
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 June 2025

by **C Livingstone MA(SocSci) (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/25/3363262

The Old Barn Twizell Farm, Ponteland, Northumberland NE20 0AL

- 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 Ms Faye Jackson against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
- The application Ref is 25/00129/AGRGDO.
- The development proposed is to erect a steel-framed agricultural building providing 108 sqm of storage space. The proposed building is required to store crops, straw, feed, farm machinery and associated goods.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and prior approval is granted under the provisions of Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the erection of a steel-framed agricultural building providing 108 sqm of storage space at The Old Barn, Twizell Farm, Ponteland, Northumberland NE20 0AL in accordance with the application 25/00129/AGRGDO and the details submitted pursuant to Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A, paragraph A.2(2) of the GPDO.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the development in the banner heading above was taken from the planning application form. In the interests of clarity and brevity I have removed the reference to the items to be stored in the building in the decision section above.
3. The proposed development is for the erection of a new agricultural building. There is no provision within Class B, Part 6, of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO) for the erection of a new building. Therefore, the appeal falls to be considered against Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO.
4. Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO, permits the erection, extension or alteration of a building, and any excavation or engineering operations reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit, on agricultural land in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares (ha) or more in area. This is subject to certain criteria, and circumstances where development is not permitted which are listed under Paragraph A.1.
5. My attention has been drawn to a recent Appeal that was allowed for the erection of an agricultural building adjacent to the appeal site, within the same agricultural

unit¹. Given the nature of the proposed development and its location, this decision is a material consideration of significant weight in my assessment of the appeal.

Main Issues

6. The main issues are whether the appeal scheme meets the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 6 of the GPDO such that it would constitute development permitted under Class A, subject to the prior approval of certain matters.
7. The main issue is whether the appeal site is agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more and that the proposed building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.

Reasons

8. The proposal is for the erection of a steel framed agricultural building adjacent to a recently erected agricultural building that was approved at appeal as detailed above. The building would be finished in corrugated steel and it would reflect the existing agricultural building on the site which is of a typical design of many contemporary agricultural buildings in the area. While aspects of the design are similar to commercial buildings, this is not to the extent that it would detract from the character of the locality.
9. The main parties dispute the area of the agricultural unit. The appellant states on the application form and planning statement that the total area of the unit is 5.3 ha and submitted a map outlining the boundary of land under their ownership in blue. However, the Council state they used IT software to measure the area of the holding and found the area of the unit to be 4.7 ha; and therefore under the required 5 ha to be considered under the terms of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO.
10. The appellants agent asserts that they measured the area using GIS which is an accurate and reliable method of measuring areas of land unlike some publicly available systems. The Council have not provided specific details of the software used to measure the agricultural unit, or evidence to demonstrate how they have reached their findings. Further, an Inspector has previously accepted that the total area of the agricultural unit is approximately 13 acres, which equates to 5.3 ha. Based on the evidence before me, and a lack of substantive evidence to the contrary, it is accepted that the agricultural unit to which the appeal relates is at least 5 ha and therefore meets the requirements of the GPDO in this regard.
11. I note the Council's concern regarding the use of the building and an absence of information to demonstrate that it is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit. However, my attention has been drawn to a previous appeal decision where the inspector found that the land is a registered and operational agricultural holding. Given the size of the unit and the nature of farming operations, an absence of livestock or obvious agricultural activity at the appeal site is not sufficient to lead to the conclusion that there is no agricultural use on the land. Notwithstanding this, If the proposed development is carried out and subsequently found not to benefit from the planning permission granted by the GPDO, then it could be at risk of enforcement proceedings by the Council.

¹ APP/P2935/W/25/3360754

12. In summary I find that the appeal site is on agricultural land which is part of an agricultural unit of at least 5 hectares and the proposed building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.

Other Matters

13. The Old Barn and neighbouring dwellings are Grade II Listed located to the southeast of the development. I have a statutory duty under Section S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The building does not impact on the setting of the listed farmhouse and farm buildings. This is due to the separation distances, topography and vegetation screening. Based on my observations on site, I raise no concern in this regard.

Conditions

14. The conditions and limitations set out in paragraphs A.1 and A.2 of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GDPO include the requirement that the development must be carried out in accordance with the details approved and the development must be carried out within a period of 5 years from the date on which approval was given. The developer must also notify the local planning authority in writing within 7 days of the date on which the development is substantially completed.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed and prior approval is deemed to be granted. The development can lawfully proceed if carried out in accordance with the submitted plans, and with the conditions and limitations imposed on the planning permission granted by the GPDO.

C Livingstone

INSPECTOR