



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2026

by Mr R Walker BA HONS DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd June 2026

Appeal Ref: 6002009

5.9 Hectare of Land off Bigby Hill, Bigby DN38 6EW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
- The appeal is made by Heather Sugden against the decision of West Lindsey District Council.
- The application Ref is WL/2025/00925.
- The development proposed is agricultural building for machinery, hay and animal feed storage.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO) permits, amongst other things, works for the erection of a building on agricultural land, comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area, which is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit. Paragraph A.2(2)(i) states that for development permitted by Class A the developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for determination as to whether its prior approval will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - Whether or not the proposed building would comply with the conditions and limitations of Class A of Part 6 to Schedule 2 of the GPDO, with particular regard to whether or not it is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit; and
 - If so, whether or not prior approval can be given having regard to the siting, design, and external appearance of the proposed building.

Reasons

Whether reasonably necessary

4. An application for prior approval to erect an agricultural storage building was previously granted in 2021. The appellant purchased the land in 2023 and indicates that they operate a mixed arable and livestock enterprise covering 5.9ha and that they currently utilise a building approximately four miles away to support the operations.

5. The appellant seeks an alternative design to that previously granted. The proposed alternative building is built from brick, is lower in height, and is designed with two projecting narrow wings to create a courtyard that overall would cover a larger area of the field. In this regard, the proposed building has departed from the more modern farming approach of taller steel portal farm buildings with large openings.
6. I'm told that the building would house machinery for grassland and woodland management, storage for hay, bedding and feed, storage for bee keeping equipment and secure parking and protection of agricultural equipment. References are also made to equestrian equipment and use, and diversification. Taken together, the appellant refers to quite a broad range of activities and equipment. However, full and specific details of the agricultural operations, how they are currently undertaken with storage off-site, the deficiencies of this that trigger the need for the appeal proposal, and the agricultural and non-agricultural equipment that would be used and stored in the proposed building, are not provided.
7. The appellant indicates that more than 60 large rounds of hay would be cropped but full details of how much, or how, this would be stored within the building, along with other items, given its size, height, materials, layout and openings are not before me. There are also no firm details of the number of livestock and animals and how they form part of the agricultural operations, and in turn, how the proposed building is reasonably necessary to support them. Moreover, suggestions that the proposed building would offer more security, better vermin control, reduced carbon footprint, are not substantiated.
8. The appellant indicates that they will be intensifying the use of the land but full details of what this entails, in respect of agricultural operations, and how the proposed building and its size, layout, and design would be reasonably necessary for this are not before me. I am also not persuaded that the design offers more long-term flexibility and adaptability for agricultural purposes than a modern steel portal farm building where the large open layout of such buildings provides flexibility.
9. Overall, there is an absence of substantive evidence to demonstrate that a building of this size, layout and design is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the agricultural unit. What has been provided is incomplete and ambiguous in that regard.
10. I have had regard to the previous prior approval, which was granted for an alternative building within the appeal site prior to the appellant's purchase of the land. However, this does not alter my findings as I must consider the proposed appeal building on its own merits and whether it is, on the evidence before me, reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit now.
11. To conclude, I am not persuaded that the proposed building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit. Consequently, it would not satisfy the necessary criteria set out in A.1 of Class A, Part 6 of the GPDO. It would therefore not constitute permitted development under Class A.
12. As I have found the proposed development to not be permitted development, it is not necessary to consider whether prior approval can be given as to the siting,

design and external appearance of the building, including the relationship to the setting of the nearby listed building.

13. Matters relating to farm tracks, other works on site, and additional planting, are not matters for my consideration as part of this appeal. Moreover, the principle of development is established through the grant of permission by the GPDO. As such, references to the West Lindsey Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework do not alter my findings on whether the building constitutes permitted development under Class A.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Mr R Walker

INSPECTOR