

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prior Notification under Class A, Part 6, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Proposed Agricultural Storage Building

Land adjacent to 1 Gorses, Birtle, Bury, BL9 6UD

Prepared for:

Mr P. Spence

Prepared by:

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a resubmission under Class A of Part 6 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) ("the GPDO").

The proposal seeks prior approval for the erection of a modest agricultural storage building measuring approximately 13.7 metres by 9.1 metres with a ridge height of 4.8 metres. The building will provide secure storage for agricultural machinery, livestock feed, hay, haylage, straw and associated agricultural equipment required in connection with the operation of an established agricultural enterprise.

A previous Prior Notification (Ref. NOT/2026/0446) was refused on the basis that the Local Planning Authority considered insufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate that:

- the application site formed part of a qualifying agricultural unit;
- a genuine agricultural trade or business existed; and
- the proposed building was reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

This resubmission provides substantial additional evidence to address each of those matters.

Importantly, the previous Officer Report also contained a number of factual misunderstandings which materially influenced the conclusions reached. Whilst the applicant has taken the opportunity to expand the supporting evidence, that additional information should not be interpreted as acknowledging deficiencies in the original submission. Rather, it has been provided to remove any remaining uncertainty and assist the Local Planning Authority in reaching a fully informed decision.

2. Previous Decision

It is important to note that the previous refusal was **not** based upon the physical characteristics of the proposed building.

The Officer accepted that:

- the agricultural unit exceeded the minimum qualifying area;
- the proposed building complied with the relevant GPDO floorspace limitations;
- the building complied with the applicable height restrictions;
- the proposal lay outside the classified road restriction;
- the proposal was unaffected by the livestock/slurry separation requirements; and
- the location within the Green Belt did not remove agricultural permitted development rights.

The only issues identified related to the evidence supporting the agricultural enterprise and the operational need for the building.

This resubmission addresses those matters comprehensively.

3. Matters Raised Within the Previous Refusal

This application has been prepared having regard to every issue identified within the previous refusal.

However, it is equally important to distinguish between information which genuinely required further explanation and conclusions which arose from misunderstandings of information already submitted.

For example, the previous Officer Report states that no holding plan had been submitted showing the wider agricultural holding.

That conclusion was factually incorrect.

A holding plan accompanied the original submission and clearly identified both the application site and the wider agricultural holding. The present application includes updated plans identifying every parcel of land comprising the agricultural unit in order to remove any remaining uncertainty.

Similarly, the previous report questioned the reliability of the applicant's evidence by referring to an agricultural holding of approximately **75 hectares**, whereas the submitted information referred to approximately **75 acres**.

Those figures are plainly different units of measurement. Seventy-five acres equates to approximately 30 hectares. The apparent discrepancy therefore arose from confusion between acres and hectares rather than any inconsistency within the applicant's submission.

The previous report also questioned the operational benefit of storing machinery at the application site on the basis that machinery would still require movement between land parcels.

That conclusion misunderstands the purpose of the proposal.

Agricultural enterprises operating multiple holdings routinely retain machinery at more than one location according to operational need. The objective of the proposed building is not to eliminate every machinery movement but to reduce unnecessary transportation by allowing machinery, forage and agricultural equipment to remain securely stored at the location where they are required.

The applicant has nevertheless chosen to submit considerably expanded supporting information so that the application can be determined on the basis of comprehensive evidence.

4. The Agricultural Enterprise

The applicant operates an established agricultural business registered under:

DEFRA Holding Number (CPH): 44/623/0577

The farming enterprise comprises approximately **75 acres (approximately 30 hectares)** together with additional agricultural land managed under tenancy agreements.

Plans identifying every parcel comprising the agricultural holding accompany this application.

The application site forms one component of this wider agricultural unit.

The business includes:

- Belted Galloway breeding cattle;
- Alpacas;
- Seasonal grazing of approximately 300 breeding ewes and followers;
- Grassland management;
- Silage and haylage production;
- Environmental stewardship works;
- Ongoing boundary improvement and habitat enhancement.

The enterprise is operated as a commercial agricultural business and not as a hobby or recreational activity.

5. Independent Evidence Supporting the Agricultural Enterprise

In response to the concerns raised within the previous refusal, this application is accompanied by substantial independent third-party evidence.

