

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Agricultural Access & Track

at

High Lee Farm
Mill Lane
Rushton Spencer
Macclesfield
SK11 0RS

for

Mr J Hulson

March 2016

Rev C

Robert Berry MCIAT
Architectural Services

Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Use
3.0	Amount
4.0	Layout
5.0	Landscape
6.0	Scale
7.0	Appearance
8.0	Access

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access statement has been prepared in response to the Governments changes to the planning application process outlines in circular: *Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System*, which came into effect on the 10th August 2006.
- 1.2 The statement provides an analysis and narrative of the proposals and is in line with guidance produced by CABE entitled *Design & Access Statements; how to write, read and use them*.
- 1.3 This is a full application (part retrospective) for the construction of a new agricultural access and track to serve land at High Lee Farm, Mill Lane, Rushton Spencer and follows the withdrawal of application no. SMD/2014/0412 and the refusal of application no SMD/2014 0591.
- 1.4 Since the previous applications the applicant has since purchased additional land to the side which will enable the entrance to be formed adjacent to the original field entrance which also enables a shallower gradient to the access thereby as a consequence there will be less engineering works as the driveway will now follow the natural ground contours.
The recently removed wall and hedgerow will now be reinstated,

2.0 Uses

- 2.1 The existing site is a farm holding of 3.23 hectares which is owned by the applicant together with two further parcels of land of 2.02 and 1.01 hectares which is rented on the opposite side of the road.
The farm currently has 14 heifers who graze on the land with further fields being set aside for hay making.
The applicant had previously purchased the land to the side of High Lee however the farmer selling the land has retained the present agricultural access and in order to provide a more practical and reasonable access to the field and further land this new access and track has been constructed approximately 10 m away from the original that has been retained by the farmer selling the land.
As can be noted from the overhead map below there is an existing farm track passing through the field to serve the land, however this is in poor condition and cuts directly through this particular field thereby restricting its usability and from an agricultural perspective is not particularly practical. This track is in poor condition and is in need of some repair and for many periods of the year is impractical to use due to the steep incline.
Since the last refusal the applicant has purchased a further parcel of land which will enable the length of track to be extended closer to the existing access with a shallower gradient being formed and the recently formed opening onto Mill lane being built up and reinstated to it's original form,

The formation of this new track will enable the original track to be removed and utilised for agricultural purposes leaving a larger uninterrupted field which will make the farming of this land a lot more practical and efficient.

The proposal has been sited to run parallel to the road which will minimise the impact on the open countryside and the replacement of the track which ran through the field can only provide a positive impact on the open countryside.

2.2 It is considered that this new access is situated in the most appropriate position within the road frontage owned by the applicant from a highway safety perspective and that this viable practical access position is essential for the operational needs of the farm enabling modern agricultural vehicles, cattle wagons, horse trailers etc to enter, turn and exit the site in a safe and practical manner.

It will also enable access to be provided to the fields within the farm ownership and by replacing an existing track which presently runs diagonally across the field will have at the very least an overall neutral affect on the openness of the Green Belt.

Existing overhead view of access track to High Lee Farm



Line of original track

High Lee Farm

3.0 Amount

- 3.1 The proposed track will now be approximately 113 m long x 3.6 m wide.

4.0 Layout

- 4.1 The layout / route of the access has been determined to provide the most practical and direct route from the highway to serve both the existing farmyard and the fields and has been positioned to run parallel to and behind a mature hedge fronting the roadway to minimise the impact on the open countryside .
- 4.2 The access position will also enable cattle to be herded along this track to access fields on the opposite side of the road which are rented by the applicant thereby minimising disruption on the narrow lane for vehicles should the cattle have to be taken down this lane.
- 4.3 The layout has been slightly amended on this revised application following original discussions on the previous applications with the Council's Planning Officer Mr C Johnston and the County Highways Department in order to achieve a satisfactory and safe turning facility into the site to accommodate agricultural vehicles and in particular small cattle wagons that access the site.

This has resulted in a slightly revised entrance detail at the junction with Mill Lane, previously it had been agreed to realign the gradient of this new access from the highway to the new gate and provide a concrete finish.

5.0 Landscape

- 5.1 The site is set in open countryside and is characterised by open fields, mature hedgerows to the road frontage and is set against a backcloth of rising land to the rear with mature woodland behind to the rear.
- 5.2 Upon completion the disturbed ground either side of the access and track will be re-seeded and returned to grassland. The access track will be of a simple functional lime stone construction with a concrete finish on the first section between the highway and the recently constructed gate.
- 5.3 The new fencing along the track will be post and wire approximately 1.2 m high.
- 5.4 The existing hedge running alongside Mill Lane will be removed to improve visibility from the new access position with a new native holly and Hawthorne hedge mixture hedge being replanted behind the new visibility splay line.

6.0 Scale

- 6.1 The proposed access and track will be of a practical functional scale to meet the access requirements of the farm.

7.0 Appearance

- 7.1 The access and track will be of a simple functional appearance to match other agricultural accesses in the vicinity.

8.0 Access

- 8.1 The access is off an unclassified road and has been designed to meet the functional requirements of the farm.

The present access adjacent to the dwelling is very steep and as indicated by the levels on the attached plan has a gradient of approximately 1 in 5 which along with the limited turning area makes the present access totally impractical for agricultural vehicles and cattle wagons to turn and manoeuvre within the site whereas the proposal will enable cattle wagons to more easily enter and leave the site and will enable cattle to be moved along from the farm buildings into the fields on the opposite side of the track thereby minimising disturbance and hold ups to vehicular traffic along the lane.

The proposal will replace an existing track effectively having a neutral effect of development in the countryside and will help improve the practical efficiency of the farm.

- 8.2 The need for a new access has been highlighted recently when attempting to utilise this present access as different types of vehicles have actually bottomed out on the drive.

There is no practical means of actually improving this access within the present site constraints and levels and whilst just about suitable for domestic vehicles the present access and limited yard area is totally impractical for any sort of larger agricultural vehicle with virtually no visibility available at the junction with Mill Lane.

- 8.3 The proposed new track and access have now been slightly amended to comply with Highway Department requirements this has been achieved by reducing the gradient from the highway to the gate to a maximum of 1 in 10, realigning the access so that it is now perpendicular to Mill Lane, providing a concrete finish to this first section to match the adjacent accesses and incorporating a drainage channel along the bottom of the drive which will be taken to a new soakaway whilst the remainder of the drive will retain a hardcore finish and will naturally soak away into the ground. Furthermore it is intended to cut back the hedge fronting Mill Lane and set a new hedge on an improved visibility splay all as indicated on the amended plan.

The purchase of the additional land has enabled the gradient to be made shallower to more naturally follow the existing contours which as a consequence means that the ground levels can be graded up to the original natural ground level and reduce the need for the construction of retaining walls and other associated engineering works which was a previous concern of the planning dept.