



JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

My Vet, Myerscough House, Longsight Road, Clayton-le-Dale, Blackburn, BB2 7JA



Proposed single-storey rear extension and rearward extension to car park

Planning Statement

October 2016

Judith Douglas BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI



90 Pimlico Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 2AH
Telephone: 01200 425051
Mobile: 07729 302644
Email: enquiries@jdouglastownplanning.co.uk
Website: www.jdouglastownplanning.co.uk

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Judith Douglas Town Planning Ltd on behalf of the applicant, Myerscough Veterinary Group, in support of a planning application for a single-storey rear extension and extension to the car park at the rear of the premises.
- 1.2 Myerscough Veterinary Group (who trade as MyVet) run a group of veterinary surgeries in the local area including the application site at Clayton–Le-Dale, and also in Clitheroe, Padiham, Oswaldtistle, Haslingden, Gt Harwood, Bacup, Lostock Hall, Nelson, Freckleton, Lytham, Ashton on Ribble and St Annes. The group has a team of 19 vets.
- 1.3 The Clayton-Le-Dale MyVet surgery is well-established, serving the rural area of the Ribble Valley including its many farms. It also acts as a hub for the Group, being centrally located and next to a good road network.
- 1.4 There has been a continued growth in client numbers and facilities available at the site. In January 2016 the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons awarded the centre the status of a ‘Veterinary Hospital’. To achieve this status a staff presence is required on-site 24 hours per day, along with the installation of additional equipment and on-site specialist staff. This is the only Veterinary Hospital in the Ribble Valley authority area and provides a valuable facility for farmers and other animal owners in the area. Other recent improvements include an on-site CT scanner for pet animals (installed February 2016) and a hydrotherapy centre building, which is nearing completion.
- 1.5 MyVet continue to strive to offer the most complete high-quality service at reasonable cost, and, in addition to their commercial activities, work extensively with the animal charities to support animal owners who may need help in seeking treatment for their pets.

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The site at Clayton-Le-Dale was formerly the Little Chef Restaurant. The veterinary centre was granted planning permission for extensions in 2012 and 2014, and a new hydrotherapy building granted planning permission in early 2016. All of these developments have now been completed or, in the case of the hydrotherapy building, nearing completion. The main building is in the centre of the site with staff car parking and the hydrotherapy building to the west and visitor parking to the north (rear) of the building. The building is adjacent to the A59 and at the rear and each side of the site are open fields.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 To proposals are to cater for the increased demand for services at the site and the additional numbers of clients attending the centre. A single-storey rear extension is proposed to the rear of the two and single-storey building. It would have external measurements of 4.00 metres depth by 9.95 metres width by 3.45 metres height. The facing materials to be used would match those of the existing building and the form of the extension would reflect that of the single-storey element to which it would be attached. The extension would provide additional space for in-patients, pre-operative care and operating facilities. The proposed extension to the car park area would be tarmac surfaced, have a depth of approximately 7 metres and extend across the rear of the site, within the existing fenced site curtilage.
- 3.2 Plans and drawings submitted with the planning application show the proposal in more detail.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The relevant planning history relating to the site is as follows:
- 3/0037/2016 - erection of building for hydrotherapy treatment and retrospective consent for change of use of agricultural land to car park and curtilage. Planning permission granted 24 March 2016;
 - 3/2014/0165 - single storey extension and retrospective consent for use of land as car park. Planning permission granted 14 May 2014;
 - 3/2012/0601 - two-storey side extension and first floor extension over existing single storey area, alteration to access. Planning permission granted 13 September 2012;
 - 3/2008/0277 - change of use from restaurant to veterinary centre. Planning permission granted 23 May 2008.

5.0 RELEVANT LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

- 5.1 The relevant parts of the Development Plan for the purposes of this planning application are the adopted Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the Proposals Map.

Core Strategy

- 5.2 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 16 December 2014 following receipt of the Inspector's examination report which found the Plan to be sound, subject to a number of modifications being made.
- 5.3 The following Core Strategy policies (as modified) are relevant to consideration of the application proposal.
- 5.4 Key Statement DS2 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) – sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and reiterates the provisions of paragraph 14 of the NPPF.
- 5.5 Key Statement EN4 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) – seeks to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity. Negative impacts on biodiversity through development proposals should be avoided.
- 5.6 Key Statement EC1 (Business and Employment Development) – seeks to direct employment development to various locations including those locations well related to the A59 corridor.
- 5.7 Policy DMG1 (General Considerations) – sets out the criteria to be applied in the determination of planning applications, including those relating to design, access, amenity and environment.
- 5.8 Policy DMG2 (Strategic Considerations) – expects development within open countryside to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the qualities of the area by virtue of such as size, design, use of materials.
- 5.9 Policy DMG3 (Transport and Mobility) – expects all development proposals to provide adequate car parking and servicing space.
- 5.10 Policy DME2 (Landscape and Townscape Protection) – states that developments that significantly harm important landscape or landscape features will be refused.
- 5.11 Policy DME3 (Site and Species Protection) – development proposals likely to adversely affect protected species will not be granted planning permission.
- 5.12 Policy DMB1 (Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy) – proposals intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. The expansion of firms outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintaining the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the local landscape.

Proposals Map

5.13 The former Local Plan Proposals Map identifies the application site as within an area of Open Countryside.

Emerging Local Plan

5.14 The Council is preparing a Housing and Economic Development Plan Document. It published an Issues and Options Consultation Report during Autumn 2016. The consultation document contained nothing of direct relevance to the application proposal.

6.0 RELEVANT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clearly states '*that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*' (paragraph 6). Paragraph 197 confirms that '*in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development*'. Paragraph 14 states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. It goes on to say that 'for decision-taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted'.

