

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.							
Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	14/9/26	Manager:	LH	Date: 15/9/26

Application Ref:	3/2026/0641	 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk	
Date Inspected:	N/A		
Officer:	BT		
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:		Decision	REFUSAL

Development Description:	Prior notification for proposed agricultural storage building 18.5m long, 9.15m wide, 3.65m high to eaves and 4.9m high to ridge under Part 6 Class A of the GDPO.
Site Address/Location:	Fells Farm, Wigglesworth Road, Slaidburn, BD23 4SY.

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
N/A	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
N/A	
CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
N/A	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 and (Amendment) Order 2018.
Relevant Planning History: 3/2026/0307: Prior notification for proposed agricultural building under Part 6 Class A of the GDPO (Refused) 3/2026/0317: Approval of details reserved by condition 4 (External surfaces-material/samples), condition 6 (Cills & lintels -materials/samples), condition 7 (Lighting), condition 8 (Roof slates -materials/samples), condition 9 (photovoltaic panels), condition 12 illumination/lighting scheme), condition 16 (Construction Management plan), condition 17 (cycle storage provisions), condition 18 (Land levels), Condition 21 (Bat and Bird boxes) and condition 25 (written scheme of investigation) of planning permission 3/2025/0750 (Approved) 3/2025/0750: Proposed demolition of existing dwelling house and conversion of attached barn to create replacement dwelling house (self-build) with single storey extension on original footprint (Approved)

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:
Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application relates to agricultural land located on the Eastern outskirts of Slaidburn within the Forest Of Bowland National Landscape. Access to the application site is from the North from Wigglesworth Road via a single width access track which also carries Public Right Of Way FP0317018. The residential property of Fells Farm lies adjacent to the West of the application site with a traditional stone barn adjoining the South-western corner of Fells Farm which was recently the subject of an approved barn conversion scheme. The application site occupies a remote location with the nearest residential property of Shays Farm lying approximately 400 metres away to the North-west of the site. The wider area comprises a mixture of woodland, agricultural land and open countryside.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application seeks a determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required for the construction of an agricultural building within the confines of the application site.

Whether or not permitted development

The scheme must satisfy a number of criteria as set out under Class A of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended 2018).

The first of those requirements is that the development must be 'carried out on an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more' and be 'reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit'. In order to satisfy this requirement it should be demonstrated that the unit (and development) is for an agricultural trade or business purpose.

The agricultural holding is 10.9 hectares in area and it is understood that the applicant came into possession of this land in early 2026. Supporting information provided under previous prior notification application 3/2026/0307 made reference to the applicants being actively engaged in wildflower meadow restoration, tree / forestry planting and ongoing land management. Details of the applicant's machinery and equipment inventory were also provided along with confirmation of there being no buildings available on the holding to securely store the applicant's equipment. A request for further supporting information was subsequently made as it was not considered that the application as submitted had provided sufficient information to demonstrate that the building being proposed was reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on agricultural land that was being used for trade or business purposes. Additional information was subsequently provided in relation to the applicant's tree and wildflower planting operations in addition to invoices for tree sapling purchases, photographs of planting and land management works and correspondence from the Woodland Trust, RSPB and Bowland Hay Time. Notwithstanding this, application 3/2026/0307 was ultimately refused however on the basis that it was not considered that this information was indicative of any trade or business being in operation on the applicant's land holding.

The supporting information provided in support of the current application shows the applicant's holding as now being registered with the Rural Payments Agency. Further details have also been provided with regards to the applicant's involvement with meadow restoration and management which include an intention to cultivate wildflower seeds and hay bales for sale. It is understood that the applicant has also recently purchased 30 sheep (due to be introduced to the land holdings in the next couple of weeks) for the purpose of controlled grazing and grassland management. It is also understood that the applicant has registered the aforementioned activities as a business (The Fells Farm Partnership) with HMRC. Notwithstanding this, no evidence has been provided in support of the application to demonstrate that the aforementioned activities are currently generating any income, as is clearly acknowledged in the applicant's supporting information which makes reference to an '*intention of generating income from the holding from 2027 onwards*' (this is also shown in the application's supporting income projections which run from 2027 through to 2029).

Consequently, it is considered that the applicant has failed to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed building would in this instance be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on agricultural land that is currently being used for trade or business purposes.

