considered that the proposal would have no effect, and therefore no harm, to designated heritage assets.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with Local Plan Policies 43 and 47, Part 20 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW.

The proposed chimney stack associated with the cremator unit would be cylindrical and extend to a height of approximately 4.6 m above ground level. The stack would be situated toward the ridgeline of the unit and therefore only approximately 1 metre of the stack would be exposed to external views. Whilst the existing units do not currently host any chimney sacks, it is noted that many buildings/units within the immediate and wider industrial park have flues and chimney stacks already installed. There would be no other external change to the existing building.

It is therefore considered that the proposed chimney stack would not be an incongruous feature in the locality and would not be harmful to the appearance of the industrial estate in accordance with Policies 43 and 47 of the Local Plan, Part 20 of the NPPF and Paragraph 7 of the NPPW.

Conclusion

The development would provide a pet crematorium in the Borough, which would make use of an existing unit on allocated industrial estate, which accords with the locational criteria for waste development set out in Policy 56 of the Local Plan.

The potential impacts of the development in relation to highway safety, amenity, design and heritage have been fully assessed and found to be acceptable, subject to conditions where appropriate. The development would be fully contained within an industrial building on a site allocated for employment use. It is considered that the proposal would fully accord with all relevant national and local planning policy.

In deciding whether to grant planning permission the Council must have due regard to the 3 equality aims contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality

duty). A preliminary assessment of the potential equality impacts of any grant of planning permission in this case has been undertaken. There are no apparent equality impacts of the proposed development which give rise to the need to undertake a more detailed equality impact assessment.

The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act, and in particular Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 of the Act itself. This Act gives further effect to the rights included in the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance.

Recommendation

Grant Permission with Conditions

Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

   As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable time.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) as detailed below

   Proposed front elevation received 29/07/2026
   Proposed rear elevation received 29/07/2026
   Proposed floor plan received 29/07/2026
   Proposed site plan received 29/07/2026
   Chimney Stack and Design Drg. No. CHRISBAK-01-01 received 29/07/2026
   Odour Management Plan received 29/07/2026
   Incinerator details received 29/07/2026

   To define this permission and for purposes relating to section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Informatives

1. Approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan NOT REQUIRED before development commences

   The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

   (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
   (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

   However, based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements

are considered to apply - please refer to Biodiversity net gain: exempt developments - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

2. In certain situations, animal carcase incarnation is a prescribed process requiring an Environmental Permit from the local authority. Typically, an Environmental Permit is needed when an incinerator is installed with a treatment capacity of over 50kg/hour and less than 1 tonne/hour. The operator must obtain an Environmental Permit from the local authority prior to using an animal carcase incinerator of this capacity. If the applicant considers that the proposed incinerator will fall into this category further details of how to apply for an environmental permit are on the South Tyneside Borough Council website.

Case officer: Adam Williamson
Date: 21/09/2026

Authorised Signatory: *G. Simmonette*
Date: 21/09/2026