

# North York Moors National Park Authority

## Delegated decision report

**Application reference number:** NYM/2023/0791

**Development description:** removal of two silos and erection of general purpose agricultural building (resubmission following refusal of NYM/2023/0521)

**Site address:** land east of Pasture Road, Lockton

**Parish:** Lockton

**Case officer:** Mrs Hilary Saunders

**Applicant:** FHJA & MA Eddon

**fao:** Mr Matthew Eddon, High House Farm, Pasture Road, Lockton, Pickering, YO18 7NU

**Agent:** Ian Pick Associates Ltd

**fao:** Mr Sam Harrison, Station Farm Offices, Wansford Road, Nafferton, Driffield, YO25 8NJ, United Kingdom

## Director of Planning's Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason(s)

### Reason(s) for refusal

Refusal reason code	Refusal reason text
1	The siting of the proposed building, remote from any neighbouring farmsteads and other buildings would represent sporadic development which would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character and special qualities of this part of the National Park. The building would be clearly seen from the adjacent highway and public footpath and by reason of its isolated nature would have a harmful impact on this nationally protected landscape which is not characterised by isolated or small groups of buildings. The Local Planning Authority do not consider that sufficient essential agricultural need exists to justify a building on this isolated parcel of land to override the resulting harm to the open undeveloped character of this area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy BL5 of the North York Moors Local Plan.
2	Approval of this proposed development would increase pressure for similar buildings on areas of land detached from a main farmstead which could lead to a proliferation of other isolated barns across the National Park which would have a cumulative detrimental impact on the character, special qualities and distinctiveness of the Nationally Protected landscape.

## Consultation responses

### Parish

No comments received.

### Highways

No objections subject to conditions

### Third party responses

None received.

### Publicity expiry

Advertisement/site notice expiry date – 10 January 2024

View of two existing silos looking back along Pasture Road towards the main farmstead.



Proposed building would be just the other side of gate – existing silo frame just in right hand side of photo.



## Background

High House Farm is a large agricultural unit, located on the north side of Pasture Road (which leads from David Lane) on the eastern side of the A169, out with the main built-up village of Lockton. The area is characterised by scattered farm holdings, with High House Farm and the neighbouring Mount Pleasant Farm forming a cluster of properties at the right-angle bend in the lane.

The farm comprises the original farmhouse, adjacent traditional outbuildings and an extensive range of modern agricultural buildings forming a long farm yard extending northwards. To the east but still in close proximity to the original steading is a modern residential property and further livestock buildings.

The land holding, however, extends over a much greater area and this application relates to a separate field in the applicant's ownership, some distance to the south of the main farmstead. Just outside the field, on the highway verge are two substantial and old silos which appear to be disused.

Planning permission was refused in 2023 for the construction of an agricultural building (to be used for the storage of hay/feed in the summer months and winter housing of ewes and lambing). It was proposed that the building would be located in the bottom southern corner of the field and would measure 18.287m long x 9.143m wide with a height to the eaves of 4.266m and to the ridge of 5.458m. The building would be clad

with concrete panels and Yorkshire boarding, with a fibre roof sheet roof, and an access track from the road to the barn would be created and surfaced.

This current application is almost identical to the previous refusal, in terms of the size and design of the building, but no hard surface access and yard is proposed.

The supporting agricultural information lists existing farm buildings and of the eight buildings listed, only four appear to be used, with four substantial agricultural buildings apparently not being used.

The applicant's agent has expanded upon the previous supporting information and stated the following: -

The farm does not currently have capacity for the winter housing of the flock and is therefore required to seek rented accommodation elsewhere, which is unsustainable given current markets.

As the building would be located away from the main steading, airborne diseases such as pneumonia simply cannot be spread to the main flock. Disinfectant, separate clothing and an ability to restrict the amount and type of vehicles / visitors all result in 'gold standard' biosecurity measures being achievable. This level of biosecurity is not feasible under the current arrangements, which again results in separate rented accommodation being required elsewhere away from the main steading.

The use of the building is directly linked to the associated land, which is used for the grazing of ewes and the production of hay. The building will also facilitate the safer and more manageable loading and unloading of livestock from the land.

