

Kirklees Metropolitan Council  
Planning Services  
PO Box 1720  
Huddersfield  
HD1 9EL

14 May 2026

Dear Sirs

**Change of Use of Barns to Kennels and Exercise Arenas and of Field to Dog Exercise Area at Lower Whitegate Farm, White Gate Road, Holmfirth, HD9 2TH**

Please find enclosed completed planning application form and plans in connection with the above proposal.

The Applicant is a mixed beef and sheep farmer, farming 115 acres. The application is for small-scale farm diversification comprising change of use of part of a grass field to a dog exercising area and change of use of redundant farm buildings to dog kennels and an indoor and outdoor dog exercise arena. The proposal is low-key, involving no physical development other than the erection of 1.8m high fencing and a timber field gate around the exercise field, the replacement of broken fibre cement sheets and timber boards on the buildings, the installation of 1m high windows along the west elevation of the south building and the installation of a large timber door in the current opening in the east elevation of the south building. There is sufficient existing parking laid out in the farmyard for 16 cars.

The Biodiversity Net Gain requirement will see the planting of 26 native broadleaved trees along the north edge of the dog exercise field (9x Sessile oak, 9x Rowan and 8x Birch). This will extend the existing woodland in that area, which is priority habitat deciduous woodland.

The surrounding land is used for the grazing of cattle and sheep. As well as helping to ensure the farm's long-term survival, it is hoped that the dog exercise facility will stop members of the public letting their dogs off in the fields and worrying the livestock.

**Design and Access Statement**

The location of the proposal has been chosen due its proximity to the farm and parking area. The proposed field and buildings are sufficiently remote so as not to be a nuisance concern to neighbouring properties. The nearest dwelling is Upper White Gate Farm, 230 metres to the southeast. This is sufficiently separated from the proposed site by a steep banking some 25 metres in elevation. Moorfield House is 500 metres away to the northeast, again separated by the steep bankside. Moss Edge is over 600 metres away to the west, separated by a steep valley. Upper Woodhouse is some 570 metres away to the northwest.

The buildings are redundant, structurally sound and suitable for the intended use with very minimal changes. Access to both the field and the buildings is existing, short and easy.

Broken fibre cement sheets and timber boards will be replaced on the buildings, improving their visual appearance. The car park is already surfaced with crushed stone and laid out for 16 cars. The field will remain a grass field and can be grazed by livestock at appropriate times.

### **Planning Statement**

Paragraph 88 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to support a prosperous rural economy by supporting all types of business and enterprise in rural areas and enabling the development and diversification of agricultural businesses.

The proposal is located within the Green Belt, where development is usually considered inappropriate. There are certain exceptions to this presumption including material changes in the use of land (such as for outdoor recreation), the provision of appropriate facilities in connection with a change of use for outdoor recreation, the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and the alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The Kirklees Local Plan states that the aim of Policy LP50 is to support new open spaces, outdoor and indoor sport and recreation opportunities wherever they are located, including within the Green Belt. Policy LP56 states that in the Green Belt proposal for appropriate facilities associated with outdoor sport and recreation will normally be acceptable as long as the openness of the Green Belt is preserved. There will be no physical changes to the land other than the provision of agricultural-type fencing. There will not be any negative effect on the openness or visual amenity of the Green Belt. There will be very limited change from what exists currently.

The proposal will bring benefits to a rural agricultural business, as well as to the local community; there is high demand for such facilities. It is hoped that the Authority will issue a swift decision in favour of the Application for this low-key development.

### **Climate Change Statement**

Surface water falling on the rooftops of the buildings will be directed to a bowser where it will be re-used for feeding livestock.

Rooflights and new windows provide natural lighting to the buildings, and the materials provide sufficient warmth and ventilation, so there will be low energy requirement.

The buildings are built from robust, long-lasting materials requiring little maintenance, that are suitable for the intended change of use. The proposal makes use of existing buildings, thus reducing demand on resources, with only a small number of new timber boards required to replace those that are broken, one new timber door and windows along one elevation.

The fencing will be sustainably sourced and erected by a local contractor, using treated timber posts for longevity.

Yours faithfully

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**Ruth Woodcock BA (Hons) MSc MRICS**  
For and on behalf of Woodcock Rural Surveyors Ltd.