

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING
PERMISSION

FOR

CHANGE OF USE OF LAND AND
BUILDINGS TO FORM A FARM AND
EQUINE VETERINARY PRACTICE
WITH ERECTION OF MODULAR
BUILDINGS

AT
WOOD NOOK ARENA
WOOD NOOK LANE
HONLEY, HOLMFIRTH
HD9 4DU

ON BEHALF OF
DONALDSON'S FARM AND EQUINE

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

DATED: JANUARY 2024

SUBMITTED BY NORTHERN DESIGN PARTNERSHIP
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1.0 – THE SITE AND PLANNING HISTORY

1.01 - The site consists of a range of buildings used for farm and livery purposes, see Photograph 1, which are suited to this rural location between Honley and Meltham.



Photograph 1 - Wood Nook

1.02 - The property has been used as a livery yard for over 50 years and hosts occasional equine competitions at the weekends and evenings in the large indoor arena.

1.03 - The applicants currently lease a unit from the owner of the livery and farm, which gained change of use permission in May 2023 (2022/93900) from stables to a Equine Veterinary Unit.

2.00 - THE APPLICANTS

2.01 - Donaldson's Vets have been a long established local veterinary practice with a number of premises around the Huddersfield area.

2.02 - In 2021, Donaldson's long established large animal veterinary services were set up as a separate team from the now much larger small animal practice.

2.03 - This separate team was set up to provide an ambulatory service only i.e travelling in large vehicles carrying equipment, medicines and assistants (see Photograph 2). Typically the vets travel a number of times to treat each animal during the course of treatment.

2.04 - Donaldson's have a 'Vet's Hospital' along Somerset Road in Almondbury, which has served as a base for the large animal vets. This was built in 2019. There are currently between 3 and 6 large animal vets working from this site every day. It is essential that parking is available adjacent to the building to load and unload the heavy equipment and medicines.



Photograph 2 - Typical Veterinary Vehicle For Large Animals.

2.05 - Donaldson's provide a 24/7 service for 365 days of the year. This often results in vets having to travel alone at night into multiple rural sites.

3.00 – PROPOSALS

3.01 – The proposals are to re-purpose a small proportion of the Wood Nook site to relocate the large animal vets to a more appropriate base.

3.02 - As mentioned the site already has an equine examination building, and the proposals will compliment this service and relieve current issues (predominantly traffic and highways - see 4.04) at the Somerset Road site.

3.03 - The proposals include the installation of 3 modular buildings. These modular buildings will provide administrative accommodation and secure storage for medical equipment and medicines necessary to treat large animals.

3.04 - The plan is to utilise these modular buildings for a period of up to 5 years, then move to a more permanent structure subject to planning permission.

3.05 - The proposed location of the modular buildings ensures easy access to the mains electrics and coverage by the current security cameras. The buildings will be green in colour to match the existing buildings. This location also ensures the buildings sit within the structure settlement, which ensures the impact on the openness of the Greenbelt is not affected. At present there are two green modular containers on the proposed site. These have been in the current position for over 20 years and will be removed should this application be approved. See Photograph 3.



Photograph 3 - Site of Proposed Modular Buildings. (Existing Containers to be Removed)

3.06 - The modular buildings location is also in close proximity to the examination building previously approved. This ensures easy access to the stored equipment that is essential for diagnostic procedures and treatment of patients.

3.07 - In addition Donaldson's will have access to the smaller of the two arenas, shown on Photograph 3 to the right of the containers. This will be used for occasional animal examination.

4.00 - BENEFITS OF PROPOSALS

4.01 - As the service will be provided at one base, the amount of travelling for the vets will be greatly reduced. Currently vets are limited in what they can carry in a vehicle. Examinations and treatments carried out at the premises of the animal are therefore limited which can often result in repeated visits.

4.02 - Also, in the majority of cases it is necessary for multiple vehicles to attend a premises. For instance, if an animal requires an X-ray, 3 trained personnel need to be in attendance. Some equipment is very large and heavy and requires transporting in a separate van, which requires the attendance of an auxillary nurse. If the proposals are approved, the number of vehicle movements will be significantly reduced.

