

**PROVISION OF ACCESS TO CONNECT WITH
NEW PUBLIC FOOTPATH TO BE PROVIDED BY
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE AONB
AND
THE PROVISION OF ACCESS TO 2 NR FIELDS IN AGRICULTURAL USE
AND THE CREATION OF A NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS
FROM THE HIGHWAY**

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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1.1 The applicant owns "The Old Workshop" a small, attractive building, located at the bottom of Grindleton Brow and now in residential use following a recent conversion. The conversion was authorised by planning permission 3/2015/0699, which included provision of a new access from the highway (Grindleton Brow), for domestic use. The work for which planning permission is now being sought takes place on part of the applicant's land.

1.2 The proposals are intended to provide safe public access to a new footpath to run alongside Grindleton Brow, in a locally-owned field where they would ensure separation of pedestrian traffic from vehicles using the narrow highway.

1.3 They are being promoted by Lancashire County Council working in conjunction with the AONB.

1.4 The proposals require the use of privately-owned land affecting two owners, both of whom have consented to the use of their land for this purpose. The applicant is one of those owners and the other, (upon whom notice has been served in accordance with Article 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010), owns land adjoining the applicant's, as shown on the application drawings.

1.5 A new access from the highway is proposed to create a safe area for joining or leaving the public footpath and space for agricultural vehicles to access two fields, where new gateways are proposed. Whilst access by vehicles is essential, it is expected to be very infrequent.

2.0 THE PROPOSALS

2.1 The application site is an existing field. Clearance of hedgerow vegetation was carried out some time ago by AONB staff, in preparation for siting of the new footpath. This application proposes replacement planting, as indicated on the application drawing no 562/1.

Design

2.2 Design of the proposals has had regard to the landscape character of this part of the AONB. In that respect the siting of elements of the design, the materials used in creating them and the form which those features take, have all formed part of a design process, one intended to ensure that the proposals are sympathetic to the sensitive landscape in which they are located.

2.3 Access to the main footpath requires steps to negotiate steep changes in level. These will be created within sections of timber retention needed at the access point. The layout of this part of the route is shown on the application drawing. The use of these materials is intended to be in keeping with similar materials used in the countryside which are of a softer, more informal nature than stone, or other forms of solid walling. They would mainly be used in association with native planting and so would quickly integrate with their surroundings.

2.4 A similar approach has been taken with surfacing materials for the access. It would be constructed to a load-bearing standard sufficient to support agricultural vehicles, but would have a natural grass surface. This would be achieved with the use of a proprietary product of Geoweb grass reinforcement and would provide a sustainable natural grass surface of adequate resilience, to meet the occasional use it would be likely to have. This approach would avert the likelihood that visual quality of the highway corridor, in this part of the AONB, would be harmed with the inappropriate use of tarmacadam.

Materials

2.5 Some post and wire fencing with sheep-netting is proposed, to ensure that grazing stock could not stray onto the public footpath and thence onto the highway. Division of the two agricultural units in separate ownerships, would be achieved with the use of this type of fencing but the boundary would also be planted with a native, species-rich hedgerow mix. There are many natural

features of this kind in the AONB and so this would be a harmonious feature in this part of the countryside.

2.6 Access to each of the two fields would be by way of standard five-bar field gates, typical of the kind in use throughout the AONB.

2.7 New walling, to form a suitable access from the highway and enable the required sight lines to be achieved, would be carried out using dry-stone walling, to match existing examples in the locality.

2.8 Surfacing of the new access from the highway and up to the point where it leads into each of the fields, would be with the use of Geoweb grass reinforcement. This would provide a surface which would have a natural appearance and therefore not be intrusive upon the visual amenity of the AONB. Surfaces reinforced in this way and in only infrequent use, are durable and have been developed to maintain a healthy grass sward.

3.0 ACCESS FROM THE HIGHWAY

3.1 The applicant was required to undertake a traffic survey when she submitted the application for conversion of "The Old Workshop". The survey recorded speeds in both directions of Grindleton Brow and was able to demonstrate that sightlines of 25m to the south and 35 m to the north, with a 2.0m sightline offset in the centre of the proposed access, were acceptable for the recorded traffic speeds.

3.2 It is considered, given the proximity of the proposed access in this application to that for which the survey was intended, that those findings could apply equally well in this instance. The sightlines in both directions are shown on the application drawings.

4.0 LANDSCAPE WORKS

4.1 The use of grass surfacing, referred to above, would contribute to the overall objective of making the proposals visually coherent within the host landscape.

4.2 Planting, using a native species-rich mix in hedgerows and other areas associated with the new footpath, would continue the process of integrating the proposals into the local landscape. Species to be used in this regard are shown on the application drawing.

4.3 The use of traditional field gates would adhere to the rural typology of agricultural elements and would therefore enable the proposals to be appropriate in their rural context.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 These are simple proposals but they have been given careful consideration. It is felt that they are appropriate for the landscape context in which they would sit. They support the objectives of conserving the landscape and scenic objectives of the AONB and are not in conflict with any policies of the Local Plan.

5.2 Also, they would also improve access to agricultural land and would enhance public access of the AONB's footpath network, by providing a safe route through an area where dangers to pedestrian safety would otherwise be prohibitive to pedestrian use.

5.3 Accordingly, the Council is respectfully requested that they are approved.

PD/562/25.10.16

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