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James Hall & Co. Ltd - Alston Dairy,  
Preston

Design and Access Statement



# Contents

01	Introduction	04	Proposed Design
02	Site Description	05	Visual Impact
03	Design Evolution	06	Conclusion

EDN2334 – January 2024

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# 01 Introduction



# Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Eden Planning [the Agent] on behalf of James Hall & Co. Ltd [the Applicant]. It is prepared in support of a full planning application to the Ribble Valley Borough Council [The Council] at Alston Dairy, Alston Lane, Longridge, Preston, PR3 3BN [the Site].

The description of development is:

*“Development of a new farm shop with car parking and service yard; extension to the dairy warehouse and installation of solar panels; new staff car parking; and storage building with associated access, landscaping across the whole site and all associated works”.*

This Statement sets out the particulars of the proposed development’s design, including how it has evolved and responds to the unique site constraints. It should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement, and all other accompanying plans and technical documents.



# 02 Site and Surroundings



## Site and Surroundings

The Site is located south of the defined settlement boundary of Longridge, within the village of Alston. Longridge is the second largest key service area (KSA) in the borough and is within the administrative boundary of Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The Site (red line boundary) area is 2.9ha. The Site sits to the east of Preston Road between its junctions with Alston lane and Pinfold Lane in the south and north respectively.

### Existing use and character

The existing site constitutes the main dairy building and its associated chill store, staff parking area (15 spaces), access road and servicing area. The field to the north of the dairy and west of the dairy are also included but the farm to the east and south is excluded.

The site is an existing commercial operation and the form of the proposed buildings directly correlates to this, as well as its 'Open Countryside' setting. The existing buildings are single storey, finished in green cladding with a low pitched roof.

The site is currently bordered by a combination of low timber fencing and hedges and there are also trees intermittently along the site's access road and perimeter.

The character of the area around the site is mixed, with Open Countryside and a residential property to the north east, a farm to the east, and Alston Village to the south and west which includes some commercial properties.



## Site and Surroundings



### Access

The Site can be accessed by pedestrians and vehicles from Preston Road, c. 130m north of the buildings on the Site. This access road has good visibility and is positioned on a safe part of Preston Road where the speed limit is reduced to 30mph.

The existing access is used regularly and safely by HGV's. There is a second gated access point at the junction of Preston Road and Pinfold Lane.

The existing entrance to the site from Preston Road will be maintained and an additional access will be created on Pinfold Lane for the storage building at the northern part of the site.

A pedestrian access is located adjacent to 249 Preston Road to the south, where there is a narrow gated path from the highway leading to the dairy.

### Surrounding Area

The Site is located within a mixed residential and agricultural area which is dominated by the dairy. Many of the surrounding properties have rural characteristics such as using stone materials and being low in height such as bungalows or cottage style dwellings.

With the exception of the nearby farm buildings, properties typically have dark framed windows such as brown, burgundy or black, however there is no consistent style. Roofing materials also vary although are typically grey/black slate.

# 03 Design Evolution



# Design Evolution

There are several opportunities and constraints with the site, which have been carefully considered in the preparation of the scheme.