The scheme will result in a reduction in annual traffic movements associated with the land. Current operations result in vehicle movements to and from the land as part of the day-to-day operations, including the harvesting and storage of hay and straw, feed deliveries, livestock deliveries and removal, removal of stock for winter housing, removal of ewes for lambing, etc.

The erection of a purpose built shed in this location will remove the majority of these movements, as the operations become more self-sustained and efficient. The crop would be harvested, stored within the shed and used for feed throughout winter. The ewes would be lambed on site, and winter housing would also be provided.

Further, it is contended that when viewed in conjunction with the removal of the existing roadside feed silos, the scheme would propose a wider betterment in terms of reducing the visual impact of the agricultural operations within the immediate vicinity.

## Main issues

### Local Plan

Policy BL5 (Agricultural Development) seeks to permit new agricultural buildings where the scale is appropriate to its setting and will not have an adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park; there is a functional need for the development; it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable existing buildings available; the building is designed for the purposes of agriculture and is related physically and functionally to existing buildings; the proposal will not significantly harm local amenity; and in the absence of existing screening, a landscaping scheme is provided.

This policy and its explanatory text explain that, in this National Park, agricultural buildings are typically closely associated with the farm house and steading (there are farm security and visual/landscape clustering benefits) and there are few remote farm buildings, which is part of what makes this nationally protected landscape special. As such remote farm buildings are strongly resisted as they dilute the beauty of the countryside, and an exception is only made where an overriding case can be made for such a remote location for a farm building.

### Material considerations

The primary issue for consideration is has there been any material change in circumstances to warrant a different decision being made on this re-submitted planning application. The only change is the omission of the hard-surfaced access track and yard and additional justification regarding disease prevention. The surfacing of the access track and yard wasn't a primary reason for refusal of the previous scheme and if the justification of requiring a separate site for disease prevention were accepted, then that would further strengthen the case regarding concerns about setting a precedent as there are many similar farms with then National Park that could then put forward the same argument, which would lead to a proliferation of isolated buildings within this protected landscape.

Furthermore, the farm has a number of buildings, some of which are located some distance to the rear of the main farmstead and some of which appear not to be in use by the farm. There is no explanation as to why these buildings could not be utilised.

Consequently, the previous considerations remain the same and are set out as follow-

Whilst the building has been designed for the purposes of agriculture, it is not related physically and functionally to existing buildings, and it is not considered that there is sufficient justification for the functional requirements for the building to be in this location.

The proposed site is three fields away approximately 900m away along the lane, with the cited benefits being primarily the reduction in vehicle movements and visual benefit from removal of the silos.



However, it is not considered that these amount to an overriding case for sporadic development in the open countryside. Any benefits from removal of the silos would be more than negated by the visual impacts of a new remote building, there would also be lower farm security than feed being stored at the main steading. Furthermore, the distances involved are modest and it would set a precedent for other feed stock buildings for land more than 1km from the steading. It is considered that moving stock feed from the steading to fields away from the steading is fairly typical of farming in this National Park and it is not considered to amount to exceptional need or circumstances.

In terms of landscape impact, the building would be very isolated, and would be seen in isolation from public viewpoints, such as the adjacent public highway which is also a public footpath.

### Conclusion

The siting of agricultural buildings in remote locations is uncharacteristic for this National Park. This proposed building is not physically or functionally linked to any other buildings and would be seen from public vantage points as an isolated form of development, reducing the enjoyment of this typically rural and open landscape.

The purpose of Policy BL5 is to permit proposals for new agricultural buildings where the site is related physically and functionally to existing buildings associated with the business unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to agricultural necessity for a more isolated location. This is to ensure that the siting of buildings does not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area.

On the basis that the proposed building would constitute isolated and sporadic development in the open countryside which constitutes development uncharacteristic of the wider landscape of the National Park that would have adverse landscape impact and, refusal is recommended.

### Public Sector Equality Duty imposed by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposal is not considered to unduly affect any people with protected characteristics.

### Explanation of how the Authority has worked positively with the applicant/agent

The Authority's Officers have appraised the scheme against the Development Plan and other material considerations and concluded that the scheme represents a form of development so far removed from the vision of the sustainable development supported in the Development Plan that no changes could be negotiated to render the scheme acceptable and thus no changes were requested.