



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2024

by N Kempton BAHons PGDip MA IHBC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V0728/W/24/3338534

**Grewgrass Farm, Grewgrass Lane, New Marske, Redcar And Cleveland
TS11 8EB**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr J Whaites against the decision of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is R/2023/0028/FF.
 - The development proposed is agricultural building and access.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr J Whaites against Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The National Planning Policy Framework was updated in December 2024, during the consideration of this appeal. Insofar as is directly relevant to the appeal, there are no substantive changes.
4. At the time of my site visit, the access appeared to be largely complete. For the avoidance of doubt, my determination of the appeal is based on the drawings submitted and not on the works as constructed.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the proposed development outside settlement boundaries has been justified on the grounds of need for the purposes of agriculture.

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to land at Grewgrass Farm. The land is located in open countryside, outside the settlement boundary of Redcar and New Marske. The site comprises a field north of the existing farm buildings and access with Grewgrass Lane bordering its eastern edge. The adjacent farm buildings are in separate ownership.
7. The application proposed the construction of a 30m x 15m agricultural building with a 4m eaves height and a 7.5m ridge height. Revised plans were

submitted during the planning application which reduced the length of the proposed building to 22.5m x 15m. The height of the proposed building remains unchanged. The structure would have an aluminium frame with a white PVC covering and a large roller shutter on the east-facing gable end. A car park and an extensive area of hardstanding would be to the south of the building. The access track would extend from this area of hardstanding, in excess of 200m in length, across the middle of the appeal site, to the junction with Grewgrass Lane.

8. The appellant states that the proposed development is intended to support the existing agricultural use and to enable the expansion of the farming activity. Notwithstanding this, there is limited information regarding the nature and extent of current activity on the land, including whether it constitutes a farming business on an agricultural unit. Additionally, there is no compelling justification as to why a building of the size proposed is reasonably necessary to support the existing use, or any future expansion or diversification.
9. Furthermore, there is insufficient information to justify rural or exceptional need for the proposed development on the basis of a technical or operational use, or a recreation or tourism proposal.
10. Potential future uses of the building are identified and these include energy production, leisure activities, permaculture, equestrian use and public events. By the appellant's own admission, the ideas are hypothetical presently, intended to give an indication of future uses being considered and stem from aspirations for a greener future. However, the appellant is clear in their appeal particulars that the proposal should be considered as an agricultural building, as per the description of the development on the application form, and that is the basis on which I have dealt with the appeal.
11. The evidence before me fails to demonstrate how the proposed building and access would align with policies aimed at maintaining rural character and restricting development in the countryside to justified rural and exceptional needs. As such, the proposed development fails to meet the criteria set out in Policy SD3 of the Redcar and Cleveland Local Plan (LP)(2018), which controls and restricts development outside of defined settlement boundaries to the exceptional circumstances that require a countryside location, as set out in this policy.
12. The proposed development is also contrary to Policy SD2 of the LP which sets out the settlement hierarchy to direct development to the most sustainable locations in the borough. The overall aims of this policy are stated, including to restrict development in the countryside to that which meets rural and exceptional needs, in accordance with criteria set out in LP Policy SD3.

Other Matters

13. The Highway Authority has objected to the planning application on the grounds that there is insufficient information on the proposed use to enable an assessment of the effect on the highway network. However, these concerns do not form a reason for refusal. Given that I am dismissing the appeal on other grounds, there is no need for me to consider highway matters further.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
15. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

N Kempton

INSPECTOR