4.03 - The care of the animals will be improved. The proposed location will have the full range of large equipment installed or readily available at the facility. This will ensure the animals get the best treatment available, with no long waits for equipment to arrive. Animals often require overnight care e.g where taking intravenous fluids or requiring frequent examinations. If there are multiple situations, these can be better controlled from one base.

4.04 - If the relocation is approved, the site along Somerset Road will benefit from reduced traffic and parking. Donaldson's have recently received a request from Kirklees Highways to provide a Travel Plan to reduce traffic and parking on the site (Responding Reference; K6-12NE/1). The proposals will greatly improve an issue that Kirklees clearly consider exists, by reducing both staff parking and any visiting larger animals.

4.05 - The proposals will provide better working practices for the vets that provide care for large animals. The vets will be able to dedicate more time to the treatment of the patients, making more use of the periods spent travelling to various premises. Also the base will provide a more secure and safe environment, particularly for any night working, where vets are often currently working alone.

4.06 - With the proposed facilities Donaldson's will be able to provide a more extensive service, particularly for horses. At present horses are often taken to the Rainbow Equine Hospital at Malton or the Liverpool Equine Hospital where treatment is difficult at the owners premises. The large majority of these cases will be treatable at Wood Nook.

5.00 - HIGHWAYS

5.01 - The site has extensive parking areas. The current area adjacent to the entrance (see photograph 4) will provide 4 No dedicated spaces for Donaldson's Vets for personnel. A further 4 spaces will be identified for short term visitors (picking up medication etc). The remaining 8 spaces will provide parking for livery staff and visitors. There is also a large area to the East of the site, which is currently used for the livery parking and storage, where animals can be dropped off or picked up.

5.02 - As mentioned in 4.04, there are great off site benefits to the proposals. Issues have been identified at the current site in Almondbury. These proposals will reduce both traffic movements and parking at that site.



Photograph 4 - Car Parking Area

6.00 - ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

6.01 - The proposals will inevitably significantly reduce Donaldson's carbon footprint. The opportunity to have a base for animal examination and treatment will ensure countless large vehicle journeys will not be required. It's common for a large animal vet to have to travel to and from the base in Almondbury to multiple sites. The proposed facility will obviate the need for these numerous journeys.

6.02 - The proposals will not adversely impact on any environmental factors associated with the premises. There are no trees affected, and no potential habitats will be disturbed.

7.00 - LOCATION AND SEQUENTIAL TEST INFORMATION

7.01 - The site is in a rural Greenbelt setting. The site is wholly appropriate for the examination and treatment of large animals. The site is a large grouping of agricultural style buildings that have been used for livery purposes for over 50 years.

7.02 - Permission has already been approved to change the use of a building within the grouping to carry out the examination and treatment of large animals. To make this service more efficient it makes sense to provide accommodation for the storing of medical equipment and medicines adjacent to the facility. This will be supported by a small office / admin area where all services and staff can be carefully administered and supported.

7.03 - It is accepted that offices are a main town centre use. However this office space cannot be regarded as a generic office space. The office will be dedicated to the work and services being provided in the nearby treatment facility. They will also provide a base to administer the large animal vets, if they need to attend any local premises where the animal cannot make it to the facility. Although this service will be greatly reduced with the opening of the new facility.

7.04 - The site provides a more practical site for the use. There seems no logical reason why a large animal veterinary practice would work in a town centre. Access, parking and night time activities will be better served in this rural location.

7.05 - As previously mentioned the current premises at Almondbury is not suitable for the treatment of large animals and traffic issues have been highlighted by Kirklees. Having the small admin office adjacent to the existing facility will save time and unnecessary journeys between two premises some 6 miles apart.

8.00 - DRAINAGE

8.01- There are no plans for any foul drainage requirements. The site has existing facilities.

9.00 - CONCLUSIONS

9.01 - The proposals will greatly improve the efficiency of the services Donaldson's can provide. This will have significant environmental benefits, with a considerable reduction in large vehicle journeys.

9.02 - The proposals will positively impact on both animal and personnel welfare. The animals will receive more efficient care in a dedicated facility. Personnel will have reduced travelling and a safe and secure working environment, particularly at night time.

9.03 - Importantly, the proposals will have minimal impact on the Greenbelt setting. The proposed modular buildings will be replacing existing containers and will be located within the grouping of buildings.

9.04 - We therefore trust that Kirklees MC can support this application.