

# TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015

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## G. E. PORTER & SONS LTD

PRIOR NOTIFICATION APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDING (AMENITY BLOCK) UPON LAND AT BARN FARM, CHURCH LANE, LOWFIELDS, NAVENBY, LINCOLN LN5 0LN

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a prior notification application for erection of an agricultural storage building (farm labourer amenity block) authorised under Part 6, Class A(a) of the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, as amended by the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2018*. The site subject of this application is located at G. E. Porter & Sons Ltd, Barn Farm, Church Lane, Lowfields, Navenby, Lincoln LN5 0LN.
- 1.2 Part 6, Class A, Conditions A.2(2) stipulates that: (i) *The developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building, the siting and means of construction of the private way, the siting of the excavation or deposit or the siting and appearance of the tank, as the case may be;* and (ii) *‘the application must be accompanied by a written description of the proposed development and of the materials to be used and a plan indicating the site together with any fee required to be paid.’* Such information is duly outlined below. The following should also be read in conjunction with the accompanying site survey, proposed site layout, floor and elevation plan drawing RC23.004.120.C.

## 2.0 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

- 2.1 The proposed site occupies vacant concrete hardstanding within the northern confines of the wider 8.0 hectare Barn Farm agricultural building complex. The site is under ownership of the applicants’ G. E. Porter & Sons Ltd, and comprises part of their wider 1500+ hectare (3700+ acre) farm holding. The proposed site boundaries are not yet physically defined, though, as evident within the aerial photograph included below, it can be observed that the development will be situated to the immediate north of five broiler poultry houses. The hardstanding associated with the poultry farm access is located to the east and west. Land to the north comprises an area of landscaping (amenity grass), which in turn adjoins a single storey agricultural workers’ dwelling. A barn is located approximately 20 metres to the northwest of the site.
- 2.2 As evident within the aerial photograph included below, Barn Farm was, until recently, host to a total of 28 agricultural buildings including a feed mill, poultry houses and pig units with ancillary office and agricultural workers’ dwellings. These essentially served three separate operations comprising: the production of compound animal feed; the rearing and fattening of pigs; and the rearing of poultry (broiler chickens). However, Barn Farm is now subject to a programme of diversification and modernisation. The feed mill complex has recently been sold to Moy Park Ltd. The mill and ancillary buildings are therefore no longer under applicant ownership/within the Barn Farm complex curtilage. The pig rearing/fattening operation located within the southern confines of the retained farm complex has ceased with many of the livestock buildings having been removed. The poultry farming operation is however in the process of expanding. Planning permission (22/0285/FUL) for a new poultry house (unit 6) of near identical specification to the existing poultry houses was granted on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022 upon land approximately 116 metres to the south of the proposed site. On the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022, planning permission was granted for installation of an ancillary 1.6 MW straw

fuelled biomass boiler (this replaces poultry unit LPG heating systems) within an existing agricultural storage building located over 150 metres to the southeast of the application site.



Aerial photograph depicting application site (outlined red) relative to associated Barn Farm complex.

- 2.3 Access to the proposed site is currently facilitated by a substantial concrete surfaced private carriageway designed for Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) use. This junctures with the public highway (Church Lane) at a point marginally over 50 metres to the north of the application site. A secondary access is also located to the southeast of the site. This junctures with a narrower section of public highway known as Parsons Lane. Parsons Lane connects with: Church Lane to the north; a green lane (Skinnand Lane) to the south; and private carriageway owned by the applicant. Parsons Lane is therefore predominantly used by agricultural traffic to access G. E. Porter & Sons Ltd's surrounding arable land. The farm complex was previously accessed by a heavy duty private carriageway (120 metres to west of site) used in conjunction with the aforementioned feed mill. However, following the sale of the feed mill enterprise, this route is no longer used in association with the Barn Farm complex.
- 2.4 The proposed development will be situated amidst a remote agricultural landscape. It should be noted that a dwelling (Skinnand Manor) is located off Parsons Lane approximately 630 metres to the south of the application site. This property, which is also the premises of 'Graffoe Veterinary Care', comprises the most proximate sensitive residential receptor (not owned by the applicant). A small engineering firm occupies premises situated adjoining Skinnand abandoned village just under 0.7 kilometres to the southwest of the application site. Land to the north of Barn Farm/Church Lane includes a substantial network of arable fields interspersed with two poultry farms and Somerton Castle (located 1.0 kilometre to the northeast), which comprises a scheduled monument host to Grade I listed buildings. This land and property is also under the applicants' ownership. The most proximate settlement comprises the village of Carlton-le-Moorland (3.6 kilometres to the west of the site). The village of Navenby is located nearly 4.0 kilometres to the east of the application site.

