

**DELEGATED**

**AGENDA NO  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
18 MARCH 2015  
REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR,  
DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES**

**14/2802/RET**

**Caravan, Blakeston Croft Farm, Blakeston Lane**

**Retrospective application for residential caravan for agricultural worker**

**Expiry Date: 23 March 2015**

**UPDATE REPORT**

**Additional Comments Received are summarised below;**

A letter has been received from Wilton House Veterinary Clinic (see overleaf)

**MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The veterinary surgeon states that the applicant is responsible for a herd of cattle and bought in young stock, including cows ready to give birth.

Information submitted with the application stated that the suckler cows are to be sold as they are inefficient users of land and the cows are to be sold to free up grassland and investment for the sheep flock. The agricultural appraisal states that Calving did not form part of the future plans and does not form part of this application currently being considered. No reference has been made to the agricultural appraisal and this letter has only been received after the publication of the officer report to Planning Committee which indicated that there was no functional need for a caravan.

Whist it is accepted that lambing will take place, the welfare requirement of the sheep during these periods requires an onsite presence, as detailed in the main report it is considered that lambing takes place during a short timeframe (springtime) and this is not justification for a full time requirement for onsite accommodation.

All matters relating to welfare and the occasional emergency have been considered in the main report.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

It is considered that the details within this update report do not alter the recommendation made within the main report.

Wilton House Veterinary Clinic  
Wilton Lane  
Gusborough  
Cleveland  
TS14 6JA

Friday 13 March 2015

Mrs Elaine Atkinson  
Planning  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton on Tees  
TS18 1LD

Dear Mrs Atkinson

**M. Lowson – Planning Application**

Mr Lowson is responsible for a herd of Pedigree Limousin cattle and bought in young stock. These include cows ready to give birth and young calves between 1 to 2 weeks old, also a flock of in lamb ewes. Wilton House Veterinary Clinic visit the yard regularly for routine health visits and emergencies.

In my opinion, as an experienced large animal veterinary surgeon, there is a need for a permanent on site presence to provide 24 hour care for farm animals at establishments of this kind. I am aware of the 'functional needs' test required by the government for on-site accommodation.

Bovine animals can require intensive observation and nursing throughout the day and night for numerous reasons; not only but including:

- In the hours prior to giving birth and during lambing all ewes require regular checks and a ewe may need constant observation through the night. At this time any failure in supervision can result in death of the ewe or lamb.
- When subject to attacks of metabolic disease (such as hypomagnesaemia – a fatal disease with rapid onset).
- Multiple serious illness and conditions of more general nature (such as pneumonia).

It is, in our view essential that a suitably experienced and qualified person is available on site to prevent unnecessary distress to injured animals and to provide intensive care as and when necessary. Indeed, in our experience, the absence of such can lead to serious injury and distress to animals and ultimately (preventable) death. The on-site presence of Mr Lowson is essential for the welfare of the animals under his care.

Yours sincerely  
Mark Webster  
MRCVS  
Wilton House Veterinary Clinic