

Peter Hitchen Architects

Peter Hitchen Architects Ltd

Marathon House
The Sidings Business Park
Whalley
Lancashire
BB7 9SE

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A PROPOSED RURAL FARM SHOP WITH RETAIL
UNITS AT CLERK LAITHE LODGE, NEWTON-IN-BOWLAND**



Purpose

This statement supports the planning application following a pre-application enquiry dated 25th April 2018 RV/2018/ENQ/00016 demonstrating a design and layout for a proposed rural farm shop with retail units.

The Author

Roger Hines ACIAT, the author, an Architectural Technologist with a background in traditional masonry construction methodology also, a professionally qualified Landscape designer; specialising in the integration of the built environment with the landscape.

Site

The site is situated between Newton-in-Bowland and Slaidburn. Access to the proposed site is directly off the B6478 and forms part of the Clerk Laithe Lodge facility. The site resides within the Forest-of-Bowland AONB, it does not reside within the Newton Conservation Area, although consideration of the potential impact has been given.

Planning history

RV/2018/ENQ/00016 – Pre-Application Enquiry for a proposed link between dwelling and bed & breakfast, and proposed farm shop and rural retail units.

The principle was supported by the council.

3/2011/0417 – Application for proposed annexe

Approved with conditions

3/97/0058/P – Application for the conversion of an agricultural barn to a private dwelling.

Application approved

Layout

The scheme is designed to maximise the use of the natural topography of the site. By nesting the building within the topography, the potential for any visual impact that may be associated with the proposal has been reduced.

The building comprises of a farm shop area for the sale of locally sourced produce, including elements generated from the client's farm. Within the farm shop, a café area is located to the south of the building serving food & drink.

The proposal also includes the addition of two retail units at the northern end of the building; these units will be available to rent by small independent businesses, such as artist/craftsmen studio etc.

Access to the farm shop and retail unit will be via an altered existing ingress point off the highway with off-road parking to the front of the building to accommodate all parking needs.

Massing

The proposal consists of erecting a single-storey farm shop with attached retail units which includes off-road parking.

The proposed farm shop inc. café and ancillary rooms have an internal floor area of 161m². The retail units each have an interior floor area of 13m². The overall floor area for the building is 187m².

The car parking area comprises of 26 standard parking bays and two accessible parking bays. The car park is to be finished in gravel to allow for the natural permeation of surface water and to take into consideration the position of the building within the AONB.

Materiality & Appearance

The farm shop will be set down and built into the hillside positioned approximately 15m from the existing B&B and main dwelling house. The external materials will be sympathetic to the existing buildings and surrounding local vernacular to ensure it sits harmoniously within its setting.

The façade will be constructed of local limestone with quoin stones at the corners. The windows and doors will be timber-framed with sandstone window sets. The roof will be finished in Westmorland Blue Slate.

The design has been informed by the rural setting of the building and is reflected in the use of the local vernacular and natural materials. Internally, the proposed design will be completed to a high standard to reflect the businesses core strategy.

The proposals consideration for sustainability will include photovoltaic panels to the south-west facing roofs along with the inclusion of electrical charging points for vehicles.



Figure 1, Front elevation



Figure 2, Perspective view

Applicant Statement

In 2013 we opened Clerk Laithe Lodge in the Forest of Bowland AONB with much success, and the Planning Application for a Rural Farm Shop/ Cafe and Units is to compliment the on-going business growth.

Clerk Laithe Lodge and Barn are in the centre of our Dairy Farmland on the B6478 on the outskirts of Newton in Bowland and the proposed site for the application are to the rear of the Lodge and Barn and 50 metres from the road.

We propose to build with similar and the same as the existing buildings being Random Limestone and a small percentage of Random Sandstone together with Sandstone Lintels, roofed over with Westmorland Blue Slate. We already have quite a stock of the materials near to the site.

Local Builders and Tradesmen together with Local Supplies will be used to construct the building, closely managed by ourselves and also under the supervision of Peter Hitchen Architects and his team of professionals.

The services as follows are:

Three Phase Electricity already on site but not yet connected.

Mains water already on site

LPG Gas for Cooking and Heating already on site but extra underground capacity will be required.

Waist and sewerage will be upgraded to existing with a Marsh Sewage Plant to the size and standard required, or a new separate system.

BT Fibre Telephone is in the roadside next to us for Telephone and Internet.

Also B.A.R.N has been given the ok to put underground with 800 metres of fibre optic next to and within our property, so we also have options there.

The application will also include Solar Panels on the South West facing roof elevations to complement the electric energy used.

The site is within a 4-acre field surrounded on three sides with over 500 trees planted 20 years ago, and unfortunately, 120 of these which are Ash Trees are badly effected with Die Back which mean they have to be removed, we are in the process of replacing these over a period with alternative varieties. Also along the roadside, we are to plant this autumn with Sycamores, Beech, Apple, and another to create a tree curtain between the application and the road.

