



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2025

by **C Skelly BA (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R1038/W/25/3359040

Brookfields Farm, Main Road, Holmesfield Dronfield S18 7WT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr William Calvert against North East Derbyshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 21/01310/FLH.
 - The development proposed is a single storey garage building to provide secure vehicle and ancillary storage for the main residential dwelling. And additionally a basement storage garage to provide secure accommodation for ancillary agricultural equipment required for the maintenance of the wider site area, (approx 12 acres), as there is none currently. The proposed roof of the garage is shown extended to provide a sheltered seating area, which would compliment the garden setting. Proposed materials are stone corners details with timber clad walls, slate roof to garage and timber garage doors. A grass roof is proposed to the lower basement store.
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1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for construction of a single storey garage building to provide secure vehicle and ancillary storage for the main residential dwelling, and additionally a basement storage garage to provide secure accommodation for ancillary agricultural equipment at Brookfields Farm, Main Road, Dronfield, S18 7WT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01310/FLH, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos P-SITE-001 Rev 01 24.01.22; P-SITE-002 Rev 01 24.01.22, P-GARAGE-001 Rev 01 24.01.22, P-GARAGE-002 Rev 01 24.01.22, P-SITE-003 Rev 01 24.01.22 and P-SITE-004 Rev 01 24.01.22.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr William Calvert against North East Derbyshire Council. That application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The application form refers to 'Stable Mallet' as the property name, whereas the appeal form refers to 'Brookfields Farm'. However, I note that permission was granted for the change of name in 2021. All the submitted documents make reference to 'Brookfields Farm' and I am therefore satisfied that this is the correct reference.
4. The description of development is described as 'a single storey garage building to provide secure vehicle and ancillary storage for the main residential dwelling. And additionally a basement storage garage to provide secure accommodation for

ancillary agricultural equipment required for the maintenance of the wider site area, (approx 12 acres), as there is none currently. The proposed roof of the garage is shown extended to provide a sheltered seating area, which would compliment the garden setting. Proposed materials are stone corners details with timber clad walls, slate roof to garage and timber garage doors. A grass roof is proposed to the lower basement store'. However, during the determination of the application the sheltered seating area was removed.

5. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the amended plans which has necessitated a revised description. Moreover, in the interests of brevity I consider that a more appropriate description would be 'construction of a single storey garage building to provide secure vehicle and ancillary storage for the main residential dwelling, and additionally a basement storage garage to provide secure accommodation for ancillary agricultural equipment'. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
6. The appeal relates to a planning application that was not determined by the Council within the prescribed period. I note that the Council would have refused planning permission should it have made a decision on the proposal. I have had regard to the parties' submissions in establishing the main issues which I set out below.
7. The Council considers that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt; would cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt; the proposed design is unacceptable; and that no very special circumstances have been identified that would clearly outweigh the harm caused.
8. The Council have referred in their statement to drawings dated 31/10/21. However, as part of the planning application, revised drawings were submitted dated 24/01/22. I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

9. The main issues are:

- whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies; and
- the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

10. The site is within the Green Belt. The Framework states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraph 153 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
11. It also states, at paragraph 154, that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of various exceptions apply. One of these exceptions is g) the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously

developed land which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

12. Policy SS10 of the North East Derbyshire Local Plan 2014-2034 (2021) (LP) states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt would be inappropriate development unless it meets one of the exceptions listed. The plan predates the Framework which was revised in 2024, which updated the approach to Green Belt land.
13. The appeal site comprises a bungalow located just outside the village of Holmesfield. Access to the bungalow is down a long gravel driveway from Main Road which leads to an open storage area at the lower ground level used for the storage of machinery.
14. The appeal site is surrounded by wider land which is also in the ownership of the appellant. I observed that there are two stable buildings located to the rear of the bungalow, accessed via gates at the end of the driveway. There is a corrugated outbuilding close to the stables in the adjacent field, which is within separate ownership. Adjacent to the main road is a stone built outbuilding and smaller timber building, next to which two horse trailers were parked.
15. The appellant contends that the proposed basement storage garage is required for the storage of haylage, feedstuffs, plant, machinery and equipment to support and service the small-scale agricultural enterprise. This includes the storage of machinery necessary for the maintenance of the land, hedgerows and tree on the appellant's land.
16. The appeal site is outside of the village, which is a matter agreed by the parties. The appellant contends that the appeal site is within the residential curtilage of the dwelling. This matter has not been disputed by the Council. I observed that the appeal site is located close to the main dwelling and is both physically separated and has a different character and appearance to the wider land in the appellant's ownership. The appeal site therefore comprises previously developed land as set out in the Framework.
17. The proposed garage would be separated from the dwelling by approximately 5.54m and located to the side of the main dwelling. The ridge height of the proposed garage would be stepped down from that of the main dwelling and would have a subservient appearance. The proposed basement storage garage would be sited to the rear of the garden area close to the dwelling where land is at a lower ground level. It would read as being single storey from most viewpoints. The proposed buildings would be seen against the backdrop of trees and hedging along the boundary, existing stable buildings and a large agricultural building. Therefore, they would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
18. The proposal would comprise the partial redevelopment of previously developed land, which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Consequently, the proposed garage and outbuilding would not be inappropriate development under paragraph 154 g) and therefore it follows that there would be no adverse harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

19. In conclusion, the proposal as a whole comprises not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore does not conflict with Policy SS10 of the LP or the Framework.

Character and appearance

20. The site is within a Primary Area of Multiple Environmental Sensitivity which are considered to be the most sensitive areas of landscape. However, it is visually self-contained from the wider landscape by hedge and tree planting around the boundary of the wider site.
21. The existing dwelling has a modern appearance with a mix of materials including render and stone, with a slate roof. The proposed garage would be oak timber framed and have a pitched roof constructed of slate. The proposed use of black timber cladding and slate roof would integrate well with the dark render and roof materials of the existing dwelling.
22. The proposed basement garage building would also be timber framed. This building would have block walls at the bottom, with timber cladding above. It would also have a corrugated metal sheeting roof. As the land has already been dug out for the existing covered shelter, the block work would be predominantly sub-ground level with the timber element having a single storey appearance. The roof of the building would be stepped down from that of the garage and the dwelling and therefore both buildings would appear as subservient additions to the dwelling.
23. The proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. Thereby, it would not conflict with Policies LC5, SDC3 and SDC12 of the LP, which amongst other things seek to ensure that new development respects the scale, proportions, materials and overall design and character of the existing property and effectively integrates into their local setting.

Conditions

24. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions and where appropriate amended the wording to more closely align with the Planning Practice Guidance.
25. In order to meet legislative requirements, a condition shall be imposed to address the period for commencement (1). I have imposed a condition relating to approved plans for the avoidance of doubt (2).

Conclusion

26. The proposed development would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the host property or surrounding area. The proposal would not conflict with the development plan or the Framework.
27. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

C Skelly

INSPECTOR