
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2025

by Elaine Moulton BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F2360/W/25/3374003

79 Royalty Lane, New Longton, Preston PR4 4JE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs B Mashiter against the decision of South Ribble Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 07/2025/00153/PIP.
 - The development proposed is erection of one dwelling and associated infrastructure.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle, and the second (technical details consent) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted¹. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent Technical Details Consent application if permission in principle is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use, and the amount of development.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within the Green Belt where, according to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), development is inappropriate unless it falls within identified exceptions set out at paragraph 154 and 155. Policy G1 of the South Ribble Local Plan (LP), adopted July 2015, says that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt subject to several exceptions.
6. At paragraph 232, the Framework states that due weight should be given to existing policies according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. In this particular instance I consider that LP Policy G1 is not fully consistent with the

¹ PPG Permission in Principle Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

Framework as it does not include the exception set out at paragraph 155. Accordingly, I have relied upon the Framework in assessing whether the development would be inappropriate within the Green Belt.

7. One exception in the Framework that is referred to by the appellant is set out at paragraph 154e), limited infilling in villages. The term 'limited infilling' is not defined in the Framework or the LP. It is therefore a matter of judgement for the decision maker and is generally considered to be the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage.
8. The appeal site forms part of the garden of 79 Royalty Lane (No 79) which lies outside of the defined settlement boundary of New Longton. It is bordered on one side by No 79, and there is a ribbon of residential development opposite. Directly to the rear of the site is part of the remaining garden which, according to the evidence before me, contains no buildings. Beyond that, at the rear, and on the other side of the site, are open fields. Accordingly, the land is bound by built development on two sides, and open land on the other two, which results, on the east side of Royalty Lane, in No 79 appearing as the final dwelling within New Longton.
9. The open countryside beyond the settlement, within which the appeal site is located, contains a looser and more sporadic form of development, interspersed by large undeveloped spaces. This contrasts markedly with the built environment of the settlement. As the appeal site is largely devoid of buildings, is enclosed by hedgerow like the adjoining field, and is bordered by open land on two sides, its appearance is more akin to the open countryside than to the densely built environment of the settlement. It does not, therefore, appear as a small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage.
10. Consequently, and notwithstanding that the site is currently residential garden land, I consider that the proposed development would represent an outward expansion of the settlement rather than comprising limited infilling within it. I therefore find that the proposal does not fall within the paragraph 154e) exception.
11. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the planning permissions granted on Royalty Avenue, 9 Parker Lane, Whitestake and on land to the north side of Preston New Road, Samlesbury. However, the evidence before me indicates that those sites were flanked by built development on three sides, rather than two sides as in this case. Furthermore, unlike the Inspector in the Royalty Avenue decision, I have found that the site has a greater affinity with the rural landscaping than the village area. Therefore, such developments differ from the appeal site in this case. As such, those decisions do not alter my findings.
12. A further exception highlighted by the appellant, at paragraph 154(g)(i) of the Framework, allows for the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
13. I have found that the development would not constitute limited infilling. Nonetheless, the exception at paragraph 154(g)(i) also allows for the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (PDL). There is no dispute between the parties that the appeal site is PDL, and, given the definition set out in

Annex 2 of the Framework, I find no reason to decide otherwise. Consequently, subject to my conclusions as to the effect on openness, the development could fall within the exception set out at paragraph 154(g)(i).

14. The proposal is a single dwelling. Although the details are not known at this stage, it is reasonable to consider that it would be much larger in bulk and massing than the single storey flat roofed garage building it would replace, resulting in a significant spatial loss of openness. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling, and the inevitable hardstanding, parking and domestic paraphernalia would collectively represent a substantial increase in the bulk of development at the site. This would, in part, be visible from Royalty Lane from the point of access. The appeal proposal would therefore also result in a visual loss of openness.
15. Accordingly, the proposal would have a significant impact, both spatially and visually, when compared to its current appearance, which would substantially harm on the openness of the Green Belt. I therefore find that the proposal would not fall within the exception that is set out at paragraph 154(g)(i) of the Framework.
16. Paragraph 155 of the Framework provides that development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where various criteria are all met. Criterion (b) requires there to be a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed. Footnote 56 advises that, in the case of applications for the provision of housing, this means the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, including the relevant buffer where applicable, or where the Housing Delivery Tests (HDT) was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.
17. The latest Housing Land Supply Position Statement, which sets out the position at 1 April 2025, indicates that the Council can demonstrate a 5.53-year supply of housing land. This has not been disputed. Furthermore, there is nothing before me that would lead me to conclude that housing delivery is below that required by the HDT. As such, based on the evidence before me, there is not, at this time, a demonstrable unmet need for housing.
18. Therefore, even if I were to conclude that the proposal would meet the requirements of paragraph 155 (a) and (c) and noting that the 'Golden Rules' as referred to at paragraph 155 (d) are not relevant as the proposal is not major development, it remains that the appeal scheme would not meet all the relevant provisions. Consequently, it is inappropriate development when assessed against paragraph 155.
19. In conclusion, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, therefore, having regard to its location, the proposed land use, and the amount of development, the site is unsuitable for residential development.

Other Considerations

20. The proposed dwelling could provide a family home in a location where several local amenities are easily accessible, thereby providing support to local services. Additionally, there would be economic and social benefits resulting from its construction and occupation. Nonetheless, given the scale of the development, these benefits would be limited.

Green Belt balance and conclusions

21. Paragraph 147 of the Framework advises that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 advises that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and very special circumstances will not exist unless that harm, and any other harm, are clearly outweighed by other considerations.
22. I have concluded that the appeal scheme would be inappropriate development and would, by definition, harm the Green Belt. I have also found harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
23. The other considerations I have identified are of limited weight in favour of the proposal. Consequently, these considerations, along with all other matters identified in the evidence, do not clearly outweigh the identified harm to the Green Belt, either individually or collectively, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.
24. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Moulton

INSPECTOR