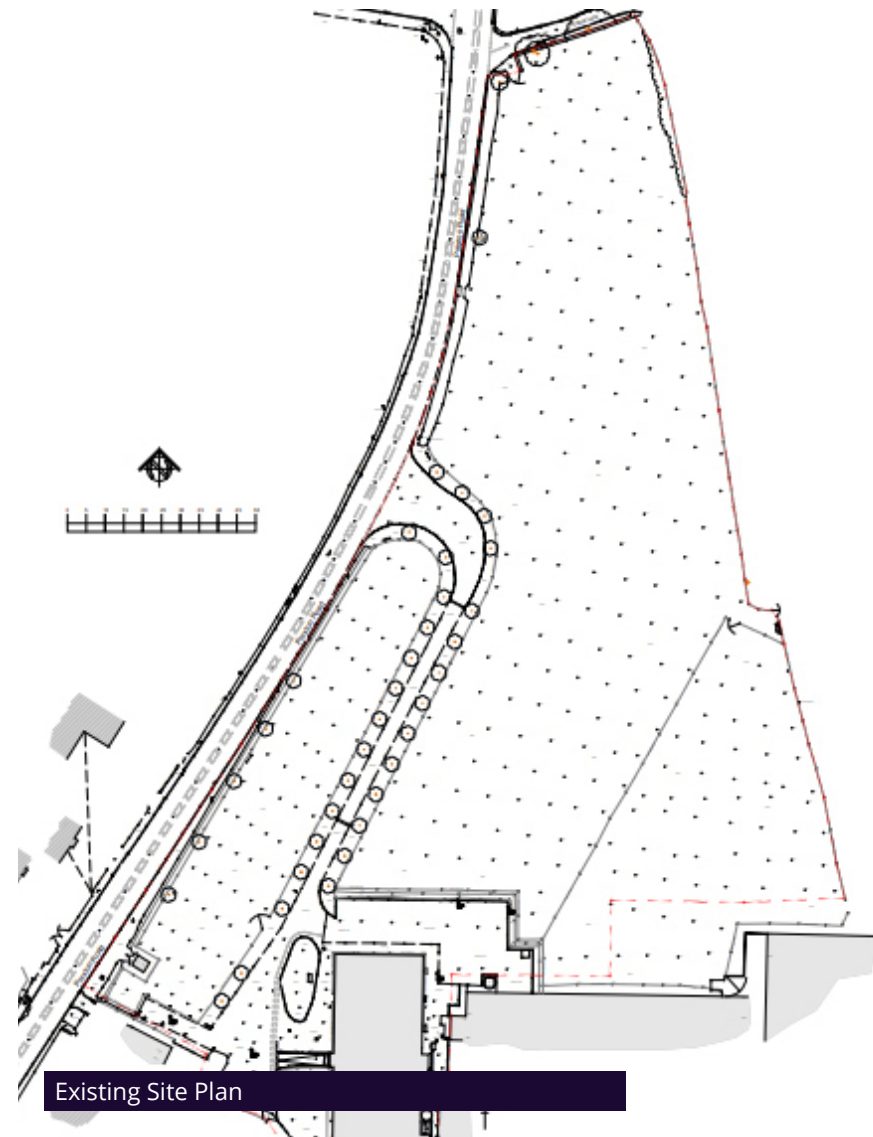
The main opportunities are:

- The development of a new farm shop to serve the local community.
- Extension to the dairy to enhance production capabilities and consumer offerings and create 30 new jobs.
- The farm shop will generate approximately 20 full time and 20 part time job opportunities.
- There is an established appropriate access road into the site which can accommodate additional capacity.
- Space for improved and extended parking arrangements, which include accessible spaces and electric vehicle (EV) charging station.
- Suitable location between the settlements of Longridge and Grimsargh for local clientele.

Key constraints for the site have been evaluated and summarised:

- As the proposed development is situated within the Open Countryside, it is imperative that the proposed building and associated structures are in keeping with the surrounding character.
- The areas of existing hardstanding are limited.
- Proximity of residential properties.
- Need to maintain the gap between settlements of Longridge and Alston.

These opportunities and constraints have been considered throughout the design evolution of this proposal.



# Design Evolution

## Previous Planning Applications and Design Proposals

There have been a number of iterations of the proposal which have included a varying degree of development.

Consideration was given to splitting the different elements of the proposal into separate applications; however, it was concluded that the elements of the development are interlinked and need to be assessed in the round given the semi-rural location, hence one all-encompassing submission was preferred.

The initial design of the dairy extension was only 1,350m<sup>2</sup> although following a detailed review of the anticipated growth of the dairy operation, it was deemed a greater capacity would be required. Therefore the scale of the proposal has increased in line with the other existing structures in the area.



# 04 Proposed Design



# Proposed Design

The proposal includes:

- Farm shop and café at the front of the site with associated parking and service yard.
- Extension to the dairy with associated staff car park.
- Storage building in the north.

