



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2026

by Hannah Guest BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/F1610/W/25/3370264

Farmland to the southeast of The Fosse Way, Stow Road, Maugersbury, Stow on the Wold, GL54 1JZ

- 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 G M Bennett & Partners against the decision of Cotswold District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03129/AGPA.
 - The development proposed is agricultural building comprising Dutch barns and link.
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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 agricultural building comprising Dutch barns and link at farmland to the southeast of The Fosse Way, Stow Road, Maugersbury, Stow on the Wold, GL54 1JZ in accordance with the application 24/03129/AGPA and the details submitted with it including the following plans: Location Plan, LPC.4209.23.01A, LPC.4209.23.02A.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by the appellant against the Council. This is subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The principle of the development is established by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO) and the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A do not require regard be had to the development plan or other material considerations. While I may have regard to planning policy, that would only be in so far as it relates to the matters set out in the conditions at paragraph A.2.(2)(i).

Background and Main Issue

4. Class A(a) of Schedule 2, Part 6 of the GPDO permits the carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building, which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.
5. There is no dispute between the parties that the proposed development would meet the criteria set out under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO, provided

it would meet the conditions set out at paragraph A.2. From the evidence before me, there is nothing to lead me to a different conclusion.

6. The main issue in this appeal is therefore whether prior approval should be granted when the proposed development is assessed against condition A.2.(2)(i) in relation to the siting, design and external appearance of the building.

Reasons

7. The appeal site is located within the Cotswolds National Landscape. It is part of Landscape Character Area 17, Pastoral Lowland Vale. This is a soft, largely pastoral landscape with areas of unimproved grassland and wet meadow bordering streams. The site is typical of the surrounding landscape character in that it is a grass field bounded by hedgerows, including hedgerow trees.
8. The proposed agricultural building has been designed and sited to minimise any adverse impact on the wider landscape character. Its overall mass would be broken up by the linked, L-shaped arrangement of the Dutch barns. Although the barns would be substantial in scale and height, this is characteristic of agricultural buildings of this type and purpose. The barns' traditional, simple form and use of profiled steel cladding reflect a well-established agricultural vernacular, and the reasonably subdued matt black finish would help to blend the agricultural building into its rural surroundings.
9. The field where the proposed agricultural building would be sited is reasonably well contained by hedgerows. The building would be positioned close to the hedge along the north-eastern boundary. While it would be visible through the field gate from the A429 layby, any views for motorists would be fleeting. In terms of Public Right of Way HMA4 (PROW), which crosses the field, its positioning would avoid any encroachment into the more scenic south-eastern outlook, which would naturally attract the attention of PROW users. Although it would be more noticeable to those approaching from the south, the boundary hedge, trees and woodland to the north would provide a supportive backdrop, assisting its assimilation into the landscape and limiting any skyline intrusion.
10. The land to the east is elevated providing some medium distance viewing opportunities. However, in many of these views, the proposed agricultural building would be partly filtered by existing vegetation, and in more direct views the wooded backdrop would substantially reduce any visual prominence.
11. Moreover, large agricultural barns are a feature of the wider area. I noted on my visit a barn-type structure in a field to the south-west, which is also visible from the PROW. As such, the proposed agricultural building would not appear out of place or incongruous within this rural context.
12. I appreciate that the proposed agricultural building would be sited in a field where there are currently no other farm buildings. However, there is a practical reason for locating it on this part of the holding and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO does not require an assessment of alternative locations. While the advice set out in the Cotswold Design Code¹ is that generally, or in most cases, new farm buildings should be integrated within existing farmsteads, the proposed agricultural building would not be read as isolated in the wider landscape, given the presence

¹ Appendix D of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2018)

of comparable agricultural buildings in the vicinity, particularly along the A429 corridor. For the reasons above, the visual impact of the proposal would be minimised, and it would not appear intrusive or dominate its surroundings. It would therefore accord with the overarching aims of the Cotswold Design Code.

13. The appellant has proposed landscape enhancements, which would further integrate the proposed agricultural building into its surroundings without changing the landscape character of the area. Nonetheless, these enhancements are not required to make the proposal acceptable and there is no mechanism under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the GPDO for me to secure them.
14. Accordingly, for the reasons above, the proposal would conserve the natural beauty of the Cotswold National Landscape, thereby seeking to further its statutory purpose. It would accord with Policies EN2, ENV4 and ENV5 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2018), which seek to ensure that new development will protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment, including the natural beauty of the landscape, character and special qualities of the Cotswold National Landscape. These policies are relevant as they relate to the siting, design and external appearance of the building.
15. The proposed agricultural building would be accessed from the existing field gate off the A429 layby. In addition to the storage of hay and crop, it would also accommodate the machinery and vehicles required for harvesting, thereby removing the need for these to travel between the appeal site and the main holding. However, the appellant has recently acquired a further 30 hectares of land. This land contains no buildings, and the evidence before me indicates that machinery for its cultivation, as well as the harvested crop, would also be brought to and from the appeal site. I am therefore of the view that vehicle movements at the site would increase, albeit the precise level is uncertain. In the absence of a formal access track or hardstanding, these vehicles would cross unmade ground, which would risk mud and debris being deposited on the highway. Such deposits can adversely affect surface conditions and thereby compromise highway safety.
16. There is dispute between the parties as to whether highway safety concerns arising from the siting of the proposed building fall within the remit of prior approval under Part 6, Class A of the GPDO. Nonetheless, in this instance, the access is already established, and matters relating to mud or debris on the highway are addressed through separate statutory controls under the Highways Act 1980. Planning decisions must proceed on the basis that these regimes will function effectively, and should not duplicate controls provided for under other legislation.

Conditions

17. The GPDO does not provide any specific authority for imposing conditions beyond the deemed conditions in Paragraphs A.2.(2)(v) and (vi). These specify that the development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details and within 5 years of the date of this approval.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is allowed, and prior approval is granted.

Hannah Guest INSPECTOR

