

## Design and Access Statement

Applicant: R Seed

Re: Kitchen Green Farm, Ribchester

**Proposal: Replacement signage to provide clear indication of the existing businesses (B1, B8 and A3) to assist existing/new site commercial trade visitors and customers to the site.**

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 were approved in 2017. Having had a very successful 15 years of trading and the workforce having grown from a one man band to a specialist team and which is forecast to continue to grow. The site now has extended car parking and on site facilities including canteen/café approved in 2018.

The proposed replacement signage has been resized to include both business information and an increase in text size so that the businesses can be clearly identified. Furthermore, this will allow proper indication of the site entrance to vehicles within reasonable distance for the purposes of safely indicating and carrying out a turning manoeuvre from the highway. It is clear to all, including those reasonably familiar with the site, that the existing signage is insufficient in both regards.

### Design

The existing sign structure adjacent to the entrance will be removed. It is proposed to replace this with a new doubled sided v sign which is a part painted timber/part aluminium, constructed on the applicant's own land. The proposed dimensions are larger than the existing, but not excessive and justified by the reasons set out above. The painted timber will be a clear but tasteful contrast to the existing timber fencing and natural foliage of the adjacent hedgerow. Text size and colouring have been chosen for clarity and simplicity.

### Transport & Access

The proposed enlarged sign at the entrance from the road (B6245) will indicate clearly the business turning. Set back from the kerb by a suitable distance the sign's upright support and sign board will not obscure the sight-lines (2m x 160m) previously agreed with the County Highways Officer. The existing access arrangements will be utilised from the road to the existing buildings, farm buildings, yard and land. The entrance is onto a straight section of road with good sight-lines.

There are a number of other business premises both on and off the same stretch of road from Ribchester to Hothersall and Longridge. It would be reasonable to clearly distinguish the subject premises from those other business premises and also private residences.

The reasoning is to avoid the unfortunate occasions where potential new clients or visitors to the area find themselves at the wrong premises and wish to re-enter the highway. A number of the other premises are tourism related, so drivers may be unwittingly over reliant on satellite navigation systems. The improved scale of signage will undoubtedly minimise these situations.

This application does not seek to alter the types of use already approved for the entrance. The highways officer has previously inspected the site and site access with existing sight-lines retained and car parking 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 Buildings**

Access to and around the existing and approved buildings is to be from the existing yard area which will continue to service all buildings. The replacement signage is outside of the yard area so will not obstruct or interfere with on-site vehicle manoeuvres, including the business premises, approved (A3) facilities building and car parking.

## **Appearance**

The existing sign structure adjacent to the entrance will be removed. It is proposed to replace this with a new doubled sided v sign which is a part painted timber/part aluminium. The proposed dimensions are larger than the existing, but not excessive and justified by the reasons set out above. The painted timber will be a clear but tasteful contrast to the existing timber fencing and natural foliage of the adjacent hedgerow. Text size and colouring have been chosen for clarity and simplicity. No garish colours or graphics have been included.

Visible aspects are to the north west and south east. The proposed site for the replacement sign is not in any area of special significance.

## **Appraising the Context**

The current signage is no longer adequate. The new proposed signage improves highway safety and provides better customer service. The applicant and agent have considered all the factors affecting the current business needs and signage requirements. A number of different options have been ruled out before deciding on the chosen proposal.

There is a good level of established precedent signage in the parish and significant levels of signage approved in other areas of the borough to support this proposal at these now well established rural business premises.

The considerations for the chosen option have been made whilst having regard for the policies of both proposed signage and development in rural areas.

## **Summary**

On balance the national and local policies regarding signage, rural businesses, farm diversification and site expansion to serve an existing business lend support to this proposal for improved signage.