Design & Access Statement

Project: Proposed Roof Alterations at Alvan Blanch Dev. Co. Ltd., Chelworth, Wiltshire, SN16 9SG.

Applicant: Alvan Blanch Dev. Co. Ltd.

Project Reference No: PP-12578694

Architect: Minster Architecture, 90 Herne Rise, Illminster, TA19 0HL.

1. Introduction

Alvan Blanch is a medium-sized, family-run business which employs 105 staff to design and manufacture large-scale crop processing machinery. We have been located on the same site in Wiltshire for over 70 years and are a rare example of a UK design and steel fabrication business which continues to produce locally and export globally.

We seek to upgrade one of the existing buildings at our production facility from a mono-pitch roof to a portal frame design, to permit the installation of gantry cranes which will support our continued manufacturing and export activities.

2. Design Statement

At Alvan Blanch, we have continued to operate in a tough industry over recent years by reinvesting all profits back into our manufacturing facility to increase productivity, maintain price competitiveness, improve safety and reduce our carbon impact. However, we also recognise that to meet changing skills and expectations of the local workforce, we can no longer fabricate our grain driers (our largest and most popular product line) from the floor up as we have until now. Despite our best efforts, we are unable to recruit the required welders/fabricators locally due to a loss of interest in this type of work, which is manually strenuous whilst requiring a high level of specialist skill and experience.

These factors have necessitated a complete redesign in terms of how we construct these machines with a focus on reducing muscular-skeletal strain, safety risks associated with working at height and the reliance on these specialist welding skills. Our plan is to fabricate the grain driers in more manageable smaller sections (using a combination of manual and robot welding), which can then be brought together and assembled with the use of gantry cranes. As well as improving work conditions for our staff, we believe this will allow us to increase productivity and improve our long-term outlook.

There is currently insufficient space beneath the existing mono-pitch roof of our main weld/assembly workshop to allow gantry cranes to be installed (please refer to the photos in Appendix 2). However, by upgrading this building to a portal frame design, the southern eaves of the building will be raised by over 2m, permitting the installation of such cranes. As shown within the planning drawings, this can be achieved without the building exceeding the height of the surrounding factory buildings. Note also that this development does not increase the factory floor area.

3. Access Statement

There is already good access to this building for vehicles and pedestrians (including disabled access). As such there is no plan to change the access requirements.

4. Visual Impact

The only noticeable visual impact from a public location will be from the factory gate or when seen from the public footpath that runs to the west of the site.

The materials to be used will be of the same type and colour as the existing and surrounding buildings. As well as updated elevation drawings, we have included a visual representation of the proposed roof change at Appendix 1 of the Design and Access Statement.

We believe this change will improve the overall aesthetics of the factory, tying this part of the site in with the surrounding portal frame buildings.

5. Ecological Statement

Following an inspection of the roofs, we can confirm that there are no birds nesting. The ecological impact of the development is expected to be negligible.

6. Drainage

The development will be connected to the same storm drains as the existing roof, which direct storm water into local water courses. The roof surface area is not changing.
No foul sewage is generated by the part of the factory where the development is taking place. The areas of the factory that generate foul sewage are already connected to a package treatment plant.

7. Waste Storage and Collection

The proposed roof upgrade does not require any changes to be made to the existing waste storage and collection arrangements. Factory waste is already separated and recycled wherever possible, with storage predominantly in skips in the factory yard.

8. Associated Grant

Please be advised that a grant is also being sought from the Invest in Wiltshire fund which seeks to support local businesses with facilities and productivity enhancements. We have been advised that we have a strong application, however this would be reliant on us receiving a positive indication that planning will be approved within the next few weeks.

Appendix 1 – Existing and Proposed views from west end of factory yard



Figure 1a: Existing view from west end of factory



Figure 1b: Proposed view from west end of factory

Appendix 2 – Photos

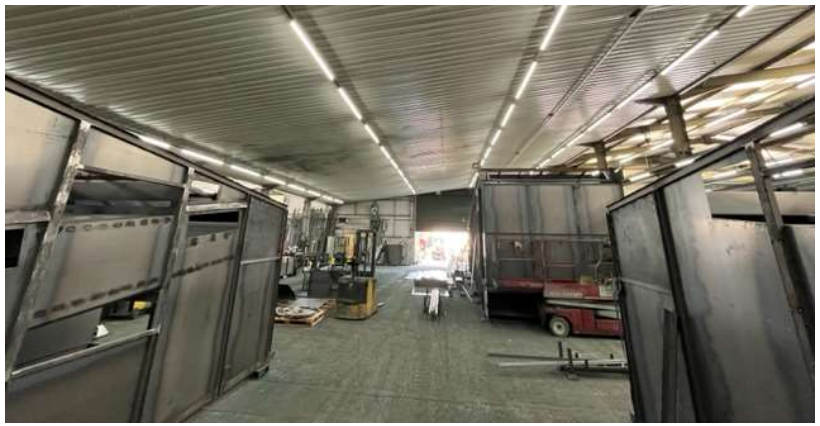

Figure 2: Grain driers being manufactured inside the existing factory area with single pitch roof. It is currently impossible to install gantry cranes to support drier building.



Figure 3: Gantry cranes of the type that we intend to install to support grain drier assembly. These will reduce work strain of our operatives, minimise working at height risk and increase productivity.