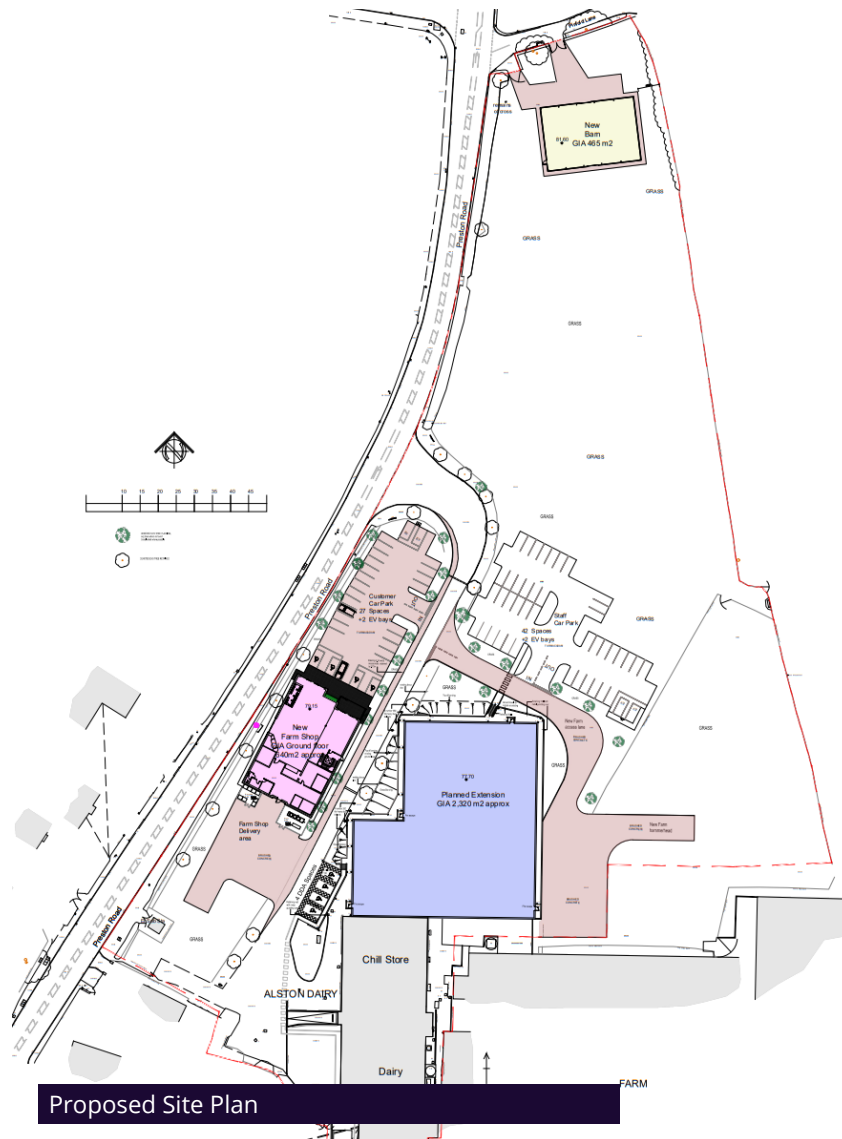
## Use

The proposed development is intended to provide an enhancement to the dairy production and sale of local produce for Alston Dairy. Given the existing commercial nature of the site, the proposal offers expansion which would be considered in keeping and appropriate for this location.

The new farm shop is designed to provide an attractive and sustainable location for the local community to purchase local produce. At present, although a 'Shop' is advertised at the site access, this is purely a counter for local residents to purchase yoghurt in bulk. By contrast, the new farm shop will stock the full range of Ann Forshaw products and other locally produced goods. The inclusion of a cafe will constitute a community asset as well as generating local employment.



# Proposed Design



## Layout

The new farm shop is proposed to be situated on the existing grassed area currently separating the dairy from the public highway. It has been positioned some distance away from the neighbouring properties at 249 Preston Road to protect their amenity. The layout also has the benefit of separation between the public facing and production elements on site, with each being readily legible.

The location of the proposed dairy extension is dictated by the shape of the site combined with the dairy's existing location on the southern tip of the site. Keeping within the Applicant's landownership, it is only possible to extend to the north. Consequently, the car park needs to be relocated and it is proposed to do so adjacent to the extension so that it is separate from the public car park and access for the Farm Shop.

The position of the dairy extension and its car park is a natural evolution of built form northward.

The dairy extension is proposed to be 2,380m<sup>2</sup>. The design of the building follows the character of the existing dairy buildings and agricultural buildings adjacent.

The storage building in the north of the site has a proposed total height of 7m and gross internal area of 465m<sup>2</sup>. This is a more modest sized building which respects the openness and exposure of its location.

The overall density of the proposal is variable. The farm shop and dairy extension are proximate to one another although maintain a consistent density with the remainder of the site, whereas the storage building is located to the north to create a 'gap' in built form to reflect the existing character of the settlement.

# Proposed Design

## Materials

The proposed farm shop boasts attractive cedar cladding, and a natural stone base, which resembles characteristics of surrounding properties in the village. There will be timber facing details to frame the façade such as sun-shades. The roof will be a natural grey slate to respect the appearance of the surrounding built form which occupy Preston Road. There will also be a number of roof windows visible from the southeast elevation and PV Solar panels.

The main entrance to the farm shop will feature prominent symmetrical triangular ridges with consuming windowpanes. The front façade will mostly be glass with powder coated aluminium frames and cedar cladding. This elevation can be seen from Preston Road southbound. The public facing elevation (northwest) will be clad in cedar and have large aluminium framed windows with timber ledged battened and braced sliding doors for an authentic, rustic appeal.

