

Riverside Design Group

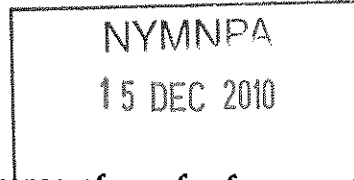
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Mrs H Saunders
Senior Area Planning Officer
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The Old Vicarage
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8 December 2010

Your Ref: NYM4/029/0253C/PA

Our Ref: MJM/SK/S.869



Dear Mrs Saunders

Design & Access Statement for proposed change of use for former petrol sales/shop building on land opposite Fylingdales Service Station, Nr Flask Inn, Fylingdales, Whitby for Mr & Mrs J Norton.

The Site

The application site is a significant piece of land with frontage to and accessed directly from the main Whitby/ Scarborough road, being the A171, the frontage being the original garage forecourt area. Currently the site has a semi-industrial appearance since over time, through circumstances beyond their control, the applicants were unable to complete the development originally approved or reach agreement with the LPA on alternate uses. The site has therefore been used as a parking area for recovery vehicles for some fifteen years.

Site history

Fylingdales Service Station as a business has been in operation for over fifty years, operated initially by Mr Norton Senior and taken over in 1977 by Mr Norton Junior and his wife who have resided on the site since 1981.

In an attempt to improve the viability of the business in the late 80s, a decision was taken to seek consent to upgrade the facilities for petrol sales and services on the land opposite and to address the more stringent rules and regulations governing the storage and selling of fuels which had come into being at that time. Consent was granted in 1989 although, due to the financial implications in meeting these latest requirements of the Fire Service, the applicants were not able to erect the new building until 1995.

The Building

The building which is the subject of the accompanying application is of traditional stone and pantiled construction and is modest in size with limited window openings.

At its inception, the building was intended to provide petrol sales, toilet facilities and a convenience shop for motorists passing south along the main road. It was believed that this new facility would complement the existing services on the opposite side of the road serving north-bound traffic. This then was the thinking which brought about the creation of this new sales and services building.

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Trading Issues

Unfortunately, through major changes occurring in the petrol retailing business at that time, the building was essentially redundant by the time that construction of the shell had finished. By 1995, all of the major Supermarket retailers had started to sell fuel on their sites at discounted rates and as a direct consequence independent fuel retailers then started to go out of business at an accelerating rate.

In 1992, for example, there were approximately 18,000 independent retailers throughout the UK but by 2007 this number had dwindled to a little over 9,200 and currently there are now only some 8,000 sites remaining although these are diminishing at the rate of approximately 600 per year. It has now been established that when a Supermarket opens a petrol forecourt, it is likely to sell up to five times the volume of a traditional supplier and this situation, coupled with consumers' expectations of low prices and twentyfour hour opening, is unlikely to change. For these reasons, it has inevitably proved impractical to attempt to use this building for the intended use as a service station.

Faced with these changes, the applicants took a decision to upgrade the main existing facilities on the south side of the A171. Consent was granted to replace the existing timber cabin with a modern building incorporating petrol sales, a shop and toilets and this was erected in 2001. Prior to that time and to help maintain the viability of the business the existing workshop services had been supplemented by the establishment of a vehicle recovery service. This additional service had proved to be moderately successful and has since been improved through training and investment to the point at which it is now used by all of the major motoring organisations and the Police to recover vehicles disabled either through break-down or accident.

During this time attempts were made to find an alternate use for the building which is the subject of this application, without success, and similarly the prospect of selling it was proved impractical by Estate Agents offering valuations which were significantly lower than the cost of building it. The building has therefore remained empty and unused.

Staffing issues

Finding staff to help run the business has always been a problem, given the remote location of the site midway between Whitby and Scarborough, although latterly Mr Norton's son has joined the business to help to run it. However there is an absence of any accommodation in the surrounding area and consequently Mr Norton's son is obliged to travel in daily from Scarborough. This in its self presents problems on occasions as the recovery business does much of its work outside of normal working hours, thus requiring Mr Norton to attend incidents on his own. For these reasons this application seeks to make use of the empty building by adapting it to domestic use.

Design opportunity

The drawings which accompany this application demonstrate how, with a minimum of alteration to existing openings and the addition of two screen walls, this redundant building can be converted into a dwelling, with no increase in overall size or height necessary. A planting/landscaping scheme is proposed which will enhance the appearance of the site, the existing access is more than adequate and there is already a sewage treatment plant on site to accommodate foul drainage.

For and on behalf of Mr & Mrs J Norton

NYM NPA

15 DEC 2010