

Planning Supporting Statement

Including Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement

Prepared for



By

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March 2022

This statement supports Medivet's request for planning permission to use the rear section of the former Grants Arms' (11A Market Place, Ramsbottom, Bury, BL0 9AJ) as a veterinary practice with associated signage and listed building consent. The signage will be covered under a separate advertisement consent application.

Introduction to Medivet

Medivet is a group of veterinary 24hr hospitals and practices based in Watford, UK. There are approximately 400 locations across the company. They aim to provide the services required when and where pet owners need it.

With an increasing number of pets in the UK, in part due to COVID-19 lockdown, Medivet are finding many of their practices are turning away new clients and they are reviewing all premises for ongoing suitability and if there are local options for providing a more sustainable service.

Medivet currently operate a small vets in Ramsbottom (19 Central St, Ramsbottom), this property is small and no longer fit for meeting the needs of Ramsbottom pet owners with the company regularly turning down new customers. This new property at the Grant Arms, provides an opportunity to keep the vets within Ramsbottom town centre and continue to support the needs of the existing residents whilst also opening up the practice to new pet owners. The new property proposed at the former Grants Arms will allow for shorter waiting times and an increase in service offered within Ramsbottom.

The Proposal

The proposed development site is the rear section of the former Grants Arms which has been vacant and fallen into a poor state in recent times. The property is Grade II listed and lies within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. Medivet are in the later stages of agreeing the legal agreements with the owner which would allow them to take a 15 year lease on the property to be used as a veterinary practice (Use Class E only excluding the use as a restaurant).

Planning permission was granted in 2020 (65739/FUL), for the change of use of the property from a public house to financial and professional services as well as external alterations and formation of the car park. This approval has allowed the landlord to begin works which will provide a shell for a leaseholder to finalise the specification of works for their use.

It will allow Medivet to construct the consultation room walls and install the required drainage and electrics where required.

The practice will be formed of:

- Four consulting rooms;
- A room used for x-rays, ultrasounds and dental work;
- A small theatre;
- A kennels area with space for two large and six small dogs;
- A kennels area with space for eight cats;
- External space for exercising animals;
- Office space;
- Laboratory area;
- Staff facilities such as shower room and WC; and
- Three dedicated car parking spaces.

The proposed floorplan detailing the location of the above services is included within this submission.

Pre-Application discussions

Prior to the submission of this application, Trivantage entered into pre-application discussions with Jennie Townsend of Bury Council on behalf of Medivet (ref: 02706/E).

These discussions confirmed that the Class E use would be acceptable in principle as a town centre use. It also confirms that there will be a neutral impact on the conservation area and that further detail included within the submission of the planning application would be required to confirm any impact on the listed building.

The Highways team also stated that there was no sustainable reason as to why permission could not be granted from a highway perspective.

Design

Amount

The works will allow for the existing open plan ground floor to be developed into the reception area, four consulting rooms, theatre and x-ray rooms, cat and dog kennels and associated utility space including WC. The first floor will convert the two rooms into an office, meeting area, open office space, laboratory and staff facilities. No

additional floor space is to be added to the property. The external areas will include an animal exercise area, waste storage and car parking. It maintains the emergency fire escape from the offices in the already converted front element of the property.

Layout

The open plan layout (as existing) allows for the conversion to a veterinary practice allowing for the most efficient and effective layout to be designed. The proposed layout can be seen on the proposed floorplans submitted.

No external layout changes are proposed through this planning application.

Scale

The scale of the building remains appropriate for the area with no extensions proposed to the building to allow for the change of use into a veterinary practice.

Landscaping

There are to be small amounts of soft landscaping to the rear of the building to demarcate between the private property and the car park currently let to Bury Council for use by the public.

Appearance

No external works are proposed to the building. The appearance of the property will be improved through the use of the property and associated general maintenance of the property. The rear of the property will be enhanced through maintained outside space for use as parking and exercise space and will be carefully maintained. This area will be locked outside of operating hours which will reduce the opportunity for anti-social behaviour which could negatively impact upon the appearance of the listed building, its setting and the conservation area.

Access

Vehicles

Car access will be provided to the rear of the property via Market Place. No public parking is to be provided but the public car park on Market Place is available for use. Three staff car parking spaces are provided via the south west corner of the car park.

Medivet have contracts in place for the collection of waste based on the existing vet practice. Deliveries and collections are undertaken by appropriate vehicles and at times where the practice is typically quieter.

Pedestrians

Good public transport connections are available given the proximity of the site to the centre of the town. There is a bus stop less than 200m from the site which is served by six bus services which connect to Bury and Accrington. A pavement is in place from the main road to the entrance to the veterinary practice.

Heritage

The property is Grade II listed and is located within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. The rear element of the building (the focus of this application) is thought to be from the 18th Century it is rendered with a slate roof and arched doorways. The elements highlighted in the listing also include the sash windows, half columns to doorway and the clock on the top storey. These elements are not impacted by the proposals through this applications.

The building as a whole, was completed in circa 1828 and was listed in 1975.

The proposed development includes internal changes only. The creation of the treatment rooms is similar to that approved through planning permission previously granted for the use of the property as an office (ref: 65739).

As per section 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the proposed change of use should be approved. The change of use will allow for the heritage asset to be sustained and enhanced through its use and therefore maintenance. A positive contribution will be made to the economy by providing additional veterinary services within Ramsbottom which currently cannot be offered at the practice due to size limitations.

No significant loss of the asset will occur. The use of the property maintains the asset. No further external works are to be undertaken compared with that which has planning permission and is currently being implemented. The internal works are minimal and maintains the cast iron column which has been highlighted as of significance to the property.

Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, the proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the asset and it is considered that the provision of additional animal services remaining within Ramsbottom, in close proximity to the existing practice, will provide a high level of public benefit and secures the optimal viable use given that Medivet will sign a 15 year lease to remain in the area. This will lead to direct and indirect employment within the local area which leads to increased spending in the area, supporting the local economy.

The property is also within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. As this application does not include any external works, and ensures the maintenance of the property and therefore, the conservation area, it would be considered to have a positive impact upon the Conservation Area. The pre-application advice confirmed that there will be a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Heritage Statement including a Statement of Significance of the property (which was prepared for the previous application (ref: 65739)) has been included within this application.

Conclusion

We consider that the proposed change of use from a vacant hotel/public house to a veterinary practice is a suitable and sustainable use of the property. The proposed change of use would have a positive impact upon local area providing a suitable town centre use with a neutral impact upon the conservation area. The proposed works have no significant impact upon the heritage of the listed building.

As such, we consider that this planning application should be approved.