

North York Moors National Park Authority

District: Scarborough Borough Council
Parish: Harwood Dale

Application No. NYM/2020/0040/AGRP

Proposal: erection of agricultural storage building

Location: Morra Head Farm, Harwood Dale

Decision Date: 19 March 2020

Consultations

Site Notice Expiry Date - 21 February 2020.

Director of Planning's Recommendation

No objection in accordance with the details submitted and amended materials confirmed by email received 13 March 2020. Recommend the following condition:

1. **Roof Colouring (insert)**

The external surface of the roof of the building hereby permitted shall be coloured and thereafter maintained **dark grey** and shall be maintained in that condition in perpetuity unless otherwise be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Informatives

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Birds

Under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), wild birds are protected from being killed, injured or captured, while their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged, destroyed or taken. In addition, certain species such as the Barn Owl are included in Schedule 1 of the Act and are protected against disturbance while nesting and when they have dependent young. Offences against birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act are subject to special penalties. An up-to-date list of the species in Schedule 1 is available from Natural England

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/species/speciallyprotected_birds.aspx. Further information on wildlife legislation relating to birds can be found at www.rspb.org.uk/images/WBATL_tcm9-132998.pdf.

If advice is needed please contact the National Park Authority's Conservation Department on 01439 772700 or conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk.

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Background

Morra Head Farm is a relatively isolated farm holding located on high ground to the west of Harwood Dale. The land extends to some 239 hectares. The applicant has completed the supporting agricultural information proforma and stated that the livestock numbers for the holding are:

- 125 Suckler Cows (85 cows with calves and 40 cows to calve)
- 32 Heifers
- 46 Fattening Bulls
- 50 Store Heifers
- 90 Hoggs
- 5 Stock Bulls

These figures show an increase in cattle and a significant reduction in sheep at the holding since 2017 when an application for a large agricultural/storage building was considered and subsequently approved.

The farm is accessed via the road to Low North Bridge before the route reduces to a single width access track. The holding comprises a detached and fairly new stone under pantile farmhouse to the immediate east of the farm track and a large farm yard opposite. There are a number of typical agricultural buildings, mainly of steel portal frame design with corrugated sheet cladding, some used for housing livestock and some for the storage of straw etc.. A public bridleway runs through the site and extends to the north and there is an unclassified road running through the site, immediately north and parallel with the main farmyard.

A notification for an open sided building/roofed area to cover an existing livestock handling area in order to prevent dirty water run-off and prevent any possible pollution from the existing sheep dip was considered in 2015 under the agricultural prior notification procedure. The building has been constructed but has also been fully enclosed with Yorkshire boarding, contrary to the submitted details.

Full planning permission for a replacement building running parallel with the unclassified track which runs through the farm yard west to east was granted in July 2016 and has since been completed. In 2017 a further full planning application was approved for the construction of a substantial agricultural building in the centre of the yard of typical agricultural design and materials comprising concrete panels with Yorkshire boarding above and dark grey fibre cement roofing. This building has also been completed but the external walls are a mixture of powder coated zinc sheeting and timber Yorkshire boarding.

This prior notification proposal is for a significant extension to the covered livestock handling area (now a fully enclosed building) to the westernmost edge of the farmyard. The extension measures approximately 49.4 metres by 16.7 metres with an overall ridge height of 7 metres to match the dimension of the existing structure. The applicant has advised that the building is required for the storage of large agricultural machinery and animal feedstuffs which are bought in bulk. The floor area is required for the manoeuvrability of tractors/wagons and the height is to accommodate the tipping of trailers. Although there is a natural and gentle fall to the land, the site upon which the extension is proposed is already levelled and stoned as it is used for the storage of baled silage.

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Main Issues

The main issues to consider with this application are considered to be whether the siting and design of the proposed building are appropriate for this location and the purposes for which the building is required.

In terms of landscape impact, Officers are satisfied that in spite of the fact the farm occupies a relatively isolated, yet visible location, the proposed extension would clearly relate well to the existing buildings and associated yard area. The proposed building would be closely with the operational farm yard, acting as a 'boundary' marking the western limit of the yard as the extension would run almost the full length of the lard in a north-south direction.

Consequently, in terms of siting, it is not considered that the proposal would unduly harm the character of the area.

Having regard to the proposed design, although the proposed materials would match some buildings on site (some of which are not wholly in accordance with the approved materials), the proposed zinc sheet used for the walls of the extension would not match the host building which has elevations clad in traditional timber Yorkshire boarding. Officers have brought to the attention of the applicant the various unauthorised materials and requested that the proposed extension is amended to match the existing building through the use of Yorkshire boarding. The applicant has explained that it became apparent that the covered livestock handling area was so exposed, it was necessary to enclose the building on all sides as the site is particularly vulnerable to adverse weather and strong winds. The larger building which has a mixture of external cladding has also been constructed in response to the weather conditions; the west and east sides have been clad with zinc as Yorkshire Boarding did not provide adequate weather protection. The building is used to house cows with calves so it is important to avoid draughts for the welfare of youngstock.

In respect of the proposed extension, the applicant has explained that the materials have been chosen to comply with the standard for buildings as specified by the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme which requires buildings to be waterproof and have suitable and solid roofs, floors, walls and doors. Having further discussions with the applicant, the scheme has been amended to achieve compliance with the applicant's requirement and the Authority's concern in relation to design and landscape impact. The Applicant has provided written confirmation that the proposal will be amended to matching Yorkshire boarding to the west elevation with the remaining elevations clad in zinc.

Looking over the site history it is clear that significant investment has been made at this farm and not only has the general appearance been much improved, but the new facilities, layout and quality of the buildings has improved operational management, animal welfare and has likely environmental benefits. Officers are satisfied that the proposed extension can be justified to ensure efficient farm management and its design is now consistent with the site and other modern agricultural buildings. In view of the above, no objections are raised.