



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 02 September 2025

by N Robinson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/W/25/3368515

The Blackladies, Kiddlemore Green Road, Brewood, Staffordshire ST19 9AT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Alice Rebecca McHale against the decision of South Staffordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00895/FUL
 - The development proposed is agricultural equipment secure storage unit/garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for agricultural equipment secure storage unit/garage at The Blackladies, Kiddlemore Green Road, Brewood, Staffordshire ST19 9AT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00895/FUL, subject to the following condition:
 - 1.) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PA-01A, PA-01B, PA-01C, HP-BL-03, Site Plan.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the application form includes words that are not an act of development. Some add information about what is being proposed, and I have had regard to that in arriving at my decision, but for clarity have omitted these words from the description in my heading and formal decision.
3. The proposal is referred to as being retrospective and at my site visit I observed that the building was already in place.

Main Issues

4. 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;
 - The effect of the proposal on landscape character; and
 - If the proposal is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

5. The site comprises land in the Green Belt. The Framework identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are openness and permanence. The Framework identifies that new buildings are inappropriate unless, relevant to this proposal, they represent buildings for agriculture and forestry. Policy GB1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012) (CS) echoes this.
6. The submission sets out that the structure is necessary to securely store agricultural and horticultural equipment and machinery used to maintain approximately 68 acres of agricultural/ forestry land associated with the Blackladies Estate including the maintenance of hedgerow, garden land and agricultural land and the planting of trees and whips in partnership with The Forest of Mercia CIC, with whom the appellant has an agreement for the planting of trees. Equipment stored in the building is also used to maintain areas of wetland habitats.
7. Whilst the equipment stored in the building would also be used for the maintenance of the private gardens at the Blackladies, its main use is for the storage of machinery and equipment related to agriculture and forestry. I am therefore satisfied that it comprises a building directly related to agriculture or forestry.
8. In light of the above, I find that the development meets one of the exceptions set down in the Framework which allows for buildings for agriculture and forestry and would not therefore be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Given this, no material conflict arises with those aims of CS Policy GB1.
9. As I do not find that the development is inappropriate, there is no requirement to question whether very special circumstances are generated in this instance.

Landscape character

10. The site forms part of an agricultural field which is bound by a mature hedgerow, and the immediate surrounding area has a rural character. The proposal relates to a timber-clad pitched roof building with 3 garage doors. The building is sited at the western field boundary and is largely screened by mature vegetation in views from the surrounding area including from the bridleway to the west.
11. The building has an agricultural form and appearance. Given its scale and siting close to the field boundary and access, the building does not appear visually intrusive and incongruous within its rural setting. The wider field in which the building is sited retains its agricultural character and the development has not altered the intrinsic rural character of the surrounding area.
12. In light of the above the development does not result in harm to the character of the surrounding landscape. I therefore find no conflict with CS policies EQ4 and EQ11 which seek to maintain and enhance the intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and ensure that the design of development is of the highest quality.

Other Matters

13. The site is located to the north of a grade II* listed building, 'The Blackladies', a grade II listed building 'Tudor Barn' and a number of curtilage listed barns. Statute requires that I pay special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. There is no indication that the site has any form of historic significance in association with these buildings and the development is separated from these buildings by mature vegetation. I am satisfied that the development preserves the setting of these listed buildings and note that this view is shared by the Council.

Conditions

14. The Council has suggested conditions. Given the retrospective nature of the application, it is not necessary to impose the standard time limit condition. It is necessary to impose a condition that requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for certainty.
15. I have not imposed the suggested condition which restricts the use of the building as I consider that this is too restrictive in the context of the site and the development applied for. Therefore, the condition would not meet the tests of being necessary or reasonable, as set out in the Framework.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

N Robinson

INSPECTOR