The extension to the dairy will be finished in a neutral colour corrugated cladding, in keeping with the existing buildings on site.

The storage building will have a red brick base to tie in with nearby residential properties but also include cedar cladding in keeping with the proposed new farm shop.

## Access and Parking

The existing access leads to an internal road which will serve the farm shop customer car park and deliveries, the dairy staff car park and deliveries. The existing access from Preston Road will be retained as the primary point of access into the site. It has good visibility splays and is wide enough to accommodate delivery vehicles.

Parking for the farm shop is proposed to the north of the building, which is in front of the shop's main entrance. This car park will provide 26 spaces including 4 DDA compliant spaces and 2 with electric vehicle charging points and 2 Motor Cycle spaces. As mentioned, there will be a new entrance to this car park created from the existing access road.

Equally, an additional spur will be introduced from the existing road eastward which will go around the proposed dairy extension to enable further access for delivery vehicles. At the rear of the farm shop (south), there will be an area of hardstanding for delivery vehicles to access the shop and sufficient space for HGVs to manoeuvre.

The new staff car park for the dairy will provide 42 spaces and an additional 4 DDA compliant spaces in front (west) of the dairy buildings. Of the 44 staff spaces, 2 will have electric vehicle charging points.

For the storage building in the north of the site, access to this has been dealt with separately considering the distance from the remainder of the development. A new access will be implemented from Pinfold Lane and has been designed to facilitate the manoeuvring of vehicles by allowing a large area of turning space. It is in this area that the loading and unloading of logs and machinery will take place.

# Proposed Design

## Connectivity

There are bus stops located on Preston Road, 90m south of the site. These are served by the 1, 99, 822 and S1 services which provide frequent connections to surrounding settlements such as Longridge, Goosnargh and Preston City Centre. The site is well connected by these bus services to the wider area however, the site also benefits from a good walking catchment due to its location within the village of Alston but close to new residential areas on the perimeter of Longridge.

Given that this is a local farm shop selling local produce, the target consumer will be located nearby and would not need any additional mode of transport that is not already available. For deliveries and exporting goods, there is good access for HGVs to this site. Preston Road (B6243) is a 40mph and 30mph carriageway which connects to the B6242 leading to the Junction 31A of the M6/Preston Bypass, 5.5km from the site.

## Sustainability

The proposed buildings will be constructed in compliance with building regulations, providing energy efficient buildings for their lifespan. As well as being energy efficient, the proposal includes a number of PV panels to be fitted to the roof of both the dairy extension and the farm shop. There are also EV charging facilities available on site to promote green travel.

The fact that the dairy uses milk from the adjacent farm to manufacture its products and the products will be sold in the new farm shop also increases the sustainability of the site.



# 05 Visual Impact



## Visual Impact

A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Bridge Associates has been prepared and submitted with this planning application. This provides the full details of the impact that the proposed development will have on short, medium and long range views - both during the construction and operational phases of development.

This shows that whilst there will be some impact resulting from the proposed development, they are mostly limited to short range and short lived impacts. This is because, although the application site is located in an area designated as 'Open Countryside' it does sit against a backdrop of large agricultural buildings.

The proposed dairy extension and farm shop sit adjacent to a large farm and within a ribbon of development on Preston Road. Both of these factors, particularly when put with the extensive proposed landscaping serve to lessen the impact to the extent that will only be minor.

In addition, the proposed storage building has been positioned on the northern end of the site so that the 'gap' between properties at the south of Longridge and the village of Alston is maintained. This part of the site also benefits from a significant number of existing trees in the neighbouring residential curtilage.

# Visual Impact

Existing view from Preston Road/ Pinfold Lane



Existing view from Preston Road



Proposed view from Preston Road/ Pinfold Lane



Proposed view from Preston Road



# 06 Conclusion



## Conclusion

The proposed development has been thoroughly considered to ensure that the scale, materiality and form is appropriate to the setting of the site and context.

The expansion of the dairy is wholly in keeping with the existing buildings on the site and will be read as part of the existing dairy complex. The new storage building reflects a traditional agricultural style to assimilate with its surroundings. The proposed farm shop and café provide an opportunity for the applicant to sell local produce from the farm itself and is appropriately scaled for its setting.

While there are three main elements to the development, there are characteristics which bring the scheme together and enhance the functionality of the site.

Overall, it is considered that this proposal provides a high quality, sustainable asset to the community.

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## Get in touch

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