

Supporting Statement for Change of Use Application
Unit 6, St Hilda's Industrial Estate, South Shields
Proposed Change of Use to Pet Crematorium

This planning application relates to the proposed change of use of Unit 6, St Hilda's Industrial Estate, South Shields, to operate as a pet crematorium providing individual pet cremation services for families throughout the North East.

The proposed layout will include a welcoming reception and office area with comfortable seating for clients, together with a private Chapel of Rest/Farewell Room located to the rear of the office. The Farewell Room will be accessible only through the main office and will provide owners with a private and dignified space in which to spend time with their pet before cremation.

Both the office and Farewell Room will have internal access to the cremation area. The door connecting the Farewell Room and cremation area will be used exclusively by staff to discreetly transport and prepare pets for viewing. The door between the office and cremation area will also be for staff use only and will provide general operational access.

The main warehouse area will accommodate the cremator, cremulator, stock and cold storage facilities. The cremator is professionally installed and commissioned by the manufacturer and is subject to annual servicing and inspection. The equipment is fitted with comprehensive safety systems, including automatic safety cut-off mechanisms. The unit operates quietly, produces no significant external noise, and remains cool to the touch during operation. Furthermore, the cremation process produces no smoke, odours or other emissions that would adversely affect the surrounding environment.

The business is a small family ran business that will provide individual cremations only, ensuring that one pet is cremated at a time and guaranteeing the return of 100% of the pet's ashes to its owner. The facility will have the capacity to undertake approximately six to seven individual cremations per day, with the equipment being thoroughly cleaned between each cremation. Cremations will be carried out the same/next day, this depending on what time we receive them into our care.

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 to ensure privacy and a respectful environment for clients.

The business aims to return ashes to clients within 24 to 48 hours wherever possible. Cold storage / refrigeration facilities are required to provide temporary storage where cremations cannot be completed on the same day or in the event of emergency collections. Although a 24-hour emergency collection service will be available, normal operating hours will be:

- Monday to Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm
- Saturday: 8:00am – 12:00pm

Waste generated by the business will be minimal and will primarily consist of cardboard packaging and recyclable materials associated with memorial products such as caskets, urns and keepsakes.

As a licensed pet crematorium, the business will be regulated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and will be subject to annual inspections to ensure full compliance with all relevant government regulations and industry standards.

The proposed facility will provide an important service for pet owners across the region, offering reassurance that their beloved pets are treated with dignity and respect through individual cremation procedures. The business will also stock a range of memorial products, including caskets, urns, scatter tubes and keepsakes, sourced wherever possible from local suppliers and family-run businesses, thereby supporting the local economy.

In addition, the business intends to create employment opportunities as it grows and becomes established. The service will operate across the North East, supporting pet owners and working alongside established veterinary practices, including those offering home euthanasia services that can be arranged through the business.

The proposed use represents a low-impact operation generating minimal traffic, noise, waste and environmental effects, while providing a valuable and compassionate service to the local community and wider region.