6.2 Paragraph 7 refers to the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. An elaboration of the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system is detailed later in the NPPF. Relevant parts are referred to at paragraph 6.5 below.

6.3 The NPPF (paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 196) confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, ie the development plan is the starting point for decision making.

6.4 Paragraphs 2, 8, 13, 196 and 212 confirm that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

6.5 The main body of the NPPF addresses the components of sustainable development. The aspects of those components most relevant to the application are:

- ‘building a strong, competitive economy’ – confirms that the Government is committed to securing economic growth, in order to create jobs and prosperity, and ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. It goes on to express support for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas;
- ‘promoting sustainable transport’ – decisions should take account of whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and development should only be refused where the residual impacts of development are severe (paragraph 32);
- ‘requiring good design’ – developments should add to the quality of the area, and reinforce local distinctiveness; and
- ‘conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ – in deciding planning applications local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying various principles including resisting development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (paragraph 118).

7. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7.1 The purpose of this section of the Planning Statement is to identify and assess the main planning considerations raised by the application proposal in the context of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. The key issues are:

- the principle of the development, having regard to the provisions of the adopted Development Plan and national planning policy;
- the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area;
- the effect of the development on residential amenity;
- the effect of the development on nature conservation interests; and
- the effect of the development on highway safety.

7.2 Each of these matters is considered below.

Principle

- 7.3 Key Statement EC1 of the Core Strategy directs employment development to the main settlements and various locations including those well-related to the A59 corridor. The application property is on the west side of Longsight Road (A59), Clayton-le-Dale and is, thus, well-related to the A59 corridor and satisfies the requirements of Key Statement EC1.
- 7.4 Policy DMB1 supports proposals for business growth and the local economy including the expansion of established firms on land outside settlements where it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and the development can be assimilated within the local landscape. MyVet is an established and successful veterinary surgery. As described at section 1.4 above there has been a continued growth in client numbers and facilities available at the site, culminating in the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons awarding the centre the status of a 'Veterinary Hospital', the only 'Veterinary Hospital' in the Ribble Valley Council's area. The proposal represents a modest expansion of the building and provision of additional car parking spaces to allow the business to continue to meet client's needs / expectations and for the business to continue to prosper and contribute positively to the local economy. The proposal therefore satisfies the requirements of Key Statement DMB1.
- 7.5 The Nation Planning Policy Framework is clearly supportive of business and economic growth and specifically refers to supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas. The building extension and provision of additional car parking car park are required to continue to meet client's needs / expectations and for the business to continue to prosper and contribute positively to the local economy.

Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.6 The proposed extension to the building is modest in size, extending an existing single-storey element of the building outward by 4 metres. The extension would represent an 8% increase in the floorspace of the existing main building at the site (excluding the hydrotherapy building). The extension would be flat-roofed reflecting the form of the element of the building to which it would be attached. The extension would be white-rendered as is the existing building. The extension would be to the rear of the existing building. Given these factors, and that the main building is wider than the extension, it would not be readily seen from the main public vantage points on Longsight Road. From positions within the fields to the rear of the site, the extension would be seen against the backdrop of the main two-storey building, be screened in part by the existing boundary fence and would appear as a minor and visually unobtrusive element.
- 7.7 The extended car park would be hard-surfaced in tarmac, as per the existing car park, and marked out with white lines. It would be entirely contained within the existing site curtilage.

Being to the rear of the existing buildings at the site, the extended car park would not be readily seen from the main public vantage points on Longsight Road. From positions within the fields to the rear of the site, the extended car park would be screened from view by the existing boundary fence. Even if it could be seen it would be against the backdrop, and within the context, of the existing buildings at the site and appear as a minor and visually unobtrusive element.

- 7.8 Given the above, the proposals would satisfy the requirements of Policies DMG1, DMG2 and DME2 and the NPPF to ensure appropriate design and avoid harm to landscape quality.

Residential Amenity

- 7.9 The nearest residential property (Turn Pike) is some 130 metres to the north east of the application site. At such distance, and given the modest scale of the building extension and car park extension, they would have no appreciable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of this house or, indeed, any other dwelling in the wider locality. Thus, the proposal would satisfy the requirements of Policy DMG1.

Nature Conservation

- 7.10 A bat survey has been carried out and is submitted in support of this planning application. It concludes that the conservation significance of this property is low, it is highly unlikely that there has been any bat activity within the existing building, the existing building has minimal potential for supporting protected species. In short, the proposed building works are unlikely to cause disturbance to bats or result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death of a bat or result in any significant impact on a local bat population. The area to be surfaced for the car park is presently a maintained grass lawn. It is apparent that this area has no wildlife or habitat value. Thus, the proposal would satisfy the requirements of Key Statement EN4, Policy DME3 and the NPPF.

Highway Safety

- 7.11 The existing 'in' and 'out' access arrangement at the site would remain unaltered. The additional car parking to be provided at the site would cater for increased visitor and staff numbers. It would ensure that there is no reason for any vehicle to be parked on the main A59 Longsight Road, by reason of lack of spaces or congestion within the existing car park. As such, the proposal would maintain and enhance highway safety at and in the vicinity of the application site in compliance with Policy DMG3 and the NPPF.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application relates to an established veterinary practice (MyVet) at Myerscough House, Longsight Road, Clayton-le-Dale. The proposal is in two parts. One, for a modest single-storey extension to the rear of the existing building. Two, for tarmac surfacing an area at the rear of the site to form a larger car park, to cater for the increased numbers of clients and staff attending the site. It has been demonstrated that the proposal would be in compliance with local and national planning policy having regard to the principle of the development and details considerations relating to the proposal, including its design, landscape impact, nature conservation considerations, neighbour amenity and highway safety interests.
- 7.2 For the reasons set out above, the Council is respectfully invited to grant planning permission for this development proposal.