Technical Note: Highways

Project: Land adjacent to Somerset Road, Almondbury

For: Donaldsons Vets Ltd

October 2022

INTRODUCTION

This Technical Note has been written to respond to the consultation response made by Highways Officers at Kirklees Council on 10th August 2022 (app ref 2022 / 92097) in relation to a development proposal to expand the existing veterinary hospital on land adjacent to Somerset Road, Almondbury.

Planning approval was granted in 2018 for the proposed development which included the provision of a car parking area for 41 cars and alterations to the junction with Somerset Road and Longley Road to provide a new access on to the existing mini roundabout at that location.

The development has been implemented and became fully operational late 2019. A total of 42 parking spaces have been marked out on site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development will extend the building to the north and increase the number of consulting rooms on site from 6 to 10. A total of 41 parking spaces will be retained on site which accords with the planning approval whilst maintaining access for delivery and refuse vehicles and for the occasional vehicle and trailer with a farm animal (sheep) inside.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON CURRENT / PROPOSED OPERATION OF HOSPITAL

As previously explained in our September 2021 Technical Note, we are advised that there will be no new employment positions that will be created as a direct result of the proposed extension to the building. The additional rooms will be used by existing staff and will allow cases to be triaged and case histories to be taken by a nurse prior to the Vet consultation.

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This system (a tried and tested system which is employed in a number of Veterinary Practices) will cut the waiting for and Vet time per consultation (and so reduce the time a vehicle is in the car park) and increase the client throughput utilising the same staff but **not** increasing visitor numbers.

An examination of the consultation response suggests that Highways Officers have largely ignored the above information and instead have relied upon anecdotal information provided by a few quite vocal local residents (from Longley Road) who complained about parking outside their property. It is claimed that "*a number of records of complaints of dangerous and anti social parking in the area have been received*" but does not specify how many, where or when. Our client is aware of some concerns raised from a couple of residents from Longley Road soon after the hospital opened but none since. A mobile number has been provided to those residents who have complained should any parking related to the hospital causes them a problem in the future.

No actual evidence of a parking problem was observed when we looked that the area during the course of the preparation of the application last year as outlined in our previous Technical Note. Officers also appear to misunderstand the benefits of the method of operation of the practice (using a triage approach) as this actually speeds up the processing of patients and does not increase the number of sick animals in the area.

Creating additional space will neither increase nor decrease the number of poorly animals in the area but reducing waiting times will decrease the length of time each parking bay is occupied for each client visit and this will in turn decrease any congestion in the car park.

The consultation response also suggests that the parking spaces will be reduced -the approved level of provision is 41 spaces and whilst 42 have been provided , the development proposal will reduce the provision by one space which is neither material nor significant.

CAR PARKING SURVEY

The consultation response suggests that the current operation of the site does not appear to be working and alleges that staff have been instructed not to use the car park. Our client completely denies that allegation.

In order to refute the anecdotal comments made in the consultation response a spot photographic survey of parking conditions at four locations has been carried on 21st September 2022. The four locations were the layby on Somerset Road just north of Longley Road, the layby on Somerset Road just north of Broadgate, Longley Road just off Somerset Road and Broadgate just off Somerset Road. The photographs were taken at around 7am (before the hospital opens properly for the day), 9am, 11am, 1pm, 3pm and 5pm. A copy of the photographs are attached to this Technical Note and the findings of the survey are given below.

Layby on Somerset Road just north of Longley Road

The survey shows that generally of the up to 5 cars that were observed using the layby, 2 of these were parked there all day (including before the hospital opened). There was still capacity for 1 / 2 further cars for most of the day.

The only vehicle that was observed parking in an inappropriate manner appeared to be somebody carrying out work (CCTV) on the corner property and nothing to do with the operation of the hospital.

Layby on Somerset Road just north of Broadgate

The survey shows that generally of the up to 4 cars that were observed using the layby, 2 - 3 of these were parked there all day (including before the hospital opened). It is reasonable to assume all of these were owned by residents.

Longley Road just off Somerset Road

It is noted that at around 7am there were 2 cars parked on the initial section of Longley Road up to the slight bend. One of these (the Mercedes) was there all day so assumed to be a resident.

There are several different vehicles then parked in other locations within view during the day which may be residents or visitors to the hospital (ownership not known) but regardless of this, none were parked in a dangerous manner or location and were few in number. At no time was passage along Longley Road obstructed and there appears to be ample capacity on that section of road so as not to cause any anti social / residential amenity issues.

Parking on the public highway outside a residential property is only permitted by anybody (including the owner of that property) providing that vehicle does not obstruct the passage of through traffic or cause a hazard to other road users. No evidence of this was observed.

Broadgate just off Somerset Road

Parking on the section of Broadgate between Somerset Road and Templar Drive would appear to be busiest at around 7am before the hospital opens properly for business. As that photograph shows, several cars belonging to residents are recorded parking close to the junction / on the corner radius with Somerset Road and with Templar Drive. A white car on the opposite side of the road was observed being present for most of the day (between 7am and 3pm) so presumed to be a resident.

Aside from the white car, parking demand is clearly quite light with no obstructions caused to through traffic on Broadgate.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the **evidence** from the parking surveys as described above (and not the **anecdotal** comments from a few residents several years ago), the only vehicles that were observed parking in dangerous locations were those of local residents and not related to the activity at the hospital as they occurred before it opened for the day. There is **no evidence** to support the allegation that parking from the hospital occurs in dangerous locations or causes anti social problems to local residents as there appears to be ample capacity on the adjacent roads throughout the day.

Given the above it is considered that the proposed development will not materially change the parking and traffic demands generated by the activity on the site and the impact on the mini roundabout junction and adjacent streets in terms of highway capacity, parking and safety will be minimal.

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Attachments

1 – Parking Surveys Photographs

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY – AREA IN VICINITY OF DONALDSONS VETS, SOMERSET ROAD – 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Somerset Road north of mini roundabout.



View at 7.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 9.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 11.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 1.00PM along Somerset Rd

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View at 3.00PM along Somerset Rd



View at 5.00PM along Somerset Rd

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Somerset Road north of Broadgate



View at 07.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 9.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 11.00AM along Somerset Rd



View at 1.00PM along Somerset Rd

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View at 3.00PM along Somerset Rd



View at 5.00PM along Somerset Rd

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Longley Rd from Somerset Road



View at 07.00AM along Longley Rd



View at 9.00AM along Longley Rd



View at 11.00AM along Longley Rd



View at 1.00PM along Longley Rd

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View at 3.00 PM along Longley Rd



View at 5.00PM along Longley Rd

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Broadgate from Somerset Road



View at 07.00AM along Broadgate



View at 9.00AM along Broadgate



View at 11.00AM along Broadgate



View at 1.00PM along Broadgate

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View at 3.00 PM along Broadgate



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