

Design and Access Statement

Applicant: J Seed

Re: Kitchen Green Farm, Ribchester

Proposal: Replacement small building at existing business premises to provide facilities (A3) to serve existing site employees and visitors

The existing diesel engine fuel system parts business was set up in 2003 and located in buildings converted on the farm. New and reconditioned parts are ordered via the business's website and delivered regionally or fitted to customers' vehicles on site. A new parts store, workshops and office space was approved in 2017. Having had a very successful 15 years of trading and the workforce from a one man band to a specialist team which is growing, it is now time to improve the on-site facilities.

The proposed small sized new building to replace existing structures will provide the necessary kitchen facilities, canteen and seating areas for both for staff and visitors together with washroom facilities to be provided in the existing structure adjoining which is also to be converted as part of the application. Within the proposal will be included the proper space, staff welfare and facilities required of all businesses under current employment legislation.

Design

The existing two structures adjacent to the office will be removed. To replace them is proposed is a part timber clad/part rendered building to be constructed with structural concrete block walls and pitched roof within the existing yard area. The external cladding will be timber which will match closely the existing site fencing and provide a pleasant contrast the more modern buildings on site and already approved. The third existing structure (north west of the office) is proposed for conversion to washrooms and will also be timber clad to match the canteen and blend in with the predominantly timber fencing on the site.

Given the late winter conditions the proposed insulated building is also preferable to the employees on site. The existing buildings adjacent to the south east are to remain complete and unaltered in external appearance.

Transport & Access

The existing access arrangements will be utilised from the road to the proposed building, farmhouse, buildings, yard and land. The entrance is onto a straight section of road with good sightlines. This application does not seek to alter the type of use of the entrances. The highways officer has previously inspected the site and site access, with sightline improvements carried out to his satisfaction. The applicant confirms as part of this application that the existing sightlines will be maintained and not be obstructed.

Access around the Building

Access to and around the buildings is to be from the existing yard area which will continue to service the existing buildings including the proposed facilities building.

Appearance

The construction is part concrete block construction, with timber cladding to the visible aspects north, south and west elevations. The proposed building is set back from the road so that it is screened to the west and north-west by the existing roadside hedgerow. This will improve the existing screening afforded by the high roadside hedge. The proposed building is screened to the south and east by the house and buildings. The proposed site is not in any area of special significance or near a public footpath.

Appraising the Context

There is a requirement for the proposed canteen for staff and visitors in terms of staff welfare and good customer service. The applicant and agent have considered all the proposed business facts and a number of different options before deciding on the chosen proposal. The considerations for the chosen option have been made whilst having regard for the policies regarding development in rural areas.

Summary

On balance the national and local policies regarding farm diversification and the expansion to serve an existing business lend support to the proposed canteen space. The site hosts an established high-tech business requiring additional purpose designed facilities on an existing site and in the very best specialist modern premises.