This includes:

- DEFRA Holding Number (CPH) 44/623/0577;
- Holding Plans identifying all land parcels;
- Veterinary invoices confirming the ongoing management of cattle and alpacas;
- Agricultural contractor invoices confirming mowing, rowing and baling operations;
- Agricultural fencing purchase orders;
- Photographs demonstrating forage production, haymaking operations, grassland management and agricultural machinery working on the holding.

The contractor invoices demonstrate that significant quantities of forage are harvested annually from the holding, whilst the accompanying photographs clearly show productive grassland in active agricultural use.

Collectively, these documents demonstrate that the holding is actively managed as a genuine agricultural enterprise undertaken for the purposes of trade and business.

6. Agricultural Production

The application site is actively managed for grazing and forage production.

Each year the holding produces substantial quantities of hay and haylage required for the winter feeding of livestock across the agricultural enterprise.

The contractor invoices accompanying this application demonstrate repeated mowing, rowing and baling operations, whilst the photographs clearly show productive grassland, harvesting operations and forage production.

This evidence directly addresses the previous suggestion that insufficient information had been provided to demonstrate agricultural production on the holding.

7. Agricultural Need for the Proposed Building

The proposed building is required to provide secure storage for:

- Hay and haylage;
- Straw;
- Livestock feed;
- Agricultural machinery;
- Implements;
- Fencing materials;
- Veterinary equipment;
- General agricultural tools and supplies.

At present, forage harvested from the application site frequently requires transportation to another holding for storage before subsequently being returned for winter feeding.

This results in:

- unnecessary vehicle movements;
- increased fuel consumption;
- additional labour;
- greater machinery wear;
- increased carbon emissions;
- reduced operational efficiency.

The proposed building allows forage and agricultural equipment to remain where they are required, representing a logical and efficient arrangement consistent with modern agricultural practice.

8. Machinery Storage

The previous Officer Report questioned why machinery storage was required when some agricultural operations are undertaken by contractors.

This application clarifies that position.

The applicant employs specialist agricultural contractors to undertake seasonal mowing, rowing and baling operations. This is standard agricultural practice for livestock farms where the ownership of specialist harvesting machinery would not be economically justified.

However, the use of agricultural contractors does not remove the need for agricultural machinery storage.

The applicant continues to own and operate machinery required throughout the remainder of the year for the day-to-day management of the holding.

This includes machinery and equipment used for:

- pasture management;

- topping;
- chain harrowing;
- livestock husbandry;
- bale transport and feeding;
- fencing maintenance;
- hedge maintenance;
- general agricultural maintenance;
- towing operations.

The building will also provide secure storage for:

- tractor attachments;
- bale spikes;
- pallet forks;
- livestock feeders;
- gates;
- fencing materials;
- electric fencing equipment;
- hand tools;
- workshop equipment;
- veterinary supplies;
- hay;
- haylage;
- straw;
- livestock feed.

Accordingly, the use of agricultural contractors for specialist harvesting operations is entirely consistent with the need for a secure agricultural storage building. It is commonplace throughout the agricultural industry for smaller and medium-sized livestock farms to engage contractors for seasonal operations whilst retaining ownership of machinery and equipment required throughout the remainder of the year.

The proposed building is therefore reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

9. Compliance with Class A

The proposal satisfies the relevant provisions of Class A of Part 6.

The building:

- serves an established agricultural unit exceeding five hectares;
- is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture;
- complies with the applicable floorspace limitations;
- complies with the height restrictions;
- lies outside the classified road exclusion distance;
- is not used for livestock accommodation or slurry storage;
- remains agricultural in character and purpose.

10. Conclusion

This resubmission provides substantially more evidence than accompanied the previous application.

The application now includes independent documentary evidence confirming:

- the existence of an established agricultural enterprise;
- registration under DEFRA Holding Number (CPH) 44/623/0577;
- the extent of the wider agricultural holding;
- that the application site forms part of that holding;
- active forage production;
- commercial livestock management;
- operational necessity for the proposed building.

The applicant respectfully submits that the proposal clearly satisfies the requirements of Class A of Part 6 of Schedule 2 to the GPDO.

The proposed agricultural storage building is modest in scale, proportionate to the needs of the holding and directly supports the efficient operation of an established agricultural business.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority determines that the proposal benefits from the permitted development rights conferred by Class A and grants the necessary prior approval.