

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

DET/2026/0014
Valid 26/05/2026

MOORVILLE HALL FARM
LEEK ROAD
MOORVILLE
CELLARHEAD

APPLICATION TO DETERMINE
IF PRIOR APPROVAL IS
REQUIRED FOR A PROPOSED
NEW 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 or not the LPA wishes to approve the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed storage building.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site lies within the open countryside about a mile to the south of Cellarhead and is also in the Green Belt.

The land holding and unit that provides the holding originates as Moorville Hall Farm, a 19th Century hall and historic farmstead. Moorville Hall has long been extended and converted to provide a hotel and spat. In the latter part of the 20th century a new separate farm house was built to the northeast of the hall to the east of, and in association with, the range of traditional and modern farm buildings.

The agricultural holding currently consists of 58.7 hectares (32.8 ha owned and 25.9 ha rented). The holding includes a farmstead which has a dwelling, and a collection of existing sheds accessible of a private drive off Leek Road (A520).

The application site is an area of existing hardstanding, operational and used for external storage by the farm, to the west of the hall hotel. The site lies to the other side of the hotel's courtyard parking area and a steep rise and high brick wall.

100m to the south east of the site there is a slurry lagoon.



Figure 9: Image of existing hardstanding and steep bank (proposed siting of the development)



PROPOSAL

The application form describes the proposed development:

As a proposed new building:

30.5m long 12.2m wide

7.3m to eaves

10.8m to ridge

To be built using steel frame with concrete panels

Box profile Juniper green roof

The statement clarifies that:

Agricultural storage building. The building will be used to store hay and machinery, and its erection will allow for better welfare of the existing cattle herds (sucklers and dairy) in the existing sheds, and the storage of all machinery and hay required for the continued operation of the holding. The proposed building will not be used to house livestock.

The proposed building will have a floor area of 372 sqm.

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2016/0017 Formation of slurry store and associated access track. APPROVED.

DET/2016/0048 Portal Frame Building. PNAPP.

DET/2024/0043 Application to determine if prior approval is required for - New Portal framed agricultural building. Length 13.4m, Height to eaves 3.6m, Breadth 10.7m, Height to ridge 5.05m (livestock housing within 400m of protected dwellings) PNREF.

SMD/2024/0543 Portal framed agricultural building. REFUSED.

DET/2025/0031 Change of use of building to flexible commercial use. Notification No Determination.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The proposal meets the criteria listed under Part 6 Class A.1 of the GPDO it would appear reasonably necessary for agriculture.

The unit provides an established enterprise of at least 32ha of owned land, with more rented, farming cattle and dairy stock. There is a limited range of sheds housing cattle and a smaller shed, less than 150sqm, that the applicant intends to use for flexible commercial purposes (Permitted Part 3 Class R to support diversification, LPA notified as required), a slurry lagoon located 100m to south east. The applicant demonstrates in submission, the range of sheds in use as cattle housing, the smaller shed not suitable for a great quantity of hay bale storage, and evidence of materials and equipment stored outside on areas of existing hardstanding across the farmstead. The height of the building has been based on the height of stacked hay bales.

The proposed building would have a floorspace of just 372m², and a height of less than 12 metres. The proposal lies over 3 kilometres from the perimeter of an

aerodrome. The facility does not therefore appear excessive or unreasonable for the size of the site and enterprise.

Under the conditions of Class A, the use of the building as livestock housing would be prohibited for purposes other than those arising from emergency circumstances, and the building should be removed if it ceases to be used for agriculture within the first 10 years.

Therefore, the “Notification of Prior Approval” process can be used to determine if the building can be permitted. As it meets Class A.2, the building will be permitted development that can be carried out without needing full planning permission. The conditions set out under class A2 state that the developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building.

The red edge on the location plan marks the position of the proposed building on existing hardstanding against a high brick wall that is already used to for farm storage.

The form and statement describes the proposed building with sufficient accuracy to understand the size of the building and that it will have the generic and conventional appearance of a functional farm shed. It is not considered that additional information is required in those regards.

The building would have context on an existing hardstanding that is against a high boundary wall to the west. There is a slurry lagoon to the east and woodland beyond. Mature tree line to the south and west screens and conceals the site from the road.

As such, due to this height of the wall structure in the immediate vicinity of the application site and its position at the rear of the site behind other existing development the building would not be visible from the road and is proposed in a concealed location. As such, it is not considered that there would be any significant harm to the character or appearance of the area through the siting, design and appearance of the building.

With consideration for the siting of the proposal, the building would be sited to a boundary shared with the non-agricultural neighbours (a nearby hotel), and by siting the barn against the wall and steep rise, the barn would be screened by this existing landscaping feature and would not represent a domineering or overwhelming feature. The barn would be used for the storage of machinery and hay, not livestock housing, and it is not considered that noise and odour would be raised against pre existing levels, the site already used for external storage.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development would be permitted by Class A, Part 6 of the GPDO. The submitted location plan and description of the development provide sufficient detail to confirm how the building would be built and appear. Prior approval is not required and to comply with the conditions at Class A the development must be carried out in accordance with those submitted details.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

Case Officer: Ben Hurst

Recommendation Date:

X

Jane Curley

Signed by: Jane Curley

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council