For the record, we planted over 7000 trees 20 years ago on the farmland, and we expect to lose all the Ash Trees due to the Ash Die Back and will replace over a period or treat as thinned out to allow the rest more room to mature. Our Dairy Farm surrounding the application is entirely for the production of Free Range Milk, and it is our intention to produce Ice Cream, pasteurised Milk, Cream, Yogurt and other dairy products within one of the Rural Units for sale on the site and also further afield as increased production is achieved. We also intend to invite a beekeeper to the site to keep Bees to produce Honey for the Farm Shop and also as a visitor attraction.

As we are in an AONB we are dedicated to conservation on all of our property and are with the help of certain Government organisations in the process of Wildlife Conservation on the Farm Land and around the application site.

We are also one of the few in the North of England with Dark Sky Discovery Status which allows all to visit our property in certain areas to view the night skies for free.

We already have a parking area we use for the Guest House near to the application site with ample room to extend to the requirements of planning. Road access to the site is good with an existing wide entrance.

As the application design is all one level, this makes good access for disabled visitors with dedicated parking near to the entrance.

The site will have all round security CCTV and pets will be allowed under control as we are located in a farming area.

We will apply for an Alcohol Licence to serve under the rules and controls laid out by the authorities to retail with food etc.
Opening times will be from 10am to 10pm daily and all year, seasonal times will be decided upon demand.

The application we believe is a need to the local economy and future growth of the Tourism in the Forest of Bowland and funded entirely by ourselves also we estimate when fully operational will employ eight employees full and part-time, plus the retail units employment numbers.

Clerk Laithe Lodge and Rural Farm Shop Business Plan

Business History

During 2010 after both of Matthew and Helena retired from their present occupations a desire to have a Bed and Breakfast was their aim for the future and with little success to purchase away from the area the decision was made to build at Newton in Bowland the family home since 1951. With a positive planning application Clerk Laithe Lodge was opened on 10th February 2013. Successfully growing over the years the desire to compliment to the Lodge would be Rural Farm Shop and Cafe/Restaurant. During 2019 the family farm was developed into the present Dairy Farm producing Milk from a Free Range herd of Fleckvie Stock imported from Bavaria.

Business Plan

Will the ever growing Tourism in The Forest of Bowland ANOB the decision has been made to compliment the successful Bed and Breakfast Guest House with a Rural Farm Shop with Cafe facilities to the rear of the Lodge on a small field being part of Clerk Laithe Lodge property which had been previously part of the family farm surrounding the Lodge on three sides and also next to the B6478.

A positive pre-application reply was received from the Ribble Valley Council so a Full Application was decided to be placed. The land which the development will be placed is longer used for agricultural use and is totally surrounded by plantations planted during 1995/6 and is 250 metres away from the newly erected farm buildings housing the modern robotic equipment.

Some of the Free Range milk produce is to be used to make Real Ice Cream and Milk products to be sold in the development in one of the separate units. The Rural Farm Shop will be dedicated to selling products from around the Lancashire and Yorkshire Area with a small amount imported. Matthew Lewis a business partner has previous and business knowledge with owning a large Wholesale Provision and Food Distribution company in the Ribble Valley has many contacts in the local area of bespoke producers and will bring his expertise into ensuring only suitable and relevant products to the development are made available.

To compliment the Rural Farm Shop we propose to have a Cafe/ Restaurant selling to the public Food made produced on site from Locally produced products where ever possible.

Helena Lewis a business partner has previous Food preparation knowledge with owning her own food business in the Ribble Valley will control the food operation and preparation producing specific foods and dishes relevant to the cafe position and area and the expected cliental. Also serving Drinks and Beverages made on site and again from locally produced businesses.

The two additional retail units will only be used for business purposes compatible to the area and will have no conflict of interest with the rest of the project and will only be let to a suitable business.

A large amount of trees have been planted on site and a further 150 to 200 deciduous and fruit bearing trees are to be planted.

Road signage is to be kept to a minimum with only an entrance sign to be positioned and not to be obtrusive or illuminated.

On site lighting is to be only what the authority require as to be necessary as the site has Dark Sky Discovery Status obtained from the Royal Observatory by the family several years ago, the first in Lancashire and welcomes Star Gazers to the property.

Parking requirements and surfacing will be of suitable material.

As with the milk from the Family Farm we have a connection with a Honey producer and envisage hives to be placed on the site to be marketed under the Lodge name together with other bespoke products.

Being in a rural area there are footpaths near to but not on the site and we are to create a private footpath to and from the existing path to the development to allow walkers and ramblers to access the site.

Being in the AONB the wild life is most important and the Dairy Livestock on the adjoining land the project will be used for educational purposes and information boards will be erected around the property.

CCTV will be placed on the site for public safety and security.

A Tourist Information Sign will be erected on site

With no other retail units or cafe facilities in the area we feel that this development will have large benefits to the local area not only for visitors attracted to the ANOB which at certain times of the year are high as we have experience of numbers connected to the Bed and Breakfast also bringing benefits to other business in the area.

Also desperately needed employment as we estimate we will create 8 new positions of employment to the local area.

Table settings in cafe are calculated to be 22/24 in a designated area with table service only, also a alcohol table licence is to be applied for, for consumption at table only with food.

With approval the project will be completed for Summer 2021.

Figure 3, Location plan



Figure 5, Existing entrance



Figure 4. Existing site



Figure 6, Existing site - construction area