- 2.5 The entirety of the site and immediate surrounding area is relatively flat, being devoid of any notable topographical features or variations in gradient. The Environment Agency flood hazard map depicts the proposed site within Flood Zone 1, which indicates a low risk of fluvial flooding (the outlying River Brant and land drain network being the greatest potential source of flood risk). There is no evidence to suggest that the site has been subject to localised flooding or drainage problems. The application site is not situated within an area of designated wildlife importance (such as SSSI's, LWS, RAMSAR site etc) or Article 2(3) land such as a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Figures 1 and 3 of the *Lincolnshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2016* identify that the application site is not located within a 'Minerals Safeguarding Area'. A search of the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the proposed site is not located within the setting or curtilage of a Listed Building, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Historic Park/Garden or any other designated heritage asset.
- 2.6 The proposed development is required in a capacity ancillary to agricultural operations within the surrounding G. E. Porter & Sons Ltd farm holding. As previously noted, the applicants' have recently sold the aforementioned feed mill agri-business, including its associated combined farm and site office/staff amenity building (located beyond the western confines of the barn farm complex). In conjunction with this, the base of arable operations (located at Castle Farm 1.7 kilometres to the northeast) is to be relocated to the Barn Farm complex. Such is logistically more efficient given Barn Farm's closer spatial relationship with the core of the business's arable field network. The removal of livestock buildings (former pig units) located within the Barn Farm complex's southern confines has also conveniently created a large area of hardstanding that is ideal for the parking and manoeuvring of agricultural vehicles. For these reasons, more farm labourers will be operating from Barn Farm. The proposed development accordingly seeks erection of a small staff amenity block, thereby complying with Health & Safety Executive welfare provision guidance. This will partially mitigate the loss of the farm office/staff amenity building sold as part of the neighbouring feed mill complex.
- 2.7 The proposed steel portal framed agricultural store will measure 11.05 metres by 5.10 metres (gross external area of 56.35 m<sup>2</sup>) with an eaves height of 2.62 metres and ridge height of 3.35 metres. The roof and elevations will be clad in profiled steel sheeting coloured Moorland Green (BS: 12B21). The base will be constructed from blockwork and the building will be insulated. Windows and doors will comprise grey UPVC. The proposed development will utilise a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) allowing roof water to discharge via gutters and drain pipes (black UPVC) into a subterranean soakaway. Foul water will discharge to a 'biodisc' package treatment plant. The building will provide two small kitchenettes and W.C.s. The building includes a central divide in order to allow poultry farm and arable workers to utilise separate facilities during periods when stringent biosecurity measures are in place (e.g. safeguarding the broiler poultry operation from Avian Influenza outbreak). The development will not require any external lighting.

### 3.0 PLANNING LAW

3.1 The proposed development is considered to achieve compliance with Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A(a) of the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, as updated by the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2018*. Class A(a) states that development will be permitted where:

*'A. The carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of—*

*(a) works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building;*

*...which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.'*

3.2 In context of the above it is emphasised that the application site comprises agricultural land situated amidst a 1500+ hectare agricultural unit, thereby significantly exceeding the 5.0 hectare threshold stipulated within Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A. The proposed agricultural building comprises an amenity block for farm labourers working within the Barn Farm poultry complex and wider arable field systems. The entirety of the proposed building is necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the associated farm holding as described in the above 'Development Context' section of this statement.

3.3 In relation to the relevant qualifying criteria of Class A.1, it is stated that:

- a) The proposed development will be carried out on a parcel of agricultural land (Barn Farm complex) measuring approximately 8.0 hectares, which is situated within the wider adjoining 1500+ hectare agricultural unit
- b) The application site's associated agricultural unit has not been subject to any development permitted under Schedule 2, Part 3 Class Q or S.
- c) The proposed scheme does not involve the erection or extension of a dwelling.
- d) As previously stated, the entirety of the new building is to be used for the purposes of agriculture.
- e) The ground area to be covered by the agricultural building (gross external area of 56.35 m<sup>2</sup>) to be constructed by virtue of Class A, as calculated in accordance with the requirements of Part 6, paragraph D.1(2)(a), will not exceed 1000 square metres [as substituted by *Section 12 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2018*] and no other buildings or associated structures have been erected within 90 metres of the application site during the previous 2 years.
- f) The application site is not situated within 3.0 kilometres of an aerodrome. It can be noted that the most proximate aerodrome comprises RAF Waddington, the defined periphery of which is located over 5.7 kilometres to the northeast of the application site.
- g) No part of the proposed agricultural building will exceed a height of 12.0 metres. The roof apex will be of greatest stature with a height of 3.35 metres.

- h) No part of the development will be situated within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road. The verge of Church Lane (public highway) is situated approximately 50 metres to the north of the application site.
- i) The proposed scheme will not involve the erection, construction or any works to a building, structure or excavation used, or to be used, for the accommodation of livestock, slurry or sewage sludge.
- j) The development will not involve excavations or engineering operations connected with fish farming on or over article 2(4) land.
- k) The proposed building will not be used for storing fuel or waste for an anaerobic digestion system.

3.4 On the basis of the above, it is reasonable to state that none of the Class A.1 preclusions apply to the proposed ancillary agricultural building. The proposal is therefore demonstrably permitted development.

3.5 This statement with submitted plan RC23.004.120.C (Site Location, Proposed Layout, Floor Plan and Elevation Drawing) provides information sufficient to address the relevant conditions of Part 6, A.2 of the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015* (as amended).

#### **4.0 SUMMARY**

4.1 In accordance with Part 6, A.2, (2)(i) of the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, as amended by the *Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2018*, this application seeks determination of the requirement for prior approval from the Local Planning Authority in relation to a scheme for the erection of an ancillary agricultural building upon agricultural land situated within G. E. Porter & Sons Ltd's surrounding 1500+ hectare farm holding.

4.2 The application site is situated upon a parcel of land exceeding 1.0 hectares located within an associated agricultural unit significantly larger than 5 hectares and the development is necessary for the purposes of agriculture (ancillary farm labourer amenity block) thereon. The development will integrate successfully with the character of the site's surroundings and the scheme will not give rise to any adverse environmental impacts. The proposed building and necessary construction works achieve full compliance with the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A, A.1 and A.2 of the 'General Permitted Development Order' (as amended). The proposal is therefore considered to comprise permitted development.