

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2023/0011
Valid 17/04/2023

HILLTOP FARM HARES
LANE
HIGHSHUTT
CHEADLE

APPLICATION TO DETERMINE
IF PRIOR APPROVAL IS
REQUIRED FOR A PROPOSED
CATTLE SHED FOR NEW
BEEF REARING ENTERPRISE

(AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY
DETERMINATION)

MAIN ISSUES

Whether or not the proposed agricultural building can be built under a Notification of Prior Approval application under Part 6 of the GPDO rather than a full planning application.

If so, whether or not Prior Approval is required for the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed building.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site is in the countryside a short distance to the east of Cheadle and lies 200m to the west of Hares Lane, a country lane which provides the access to the site via a farm track. The site is part of a long established beef-rearing and dairy farm (with 180 dairy cows) with several farm buildings and a farmhouse grouped fairly closely together. The site is currently open, forming part of a field but is also adjacent to farm buildings to the north-west and south-west with the rest of the field to the north-east and south-east. The farm complex is surrounded by open countryside. The site is not affected by any particular land designations. The farm property is 157 hectares in size.

PROPOSAL

The application is a "Notification of Prior Approval" application for a detached livestock farm building with a footprint of 27 x 24 metres and with a dual-pitch roof which gives the building an eaves height of 4.0 metres and a max ridge height of 7.5 metres. It would have a blockwork plinth of 2.0 metres in height and above this would be open on the north-west side (facing the track), would have timber boarding on the two side elevations (facing south-west and north-east) and on the south-east side, facing the road, the finish would be mostly green fabric "gale breakers" (to allow good ventilation for the animals) but with also some timber boarding. The roof would be grey corrugated fibre-cement sheeting with several rooflights.

The proposal would enable the applicant to accommodate additional dairy bull calves on site, which will be reared within a beef production system. A Planning Statement has been submitted with the application which gives more details in support of the proposal:

In line with the NFU & AHDB's GB Dairy Calf Strategy 2020-2023, Hilltop Farm is addressing the aims and objectives of the strategy by introducing a dairy calf beef system on the holding. This will provide an additional source of income, thereby allowing the farm to remain competitive and viable in the local rural economy, whilst also contributing towards the overall sustainability of the dairy farming industry. Overall, the move towards rearing dairy bull calves is a step towards a more sustainable agricultural industry that considers animal welfare and environmental impact, whilst also aligning with the growing consumer demand for locally produced beef products. By working together, farmers and supermarkets can promote sustainable practices and meet consumer demands for more sustainable and locally produced food. Therefore, in order for Hilltop Farm to facilitate this additional enterprise, a suitable modern and fit-for-purpose agricultural cattle building is required to accommodate the increased number of calves on site which will be reared and sold for beef. The aim is to rear around 140 beef animals per year aged from 3 weeks to 14/15 months.

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 whether or not Prior Approval is required for the siting, design and external appearance of the building and if necessary request further information in which to determine the proposal, or whether or not on the basis of the information submitted, the application should be refused.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

N/A

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There have been a number of previous Prior Approvals under part 6 of the GPDO and also full planning permissions granted for various buildings and structures at the farm the most recent of which was in 2017.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: N/A

Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

None.

OFFICER COMMENTS

For agricultural-related development to be provided under the Prior Approval process without needing a full planning application, the proposal would need to meet the criteria/tests listed under Part 6 Class A.1 of the GPDO. On the basis of the information provided, it would appear that it would pass those tests (and I can confirm that the site is over 400 metres from the nearest "Protected Building" e.g. dwelling outside of the property which is not part of a farm) and therefore the building can be provided under permitted development via "Prior Approval" application without the need for full planning permission.

The Council must now decide if Prior Approval is required for the siting, design and external appearance of the building (i.e. the tests under Class A.1(2)). Although elevation and site plan details have been provided and details of the finishing materials, I consider that Prior Approval is required. This is because if the building would appear to have the largest footprint of all the buildings and structures on the farm and with a height of 7.5 metres could also possibly be the largest building at the farm. It would also be one of the closest to the nearest road (Hares Lane) and it is possible it would be visually prominent from the road and would not be screened by other buildings when viewing it from the east. I consider a site visit would be necessary to establish if the siting, design and appearance of the building, including its materials, is acceptable and therefore further assessment is needed and therefore Prior Approval would be required for the building.

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. However, on the basis of the drawings and information submitted, showing its scale, design and siting, it is considered that Prior Approval is required to establish if it passes the tests in Part 6 Class A.2 i.e. to determine if the siting, design and appearance is acceptable.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 11.5.23

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council