

DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT

FOR RETROSPECTIVE FARM FIELD TRACK

Low Laithe Barn
LAND ADJACENT SETTLE ROAD
Newsholme
Gisburn
BB7 4JF

Grid Reference
382826 450506

APPENDIX 1: Ground Images
APPENDIX 2: Aerial Images

This application seeks partially retrospective permission for engineering operations to create a new farm access track to land surrounding Low Laithe barn. The applicant has recently purchased the 50 acre parcel of land, and as such has no access to the fields in tractors and large agricultural machinery. The track has been started due to a misunderstanding on the applicant's part.

He now seeks to apply through the correct channels for planning permission.

There was an existing access off Settle Road as shown below, which was unearthed by the contractor when work commenced on the track. The hard surface extended under the grass for approximately 66 m into the field. The new track continues from this point, lying tight to the existing field boundaries, and terminating at Low Laithe Barn. Upon further archaeological investigations conducted by a third party, it has become apparent that a historical track used to run adjacent to the applicant's proposed track. Furthermore, the access as can be seen in the photograph below forms part of that historical track. The applicant seeks to extend this track in order to be able to have the necessary access to the land purchased.

Permission has been approved on this land for the earth banked slurry lagoon (Application Number 3/2014/0763).

Permission has been approved on this land for the formation of a slurry lagoon (Application number 3/2016/0180).

Permission was refused on this site for the retention and extension of unauthorised agricultural access track (Application number 3/2016/0531).

- Reason 1 for refusal was that the proposed access track has not been adequately demonstrated to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and would be contrary to Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence to justify the proposed development and, therefore, construction of the access track would be unnecessary.
- Reason 2 for refusal was on the basis that the proposal would lead to the intensification of the use of the existing field access which would be to the detriment of highway safety contrary to Core Strategy Policy DMG1.

This is the central point of the land recently purchased by the applicant.

In response to Reason 1, we assert that the access track is essential for the applicant both to access his land and to access that agricultural storage building to the west of the A682. The historical track leads to Low Laithe Barn, which is used today by the applicant for agricultural storage. On the basis that the track provides essential access to both the storage building and the fields owned by the applicant, this justifies its agricultural need. Damage to profitable land would occur should the access track be refused.

In response to Reason 2 for refusal, the same level of use as is existing will continue. The track has been used to minimise traffic over the fields, which would spoil the ground and make it unusable. Furthermore, the agricultural storage building has been used as such for a significant period of time. No additional traffic other than what the farming enterprise already necessitates will result from the proposal. The only difference is that the track will be clearly defined. The materials chosen for the track by the applicant (compacted hardcore) are suitable for this type of track.



Existing access off Settle Road.



Existing hard standing into the site

AMOUNT

One new field access track off Settle Road is being applied for. The track is 233m long and 2.9m wide. At present it is unmade, and the final surface finish will be of compacted crushed stone, which is passable by vehicles. 66.8m of the track (the part nearest to the road) is the remainder of the previous historical track as determined by the consultant archaeologist. The additional track applied for is 233m additional, running adjacent to the historical track.

The access track has been widened at the exit to 9.5m from fence corner to fence corner (best seen in Appendix 1, Image 1 below). The access then tapers to a gate 10 m into the site, which is 5m 5cm wide. The 10m entry allows vehicles to pull into the site off Settle Road to open the gate safely.

USE

The track will be used by the applicant to serve the 50 acre block of grass land, this will be used to grow grass for silage and hay. The size and type of machinery involved in this activity are large agricultural tractors, and forage harvesters, with trailers and cultivation equipment often being towed. These machines can have detrimental impact on soil structure through continued tracking over ground. The track leads to the centre of the parcel of land, enabling the machines to access all the fields via a hard surface, this removing the chance of excessive poaching (ruination of the soil structure) and soil structure damage.

This is essential for the applicant's business to remain profitable. Should the track extension be refused, this would mean damaging what would be potentially profitable soil due to the heavy machinery required to farm the land. The access track will not mean any extra traffic, as the vehicles necessary for farming the site operate there already.

The track also provides adequate access to Low Laithe Barn, which is used to store agricultural machinery. The refusal of the access track will not prevent the traffic to and from the barn, but it will make it more difficult for the applicant and potentially damaging to what would have been profitable agricultural land.

LAYOUT

The track follows the natural field boundary line, with minimal impact on the best and most versatile agricultural land. It runs adjacent to the historical track, and follows the tree line, which is not farmed.

SCALE

The track is wide enough for a single track use by tractors, and general agricultural cultivation equipment. Its length takes the users to the centre of the parcel of land

permitting access to all fields. This enables the applicant to travel in a direct line to the centre of the land, which in turn means the shortest track necessary is applied for. Also, it should be noted that the direct track to the centre of the field means the least damage to otherwise profitable land that the applicant can farm and direct access to the agricultural storage building.

LANDSCAPING

No landscaping is proposed as the track lies adjacent an existing hedgerow to the north, and in any case as it is at ground level it does not cause an incongruous feature in the landscape. However, in line with suggestions in the previous highways report, we propose that the hedgerow at the entrance to the site will be maintained in order to ensure optimum visibility on the A686 for vehicles travelling on that stretch of road, and for the applicant and other vehicles to enter and leave the site safely.

