

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
(Including Heritage Statement)

LANCASHIRE FARM
LITTLEBOROUGH
OL15 8BZ

6th February 2026

Revision 2

1. INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement accompanies planning application 25/00897/FUL for the proposed side extension to an existing manufacturing unit within Littleborough Industrial Estate. The document outlines the design rationale, site context, layout, scale, appearance, and access considerations for the development. It also includes a Heritage Statement addressing the site's proximity to the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area, demonstrating how the proposal has been sensitively designed to avoid adverse impact on designated heritage assets.

2. SITE CONTEXT

The site lies within Littleborough Industrial Estate, an area occupied by a mixture of industrial and commercial uses. Existing buildings within the estate are typically characterised by external steel-frame structures with metal cladding and brick plinths, accompanied by large service yards. The existing unit is bordered by industrial units to the east and south, and residential dwellings to the north and west. The site is situated close to Whitelees Road, yet it is accessed via Church Street. The site sits adjacent to, but outside of, the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area, designated for its historic stone buildings, distinctive townscape, Victorian commercial architecture, and the linear form of the settlement along River Roch and key transport routes. Whilst the application site resides outside of the Conservation Area, its proximity requires careful consideration of visual and contextual relationships.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal seeks to construct a modest extension to the existing industrial unit to improve operational efficiency, accommodate storage requirements, and support the growth of the business. The extension will be located on the north-eastern elevation of the building, within the existing curtilage of the site.

Key elements of the proposed extension:

- Simple, functional rectangular form consistent with the existing unit.
- Grey standing seam cladding to match the existing unit.
- Height aligned with the existing unit to maintain a cohesive built form.
- New pedestrian access to the unit.
- Existing hedgerows and trees along the site boundary are retained to ensure the extension does not have a large visual impact on neighbouring residents.

4. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.1. LAYOUT

The extension is positioned to integrate seamlessly with the existing unit, adopting a rectangular footprint that complements the existing unit, without the large scale of the existing unit. The layout respects operational requirements for vehicular movement, loading, and safety. The footprint maintains clear manoeuvring areas for HGVs. Though the extension does encroach on parking spaces within the delivery area, these spaces are not currently used. The arrangement ensures no encroachment into neighbouring plots.

4.2. SCALE

The scale of the proposal responds directly to the proportions of the existing unit. The extension adopts:

- An eaves height matching the existing unit.
- A ridge line that continues that of the existing form directly adjacent to it, which is lower than the main ridge line of the building.
- A compact footprint. The existing building area is approximately 6282sqm, and the proposed extension measures 521sqm, resulting in a percentage area increase of only 8%.

These considerations ensure that the development remains visually subordinate to the current building, avoiding excessive bulk or visual dominance within the estate.

4.3. APPEARANCE AND MATERIALITY

A coherent architectural language will be maintained by using materials that match the existing industrial unit:

- Standing seam cladding and roofing to match the existing
- Two shades of grey to match the existing, following the same datum as the existing
- Black aluminium doors
- Concrete or tarmac hardstanding finishes

These choices reinforce the functional character of the industrial estate while ensuring durability, low maintenance, and visual continuity between the existing and proposed.

The existing building is mostly obscured from Whitelees Road by dense hedgerows along the site boundary. A grassed mound provides relief between the building and Whitelees Road, whilst ensuring the site has a lower ground level to the road, further reducing its visual impact. Established trees to the north and east boundaries of the site also provide privacy to the adjacent dwellings, which will be retained.

5. ACCESS

The current vehicular access arrangement onto the site is retained. The proposal does not alter access points, road geometry, or visibility splays. Internal circulation will remain safe and efficient for HGVs, delivery vans, and staff vehicles.

The pedestrian route to the building remains unchanged; however, a new pedestrian access gate has been proposed, as the existing gate occupies the proposed location for the extension. Pedestrian access remains safe and secure, with the pedestrian building entrance located at the rear of the extension, not requiring individuals to walk in front of or near the vehicular entrance.

Two staff/visitor parking spaces are removed for the proposal, though this area is to accommodate bike shelters, encouraging cycling to work. Parking provisions remain adequate for both staff and visitors.

6. HERITAGE STATEMENT

The application site lies adjacent to, but outside, the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area, an area designated to protect the historic character of the town centre. Whilst the proposal is modern and does not contribute to the character or setting of the Conservation Area, it resides within an existing modern industrial estate that also does not reflect the nearby Conservation Area.

The proposed extension is sensitive to its immediate surroundings, demonstrated through a height consistent with the existing unit, a footprint significantly smaller than the existing unit, and all external materials matching those of the existing unit.

Nearby the site are two non-designated heritage assets, both pre-dating 1850. The first consists of a pair of semi-detached houses, located to the north of the site's boundary. These were historically known as Smithy Field and likely housed domestic workshops on the upper floors, indicated by the expanse of windows. Their construction consists of local stone, complemented by stone fenestration surrounds and mullions. Beyond these two properties lies a run of terraced properties, built from the same stone, and suspected to have also housed upper-storey workshops. The varying heights and levels between the dwellings suggest that they were not built at the same time, and all have undergone alterations such as the addition of porches and

replacement windows. Despite these changes, their character remains, and their heritage is of interest.

Though the semi-detached properties border the north boundary of the site, the visual impact of the proposal should not be significant to these heritage assets. The proposal is well screened to the north by tall, established hedgerows lining the road and by a dense area of vegetation and trees separating the proposal from Smithy Field. Furthermore, the site sits at a ground level significantly lower than both Whitelees Road and the properties in question, significantly reducing the visual impact of the extension.

Given the modest nature of the proposal, its sympathetic design approach, and its location within a modern industrial context separated from historic townscape, the development is assessed to cause no adverse impact on the special interest, character, or appearance of the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area. Similarly, the existing dense vegetation and level change between the proposal and Smithy Field ensure that the visual impact on these non-designated heritage assets is minimal.