



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by **L Wilson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2003/W/25/3372031

Belton Grange, Crowle DN17 4BT

- 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 3, Class R, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Rockscape Farm Ltd against the decision of North Lincolnshire Council.
 - The application Ref is PA/2025/642.
 - The development proposed is change of use from agricultural buildings (and land within its curtilage) to B8 storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The principle of development is established by the General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO), and the relevant provisions do not require regard be had to the development plan. I have only had regard to the policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) insofar as they are material considerations relevant to the matters before me.
3. Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 3, Class R of the GPDO enables the change of use of agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use subject to certain conditions and limitations. Class R sets out various uses, including Class B8 (storage or distribution), which is the proposed use sought by this appeal.
4. Development permitted under Class R is subject to the condition set out in paragraph R.3(1)(b) which states before changing the use, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required regarding several considerations. This includes (i) transport and highways impacts of the development.

Main Issue

5. In light of the above, the main issue is whether the prior approval details relating to transport and highway impacts would be acceptable.

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to an existing agricultural building. The wider site currently houses a series of commercial facilities and offices, which generate regular and consistent vehicle movements throughout the day.

7. There would be sufficient space on site to accommodate parking and turning facilities. The site is accessed via a tarmacked, single-track road (herein referred to as the access road). The access road has ditches and banks on either side and no formal passing places. Thus, the access route is physically constrained throughout its length.
8. The access road only serves limited access points and is parallel to the A18. On my site visit (which was a single snapshot in time), I observed several cars and tractors using the access road. This included a vehicle and tractor passing each other as well as two vehicles passing each other, which involved using informal passing places and the grass adjacent to the access road.
9. The proposed storage is intended to operate primarily as private storage for domestic vehicles and trailers. Although that is the current intention, Class B8 use is flexible, and there is no mechanism to control the size or type of vehicles that might access the site. Given the floorspace of the building and use class, it would not be unrealistic for larger vehicles to visit the site.
10. The access is currently used by agricultural vehicles associated with the appeal building. Vehicle movements, including HGVs, are not restricted under the existing use. The agricultural business operates year-round and there is daily activity with peaks in vehicle movements during certain times of the year, for example harvest time.
11. The appellant sets out the existing annual number of vehicle movements by the farm. They assert that the change of use would result in a reduction in vehicle movements and the likely number of vehicles accessing the site would not be dissimilar to that of the existing agricultural use. The appellant states that the use would result in around 4 vehicle movements per day, which would be likely to be cars and LGV's rather than large agricultural vehicles associated with the current use. It is not anticipated that HGV's/ articulated lorries would be required to visit the site. Furthermore, the proposed use is unlikely to result in a large number of employees based at the site.
12. The number of vehicle movements suggested by the Council is significantly more than that suggested by the appellant. The appellant states that the anticipated vehicle movements are based on other local sites that operate as B8 storage in former agricultural buildings. However, there is very little evidence before me regarding those sites and to certify the movements associated with those sites. The above statements are also not supported by firm evidence, and do not appear to be based on formal assessments. Whilst I agree that the TRICS data is not specific to the site, the appellant's evidence regarding vehicle movements is also no more compelling.
13. Given the nature of the access road (including it's length, width, as well as ditches and banks on either side, and no formal passing places), access to the site would not be suitable for regular two-way movement, and particularly larger vehicles. An increase in two-way vehicle movement could result in unsafe manoeuvres and verge damage. Furthermore, an increase in the use of informal passing places and grassed areas for vehicles to pass on the access road would not be suitable during winter months, as they are likely to become muddy and unstable which would increase the risk of vehicles getting stuck or causing damage.

14. I understand that there is no history of accidents along the access road. Nonetheless, this does not change the nature of the access road, and the change of use has the potential to increase vehicle movement which in turn would increase the highway risks associated with it. I also recognise that generally drivers are likely to drive at lower speeds due to the nature of the access road. However, the access road is subject to the national speed limit, and there is no guarantee that would be the case.
15. The appellant highlights that similar prior approvals have been granted¹. There is insufficient evidence before me to be able to directly compare the cases. For example, the nature of the access road, evidence regarding vehicle movements, and size of the building. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.
16. Even taking into account the existing use of the site, in this case, given the nature of the access road, it is paramount that adequate evidence is provided to robustly demonstrate the highway impacts of the proposal. For instance, the likely number of vehicle movements, particularly as the change of use would allow the building to be used for a wide variety of purposes which are generally associated with larger vehicles. No robust, supporting data has been submitted to substantiate the appellant's figures.
17. In conclusion, when drawing the above points together, and in the absence of sufficient evidence to the contrary, the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on highway safety. I therefore conclude that the prior approval details relating to transport and highway impacts would not be acceptable.
18. Insofar as it is a material consideration, the proposal would conflict with Policy T2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003). This states all development must be provided with a satisfactory access. The proposal would also not align with paragraphs 89, 115 and 116 of the Framework. These seek to ensure development's do not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and should be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

19. My attention has been drawn to various parts of the Framework, including paragraph 88 which states decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The appellant also highlights that the storage facility would offer practical, cost-effective diversification for the agricultural building and land which would provide benefits and income for the existing agricultural enterprise. Nonetheless, considering the requirements of the GPDO, the other matters highlighted do not change my findings on the main issue in this appeal.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L Wilson
INSPECTOR

¹ Including PA/2024/852