

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2025/0004
Valid 19/02/2025

SHIRLEY COTTAGE
GARSTON ASHBOURNE
ROAD
WHISTON

AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO
STORE FODDER AND
IMPLEMENTS

(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 lies in the countryside about a mile to the north-east of the small village of Whiston and is on the south side of A52 and to the west of Cotton Lane. It comprises part of a 7.3 hectare sheep farm. The exact site is immediately to the south-east of the farm buildings and farm cottage and 100m to the south of the main road. There are also some equestrian uses at the property including stabling and there is a manege immediately to the north of the application site, forms part of a field.

PROPOSAL

The application is a "Notification of Prior Approval" application for a typical portal framed modern agricultural storage building with floor dimensions of 18.3 x 12.2m and a max height of 3.7m. It would have metal corrugated cladding above a concrete base wall and fibre cement sheeting for the roof. The roof will have solar panels on the south-facing roof slope and also rooflights. The application forms state the wall sheet colour will be slate blue but a Planning Statement submitted with the application states Juniper Green. The Planning Statement also gives more information about the proposal as follows:

The building will provide a dry storage area for the fodder and reduce the need for plastic wrapping and for the storage of implements and machinery required to manage the holding.

The farmland is currently used to produce fodder and for rearing sheep.

The applicant currently has 50 ewes plus followers with lambing generally at the end of January.

There is currently only one other building on site, which is used for livestock and stables alongside the menage area. This building is unable to accept modern machinery as the height of the building is too low and there is no room inside for storage.

The applicant requires this building in which to store the fodder produced on the holding without the need for plastic wrapping and loss of produce from weather ingress.

This building will also be used to store some of the implements used on the holding such as a tractor, topper, chain and harrows, roller and other general agricultural equipment required to run the holding. This building will enable the equipment to be kept out of view and restricts the chances of the implements being stolen.

This building will be used to store Heston bales of hay and straw. By enabling these bales to be stored in the building it will reduce the use of plastics therefore helping the holding to become more environmentally friendly.

The drawings also show that end quarter of the existing livestock building will be demolished to allow access around the building from the main access track to lead to the chosen site for the new building.

Under Part 6 Class A of the GPDO, a full planning application is not required for new agricultural or horticultural 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

None relevant.

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. From the information provided, it would appear the proposal would accord with all the criteria in that part and it definitely appears to be a working farm. Streetview images from various years going back to 2009 show significant numbers of sheep in the fields and also show an area about half the footprint of the proposed building and in the same area, covered with plastic wrapped hay bales. There are a number of items including at least two tractors visible from the images. I am satisfied that there is sufficient agricultural justification for the building. I also consider the proposed size and height of the building to also not be unreasonable or excessive for the purposes intended as set out in the Planning Statement. There is a need to protect farm machinery and implements from the weather and the storage of hay within the building to keep it dry is environmentally preferable to keeping it wrapped in plastic.

The proposal meets all the tests in Part 6 Class A.1 and can therefore be deemed to be determined via the Notification of Prior Approval process.

In this case, the storage building would be permitted development not requiring a full planning application but the Council must decide if Prior Approval is required for the siting, design and external appearance of the building and this is the purpose of this Determination of Prior Approval application, i.e. the tests in Class A.2.

The current buildings are easily visible from the main road due to the lack of screening along it. The proposed building would relate well to the cluster of existing building in terms of its location and distance away. I consider its design, form and materials are acceptable as it has a typical modern storage building design not out of keeping with the countryside and which also harmonises with the other buildings. However, its siting further to the east of the buildings would make it appear as an encroachment into the open landscape to the east and this would be easily visible from the road as there would be no screening of it between the site and the road.

There does appear to be scope to site the building immediately to the south of the livestock building which would allow the building to be screened from the road and also prevent the farm from appearing to encroach into the open countryside when viewed from the road. A siting to the south of the livestock building would also provide a better relationship with the existing buildings forming the farm.

For the above reasons, the building, by virtue of its siting, design and appearance would have a potential visual impact on this area of very open countryside and I therefore consider that Prior Approval for the proposed building should be required

as I consider that the siting, design and appearance of the development would need to be further assessed.

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 information submitted, 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. Prior Approval is therefore required for the proposed development.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED

Case Officer: Chris Johnston

Recommendation Date: 17.3.25

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council