APPEARANCE

The track is treated with compacted hardcore, no membrane has been laid to prevent the ingress of grass and vegetation, so in time the track will green up and the tyre tracks only will become worn and visible. This is to ensure that the track remains rural in appearance so as to compliment the surrounding rural landscape.

ACCESS

Access is gained from Settle Road, via an existing gateway, with hard core standing 66m into the site already. There is adequate room for turning on site.

SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS OBJECTIONS AND THE PREVIOUS PLANNING REFUSAL.

Permission was refused on this site for the retention and extension of unauthorised agricultural access track (Application number 3/2016/0531).

- Reason 1 for refusal was that the proposed access track has not been adequately demonstrated to be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and would be contrary to Policy DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy. The applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence to justify the proposed development and, therefore, construction of the access track would be unnecessary.

As noted above, the extension track is necessary for the applicant to be able to make the most profit from the land and for the land to remain profitable for the applicant. Furthermore, it has been designed in order to provide access to all of the applicant's farmable land using a minimal amount of additional

track. Historically, the track would have been used for the farming of the land. There is no other available access to the land to be farmed. On this basis, we find that there is in fact a need for the track. Furthermore, the access track provides an essential route for vehicles to get to Low Laithe barn, which is used for agricultural storage.

- Reason 2 for refusal was on the basis that the proposal would lead to the intensification of the use of the existing field access which would be to the detriment of highway safety contrary to Core Strategy Policy DMG1.

We assert that the permission of the extension of the track would not encourage or increase traffic on the basis that all necessary traffic already travels to and from and uses the site. The track would not lead to an intensification of the farming of the land, but would enable its effective farming.

The policy considerations of this will be considered below.

POLICY

Policy DMG1: general considerations

10.4 in determining planning applications, all development must:

Design

2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.

The proposed extension to the track has been designed so that it would green over, so as to blend with its rural setting. Furthermore, it has been designed so as to be as short as possible while still fulfilling its necessary function to the fields to be farmed. It has been designed so as to have as minimal impact as possible.

Access

1. Consider the potential traffic and car parking implications.

The extension to the track would not create or encourage any extra traffic other than that already travelling to and from the site. It would be a private track used solely for the running of the farm. Traffic already travels to and from the site for the maintenance of the slurry lagoon and the farming of the grass on the 50 acres. The extension to the track can only be of benefit to the applicant as they will be able to farm their land more effectively and for increased profit.

2. Ensure safe access can be provided which is suitable to accommodate the scale and type of traffic likely to be generated.

As explained above, no extra traffic will be generated as a result of an approval. However, in line with the recommendations given by the Highways Agency for the previous application, we propose that the hedgerow at the entrance will be maintained in order to achieve optimum visibility. Furthermore, we propose that the entrance will be tarmacked 6m wide by 10m into the site in line with those recommendations.

In addition to this, we find it important to note that the Highways Agency had concerns about traffic safety. In response to this, we argue that the visibility from the access point is approximately 150m each way. With a stopping distance of 73m for vehicles travelling at 60mph (the speed of the A686), we believe that the visibility distance is 2.05x what is required for any vehicles to safely stop should this ever be necessary.

Environment

5. Achieve efficient land use and the reuse and remediation of previously developed site where possible. Previously developed sites should always be used instead of greenfield sites where possible.

As discussed previously, the track has been there historically. The extension to the track will mean efficient land use in that the land will remain profitable for farming due to the decrease in damage to the soil through heavy vehicles and machinery.

THE PROCESS

The growing of grass requires large and heavy machinery to cultivate and harvest the crop. This leads to the possibility of soil degradation at the point of access, and deposit of debris at the point of exit, in this case onto Settle Road. The track follows adjacent to the historic track on the site. While the track is compacted hardcore, this has been designed so that it will grass over. Once this happened the track will no longer be visible but will be robust enough to support the weight of farm vehicles.

The formation of this track will remove the risk of both of the above occurring. In addition the applicant is complying with DEFRA's guidelines on soil protection, which tackles degradation threats to soil thorough compaction, erosion, or loss of organic matter, and which forms part of the Rural Development Programme and Single Farm Payment Scheme. For more information go to www.defra.gov.uk Soil Protection Review.

We would therefore conclude that the proposal should be recommended for approval.

APPENDIX 1



Image 1 showing the access



Image 2 showing the view to the left upon exiting the site



Image 3 showing the view to the right upon exiting the site



Image 4 showing the view from part way down the access track towards Settle Road

APPENDIX 2

Historic Information

Thematic Designation Maps

Aerial Photographs and Historic Maps

Map Layers

Details

Transparency: 50%

☐ OS 1950s Map

☐ OS First Edition 1:2,500

☒ OS First Edition 1:10,000 (Formerly Yorkshire)

☐ OS First Edition 1:10,000

☐ Aerial Photos

☐ 1950s Aerial Photos

☐ 1940s Aerial Photos

☐ Public Rights of Way 1998 Definitive Map



Aerial Photographs and Historic Maps

Map Layers

Details

Transparency: 25%

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☒ 1950s Aerial Photos

☐ 1940s Aerial Photos

☐ Public Rights of Way 1998 Definitive Map

