

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2022/0005
Valid 07/02/2022

SQUARE MEADOW FARM
ASH BANK ROAD
WERRINGTON

PROPOSED NEW PORTAL
FRAME AGRICULTURAL
BUILDING.

(AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY
DETERMINATION)

MAIN ISSUES

Whether or not the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed building is acceptable.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is on the southern edge of Werrington but to the south of the development boundary which runs along the Ash Bank road, A52 main road a short distance to the north and the site is therefore deemed to be within the “countryside” and is also within the Green Belt. The site forms parts of a farm and milk business and has a total size of 9.3 hectares. The farm comprises buildings to the west of the site and the fields to the south of it which slope downwards towards the south. The farm is accessed via an access road off Ash Bank Road. There are dwellings facing Ash Bank Road to the north of the farm and also to the east side forming ribbon development facing Ash Bank Road. The land to the immediate east of the site is open fields. The site itself is part of an open field and there is small separate parcel of open land to the north next to the access road which has trees and recent planting. There is a track adjoining the access road which runs along the east side of the site heading south.

PROPOSAL

The application is a “Notification of Prior Approval” application for an agricultural storage building with Moorland Green plastic coated sheeting above a concrete base and which would have a footprint of 14.0 x 9.5 metres. As originally submitted the building had an eaves height of 4.8 metres and a ridge height of 6.2 metres. It would be placed on an east-west access, similar to the other farm buildings and would be used to store a tractor and other machinery to maintain the field for a neighbouring farmer who farms the land for cattle and harvesting silage in the adjacent fields within the same ownership. The building would also be used as a workshop for the maintenance of the machinery, to store spare parts and other items needed for the upkeep and maintenance of the land. However, the covering letter also refers to hay and fodder storage uses for the building in addition. The site plan shows the southern boundary of the site would be used for tree and hedge planting to provide screening of the building in the landscape and to stabilise the slope.

Under Part 6 Class A of the GPDO, a full planning application is not required for new agricultural buildings on farms of over 5.0 hectares, subject to the proposal meeting

all the other criteria set out in Class A.1 of that part. However, the same part of the GPDO requires the submission of a "Notification of Prior Approval" application and the Council must determine, along with whether or not the proposal meets the tests in Class A.1, whether Prior Approval is required for the siting, design and appearance

In this case, it was decided on 7.3.22 that Prior Approval was required, due to the scale and siting of the building and its impact on the visual amenities of the area. As required under the legislation, the applicant put up a site notice to advertise the proposed development on 11.3.22.

The Council must now determine the application on the basis of the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed building.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

N/A

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None relevant.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 1.4.22

Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

OFFICER COMMENTS

With regard to siting, design and external appearance of the proposed building, although there are other buildings at the farm which could be used for further storage purposes, the only available building has limited height for the purpose of storing a tractor and other machinery for the maintenance of the land, hence the reason for a new building. It would be relatively small for an agricultural storage building and I do not consider it would be excessive for the purpose of maintaining over 9 hectares of land along with hay and fodder storage. It would have a typical farm storage building form and design and colour of materials.

As originally proposed there was no issue about the visual impact of the proposed building. There are open views of this location from the south and east and the site is elevated

above the surrounding countryside. The site is steeply sloping and the drawings originally submitted with the application showed building elevated in order to create a level finished floor.

Following further discussions with the applicant and a site visit, which determined that there were no suitable alternative locations, amended plans were submitted which show the finished floor level of the building reduced by 400mm and the eaves height of the building dropped by 800mm.

Following the submission of the amended plans I do not consider it would encroach unnecessarily into the open landscape. There is development further up to the slope to the north of which the building would be seen against when viewed from the open land to the south, although it would not be prominent from the south due to the absence of nearby footpaths, with the nearest footpath to the south being one heading towards the prison buildings (which encroach much further into the open countryside) which lie further to the west on a north-south axis. It would be no further south than the southernmost building at the farm and would be level with and adjacent to a yard with retaining outer wall. It would be smaller and lower than most of the farm building. Whilst there will remain some cut and fill, the need for this will be reduced and it will no longer be harmfully visible from outside of the farm. Further tree and hedge planting is proposed along the southern edge of the proposed building to provide additional screening. The building including concrete base would be very well screened from the main road and residential properties to the north by a well planted patch of the land immediately to the north of the site.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development meets the tests in Part 6 Class A.1 and can be provided under permitted development not requiring a full planning application, via the Notification of Prior Approval process. It was decided that Prior Approval was required for the development. Further information has now been submitted which includes amended elevation drawings and sections and details of materials, is sufficient for the Council to determine the impact with regard to siting, appearance and design. In this respect the proposal is acceptable and therefore passes the tests in Part 6 Class A.2 and the application is recommended for approval

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE DETAILS OF SITING AND DESIGN

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 28/12/2022

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