In which case, the proposal is not considered to be permitted development under Class A, as such it is not necessary to go on to consider the other criteria / conditions within Class A. However, in the interests of transparency this assessment will go onto consider these conditions.

Having regard to criteria a) – k), development is not permitted by Class A if –

(a) the development would be carried out on a separate parcel of land forming part of the unit which is less than 1 hectare in area;

The proposed building would be located on a land parcel in excess of 1 hectare in area

(b) it would consist of the erection or extension of any agricultural building on an established agricultural unit (as defined in paragraph X of Part 3 of this Schedule) where development under Class Q or S of Part 3 (changes of use) of this Schedule has been carried out within a period of 10 years ending with the date on which development under Class A(a) begins;

Development under Class Q or S of Part 3 (changes of use) has not been carried out within the last 10 years

(c) it would consist of, or include, the erection, extension or alteration of a dwelling;

The proposal would not consist of or include the erection, extension or alteration of a dwelling

(d) it would involve the provision of a building, structure or works not designed for agricultural purposes;

The proposed building has been designed for the purposes of agriculture

(e) the ground area which would be covered by—

(i) any works or structure (other than a fence) for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations would exceed 1,000 square metres; or

N/A

(ii) any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A would exceed 1,500 square metres, ... calculated as described in paragraph D.1(2)(a) of this Part;

The ground floor area of the proposed building would measure 168.3m², within the above threshold limit

(f) the height of any part of any building, structure or works within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 3 metres;

The proposed building would not be sited within 3 Kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome

(g) the height of any part of any building, structure or works not within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 12 metres;

The highest part of the proposed building would be 4.9 metres

(h) any part of the development would be within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road;

The proposed building would be located approximately 350 metres away from the nearest trunk road or classified road which in this instance is the C592 Dugdale Lane

(i) it would consist of, or include, the erection or construction of, or the carrying out of any works to, a building, structure or an excavation used or to be used for the accommodation of livestock or for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge where the building, structure or excavation is, or would be, within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building;

The proposed building would not be utilised for the accommodation of livestock, nor would this building be used for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge

(j) it would involve excavations or engineering operations on or over article 2(4) land which are connected with fish farming; or

The proposed development does not relate to excavations or engineering operations on or over article 2(4) land which are connected with fish farming

(k) any building for storing fuel for or waste from a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digestion system—

(i) would be used for storing waste not produced by that boiler or system or for storing fuel not produced on land within the unit; or

(ii) is or would be within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building.

The proposed building would not be used for storing fuel for or waste from a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digestion system

Whether or not prior approval is needed

In accordance with condition A2 (2) (i) the Local Authority must also determine whether prior approval is required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the proposal.

Siting

The proposed building would be sited in reasonably close proximity to Fells Farm and its adjoining barn building and as such would be read in concert with existing built form. Consequently, the proposed building would share an acceptable relationship with the existing buildings on site and would not read as an isolated feature within the surrounding landscape. The application site accommodates an existing agricultural operation and in this instance the proposed building would be located at considerable distance from the nearest neighbouring receptor to the application site. Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposed introduction of a building to the site for storage would have any undue impact upon neighbouring amenity.

As such Prior approval is not required in terms of siting.

Design / appearance

The proposed building would comprise a portal framed design detailed with a stone plinth, timber cladding, timber doors and metalised roof sheets, all of which are materials commonly used in the construction of modern agricultural buildings. As such, the external appearance of the proposed building would be in keeping with the rural vernacular of agricultural buildings within the locality. In addition, the proposed building would comprise a similar size to the adjacent barn building with respect to its footprint which in this instance is considered to be proportionate in relation to the quantity of farm machinery and associated equipment that it would accommodate. In addition, the proposed building would be a modestly

sized structure with respect to its height. As such, the proposed building would not read as an over dominant addition to the application site. Solar panels are proposed for the Southern roofslope of the building and whilst it is acknowledged that these would not be wholly in keeping with the rural setting of the site, the originally proposed quantity of solar panels has since been reduced to a level which is now considered to be acceptable. Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the visual amenities of the immediate area or wider landscape.

As such Prior approval is not required in terms of design and appearance.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development would be reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on agricultural land that is used for a trade or business purpose. The proposal is therefore not permitted development.

Accordingly, the proposed development fails to satisfy the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 and (Amendment) Order 2018. As such, it is recommended that Prior Approval is refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

Refuse Prior Approval.