

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2025/0027
Valid 08/07/2025

FOREST FARM
ASHBOURNE ROAD
CALTON MOOR
ASHBOURNE

**APPLICATION TO DETERMINE
IF PRIOR APPROVAL IS
REQUIRED FOR A PROPOSED
ERECTION OF A GENERAL
PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL
BUILDING**

**(AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY
DETERMINATION)**

MAIN ISSUES

Whether or not the proposed storage 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 the LPA wishes to approve the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed storage building.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Existing established farm surrounded by open undulating farmland with small scale irregular field parcels. The farm grouping consists of a dwelling with a linear run of adjacent sheds. The farm is to the south of Ashbourne Road and a straight 200m access track is at right angles to the road. The farm occupies a dip or shallow valley in the landscape. The open farmland is broken up by clusters of mature trees and traditional hedgerow boundary.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes a general-purpose agricultural building to store straw and grassland machinery. The storage building to be provided as a portal frame building with concrete base panels and vertical Yorkshire board cladding above. The store would be 18.29m by 24.38m with an eaves height of 4.27m (ridge height 6.72m).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2021/0311 Proposed Silage Clamp. Approved.
SMD/2021/0273 Proposed livestock housing building. Approved.
SMD/2021/0298 Proposed livestock housing building. Approved.
SMD/2023/0149 Phase I cattle housing building. Approved.
SMD/2023/0150 Phase II cattle housing building. Approved.
SMD/2023/0333 Erection of covered collecting yard. Approved.
SMD/2023/0331 Erection of Agricultural Building to house parlour and dairy.
Approved.
DET/2025/0009 Prior Approval Application General Purpose Storage. REFUSED.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Class A, Part 6 of Sched 2 of the GPDO permits the carrying out on agricultural land comprised in a unit of 5ha or more of works for the erection of a building; or any

excavation or engineering operation, which are reasonably necessary for agricultural purposes.

It is a condition of Class A (A.2 (2)) that prior to carrying out development consisting of the erection of a building or the carrying out of excavations over an area more than 0.5ha – the developer applies to the LPA for a determination as to whether prior approval is required.

The building would appear reasonably necessary for agriculture given that the structure would have the obvious design and function, as described, necessary for the storage of hay and machinery associated with an established enterprise of more than 5ha. The building would not be for the housing of livestock or for the storage of slurry, unlike adjacent development that was carried out with full planning permission because it was carried out within 400m of a, protected, non-farming dwelling.

However, it is a limit on development being permitted by Class A, that the ground area which would be covered by any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A would exceed 1,500 square metres, calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a) of Part 6.

An area “calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a)” comprises the ground area which would be covered by the proposed development, together with the ground area of any building (other than a dwelling), or any structure, works, plant, machinery, ponds or tanks within the same unit which are being provided or have been provided within the preceding 2 years and any part of which would be within 90 metres of the proposed development.

The proposed building in this case would be 18.29m by 24.38m (446 sq m). While the building itself would be a lot less than the 1500sqm, it would be carried out adjacent to other development – buildings and clamps that have relatively been recently provided. The adjacent housing, within 90m, has, in itself, covered an area of more than 1500 sqm. This led to a previous prior approval application for the development having been refused because the proposal would not have met the criteria listed under Part 6 Class A.1 of the GPDO and would not be permitted by that part of the GPDO. The ground area which would be covered by the 18.29m by 24.38m proposed building would be 446 sqm, which when calculated together with the ground area covered by adjacent development carried out would exceed 1500 sqm.

However, in post application discussion prior to the submission of this current application, it was contended that providing a start of works on the proposed development was delayed until more than 2 years after the date that other development had been provided or completed, then it would be permitted and would not fail against the limit. If prior approval were granted it could be subject to a condition that prevented the development from commencing until 2 years have passed from completion of adjacent development.

The application submits that come the 11th Sep 2025, adjacent development carried out within the preceding 2 years would be limited to the two buildings permitted under SMD/2023/0333 & SMD/2023/0331. The cumulative floor area of those two

buildings plus the building proposed with this application would be 1143 sqm, less than the 1550 sqm limit.

This evidence and premise is accepted. There is no counter evidence that disputes that version of events. Taking the literal wording from Part 6 of the order if the proposed building were provided after the 11th Sep 2025 then the ground area which would be covered by any building erected would NOT exceed 1,500 square metres as calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a).

Therefore, the “Notification of Prior Approval” process can be used to determine if the building can be permitted. If the development is delayed and subject to appropriate timing condition, the development would comply with the criteria and not exceed the limits at Class A.1.

The siting, design and external appearance of the building

The proposed building is to be located within proximity of existing development and farmyard to the exposed side of an existing housing building and sileage clamp. The development would extend further into the open field to the west. The building would have a typical agrarian appearance, similar to the adjacent building to the east and common to existing onsite and nearby development. The building would have a much narrower width (18m) than the adjacent cattle buildings and as such the roof height of the proposed additions would be considerably lower than, and subordinate to, that of the adjacent taller and much larger building. The building would not in these regards be at odds with the agricultural character of the area and landscape and would provide a kind of taper to the end of this extending run of development. In any views from Ashbourne Road, to the north, or the A52 to the west, the building would appear as part of a line of low profile farm sheds set down in a natural dip in the landscape and cut below the rising land level, where it would have limited interference with the views of the landscape beyond. From the south there are no roads or footpaths that would provide views of the development from public vantage. In these regards the local landscape would be protected, and the development would not lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character of the landscape. The proposed development will consequently not derive any conflict with policies DC1 and DC3 of the Local Plan.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Acceptable development to support the diversification and expansion of an existing farm enterprise in the other rural areas. The development would be well designed and located with minimal impact on the character and appearance of the area.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED AND GRANTED
SUBJECT TO TIMING CONDITION**

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date:

X 

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council