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Dr Martin Hobbs,
The Meopham Veterinary Hospital,
Wrotham Road,
Meopham,
Kent.
DA13 0QG

11th May 2022

Dear Martin,

Planning Application: For the attention of Gravesham Borough Council Planning Department

I write in enthusiastic support for the planning application that you are submitting to further develop your veterinary hospital. Meopham Veterinary Hospital is a beacon of excellence for veterinary services in the region and this application is worthy of support for several reasons.

The pandemic has seen a rapid rise in companion animal ownership, our pets helping many of us to get through the dark days of lockdown. Pet ownership has become more realistic for many with the widespread adoption of working from home. This increase in the pet population has put huge extra demand on veterinary services.

This application contributes to a national need for more veterinary surgeons. Our profession is on the government's Shortage Occupation List recognizing the critical shortage of suitably qualified veterinary professionals. Meopham Veterinary Hospital has been a foundation partner of the new veterinary school at the University of Surrey in Guildford which is committed to inspiring and educating the next generation of veterinary surgeons. As a valued partner practice, it has been instrumental in the design and delivery of our innovative, workplace-based clinical education, with final year students spending blocks of time with Dr Hobbs and his colleagues to hone their veterinary skills before graduating and entering the workforce. Meopham Veterinary Hospital is also a veterinary nurse training centre, a critical part of the national training infrastructure ensuring that local opportunities are available for people to train for this important role in the veterinary team. The proposed developments will enhance both the capacity and the quality of the hospital to fulfil its important training mission.

Veterinary clinical science evolves at an alarming pace, and I can see features of this planning application that respond to the needs of a 21st veterinary hospital e.g. dedicated space for a pharmacy, imaging and endoscopy. The modern veterinary profession is also very aware of its responsibility towards environmental sustainability; this application includes many elements that will minimize the carbon footprint of the hospital.

The community that Meopham Veterinary Hospital serves is fortunate to have such a dedicated and professional team of veterinary surgeons to take care of its animals; this proposal outlines the developments needed to ensure that this service remains excellent for the next 20 years and can continue to serve an expanding client-base. It has my wholehearted support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Proudman', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Professor Chris Proudman, FRCVS.

Professor and Head of the School of Veterinary Medicine
Member of RCVS Council