
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/25/3373121

Edington Wood, Cockhill Plantation, West of Ponteland Road, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3FR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Daniel Flounders against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01126/AGRGDO.
 - The development proposed is apex shed for storage relating to forestry operations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and prior approval is not required under the provisions of Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 6, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for apex shed for storage relating to forestry operations at, Edington Wood, Cockhill Plantation, West of Ponteland Road, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3FR in accordance with the application 25/01126/AGRGDO and the details submitted with it.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal relates to a prior notification submitted under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO). This provision grants planning permission for certain forms of development on land used for the purposes of forestry, subject to conditions and limitations, including a requirement for the developer to apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether prior approval is required in respect of the siting, design and external appearance of the building.
3. Although the Council's decision notice refers to a refusal of planning permission, the officer's report and the appeal statement confirm that the submission was assessed as a prior notification under Class E of the GPDO. While the terminology used was imprecise, this does not affect the substance of the assessment or the validity of the appeal.
4. The appellant has provided additional material with the appeal, including photographs and a summary of the woodland management. This does not change the proposal but assists in explaining it, and I have taken it into account in reaching my decision.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the proposal constitutes permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class E of the GPDO. This turns on whether the land is being used for the purposes of forestry and whether the proposed building is reasonably necessary for those purposes.

Reasons

6. Class E permits development on land used for forestry, including afforestation, where the development is reasonably necessary for those purposes. The appellant has provided a detailed account of recent and ongoing operations at Cockhill Plantation, including planting native broadleaved species, coppicing, removal of storm-damaged trees, and on-site processing of timber. These activities are consistent with recognised forestry practices and demonstrate that the land is actively managed for forestry purposes.
7. While the need for a felling licence has been questioned, the GPDO does not require such evidence for development to qualify under Class E. On the basis of the appellant's description of woodland management activities, I am satisfied that the land is actively managed for forestry purposes, irrespective of whether a felling licence has been obtained.
8. The proposed building is modest in scale, with a footprint of approximately 4.5 square metres, and is intended to provide secure, weatherproof storage for tools and equipment used in woodland management. The appellant has identified a range of items to be stored, including chainsaws, strimmers, planting spades, fuel, protective gear, and a first aid kit.
9. The Council refers to an appeal decision (APP/J9497/X/10/2127979) at a different site to support its view that the equipment could be transported to and from the site as needed. However, in this case the appellant has shown that the equipment is used regularly and that secure on-site storage is reasonably necessary to support ongoing operations. The test under Class E is one of reasonable necessity rather than essentiality. On the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the scale and purpose of the building are proportionate to the forestry activities described.
10. The Council has not raised concerns regarding the siting, design or external appearance of the building. Therefore, on the evidence provided, I am satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of Class E and that prior approval is not required.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal constitutes permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class E of the GPDO. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed and prior approval is not required.

A Caines

INSPECTOR