

OFFICIAL

**From:** Sir Alec Shelbrooke MP <[alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk)>  
**Sent:** 18 June 2025 14:12  
**To:** [Ministerial.Correspondence@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:Ministerial.Correspondence@levellingup.gov.uk)  
**Cc:** Cllr.Andy Paraskos <[Cllr.Andy.Paraskos@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Andy.Paraskos@northyorks.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** (Case Ref: AS9426)

Dear Minister,

I am writing on behalf of my constituents living in Bickerton, North Yorkshire who have approached me recently about the expansion of North Fields Farm – further information can be found here: <https://www.biltoninainstywithbickerton-pc.gov.uk/news/expansion-of-pig-farm-in-bickerton>.

Having approached North Yorkshire County Council, I am informed that no breach of planning control would occur should a proposed development proceed. I agree with this assessment, as the structure in question is lightweight, moveable, and not classified as “development” under the existing legislation. Similarly, the Environment Agency has confirmed that an environment permit is not required.

As you will be aware, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines “development” as involving building, engineering, mining or other operations, or a material change of use. However, agricultural land is typically excluded from the latter definition, and the nature of these temporary livestock structures means they do not fall within the former. This legislative framework, conceived more than three decades ago, does not reflect the realities of contemporary intensive livestock farming operations.

While the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2025 sets out relevant provisions under Part 6, including the restriction on erecting buildings for livestock within 400 metres of residential property, this does not currently apply to non-building structures, leaving local authorities with limited means to respond where residents are adversely affected.

My constituents and local stakeholders feel there is a growing need for the legislation to better reflect the operational and environmental impact of modern, intensive agricultural units. I would be grateful if your department could consider:

1. Whether there is scope to review or revise the definition of "development" in the 1990 Act to reflect intensive farming practices;
2. Whether the term "building" in the GPDO could be extended or clarified to include temporary or movable livestock accommodation; and
3. Whether intensive livestock installations might, in certain contexts, constitute a material change of use warranting planning control, particularly where located in close proximity to residential dwellings.

There is considerable concern locally that, without a more nuanced legislative framework, communities will continue to face disadvantage and disruption without appropriate recourse.

I would appreciate your department's views on this matter, and whether any legislative or policy updates are currently being considered that may help address this gap.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Alec

**Sir Alec Shelbrooke, M.P.**

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