



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2025

by H Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/N3020/W/25/3369300

Abbey Quarry, Quarry Lane, Linby, Nottingham NG15 8GA

- 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 Mr Richard Butler against the decision of Gedling Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0107.
 - The development proposed is retrospective permission for installation of workshop building (Use Class B8).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. 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 the openness of the Green Belt; and,
 - Whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, or any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development

3. The appeal site is a former quarry situated within the Green Belt, which now comprises a large water body, hardstanding and landscaped areas. It is used primarily for domestic recreation and use associated with certification for five pitches from the Caravan and Motorhome Club (CMC). The proposal comprises a large utilitarian workshop sited close to the site's boundary with Quarry Lane.
4. Paragraph 142 of the Framework sets out that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the Framework set out exceptions for development in the Green Belt, but there is agreement between the parties that the building does not meet any of those exceptions and that consequently the building is inappropriate development. From the evidence before me and my observations, I see no reason to disagree.

5. As such, the development comprises inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful. Paragraph 153 of the Framework sets out that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. There is therefore conflict with the fundamental aim of the Framework which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, as well as Policy 3 of the Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan (2014) (LP) insofar as this supports the principle of the Nottingham Derby Green Belt.

Effect on openness

6. One of the five purposes of a Green Belt, outlined in Paragraph 143 of the Framework, is that it should assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Planning Practice Guidance sets out that factors to be taken into account when considering openness, include visual and spatial aspects.
7. Although there are other buildings on the site, the development has introduced significant built form into an area previously free of structures. Consequently, the bulk and mass of the building is detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt in spatial terms.
8. I acknowledge that there is screening between the building and the lane, and that this section of the lane is unadopted and has limited public access. This would limit the perception of reduced openness in visual terms. Nonetheless, this does not alter my reasoning with regard to the loss of openness in spatial terms. Moreover, the effect of a proposal on openness in the Green Belt is not a relative concept dependent upon the overall size of the Green Belt.
9. As such, in addition to being deemed to be inappropriate development, there is an adverse effect on openness. The Framework states that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Other Considerations

10. The appeal statement states that the building is required *solely for the storage and necessary repair to all the equipment necessary to maintain the site*. Yet when permission was sought for another building in 2016, for what is named the Boathouse, this was also *explicitly for the secure storage of ... machinery associated with the private outdoor use of the lakes and the surrounding area*. The planning statement for the Boathouse goes on to state that the machinery needed includes a commercial mower for the maintenance and management of landscape areas.
11. Yet the evidence now before me contains an extensive list of machinery requiring secure storage¹, including a mini tractor, a JCB, and a tracked digger. There appears to me to be at least some duplication in function between those items of machinery. Moreover, the list of specific capabilities associated with each piece of machinery or equipment appears to be considerably more extensive and diverse than the list of maintenance operations required to maintain the site, as set out in the maintenance report². The evidence does not explain why site maintenance

¹ Pegasus Group – Machinery and Itinerary List, March 2025

² Whiting Landscape, September 2024

requires large machinery designed to carry out operations not listed in the maintenance report.

12. There is nothing before me to suggest that the site has changed significantly in extent, profile or terrain since the permission for the Boathouse was granted so it is unclear why so much additional machinery and equipment is now needed to undertake similar maintenance operations. It is also unclear why the storage provided by the Boathouse is now considered to be inadequate. The machinery list provided indicates that machinery is needed to maintain Quarry Lane and its hedgerows. However, this is inconsistent with the argument that the machinery is needed solely for site works.
13. The argument is advanced that equipment is needed to support the use of the site by the CMC. This certification has resulted in a change of use on the site which does not require planning permission, but this does not justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. If additional storage areas were needed to facilitate the change of use, this should have been taken into account and the necessary permissions sought beforehand.
14. The argument is also advanced that the machinery is used for works in the local area and for maintaining the lane. However, there is nothing before me to indicate that there are firm agreements with other parties in this regard, and nor would machinery stored on this site be the only option to maintain an unadopted lane. Moreover, although the appellant argues that work is carried out for the parish council, the parish council has objected to the development.
15. The appeal statement notes that as the Boathouse was granted permission for change of use in 2020, to allow functions and community events, the appeal building is needed to store machinery to support these events. However, the planning history shows that this application was withdrawn. As such this argument carries no weight.
16. With regard to protecting and enhancing wildlife, it does not follow that this is sufficient reason to construct such a large building to house machinery that appears to be in excess of that needed to maintain the site. In any case the evidence shows that the site sits within the larger Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designation and there is nothing before me to indicate that maintenance operations on the site are compatible with, or key to, maintaining the integrity of that LWS designation.
17. Although I appreciate that storing machinery on site reduces transport, the range of likely maintenance operations set out in the maintenance report indicates that there would not be a significant impact on local roads if equipment was imported for each maintenance operation.
18. I acknowledge that permission was given for a building on the site in the late 1990s but this carries no weight with regard to this appeal. Each application is determined on its merits and the planning context at the time.
19. Consequently, I conclude that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the machinery listed is needed solely for maintenance of the site, and consequently, that such a large storage area is essential for the site's ongoing maintenance. Although I acknowledge that it may be useful for the appellant to maintain the unadopted lane, and carry out other work in the area, such social or community

benefits are incidental and carry only minor weight in favour of the appeal. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the inappropriate development undertaken do not exist.

Heritage Assets

20. There are several designated heritage assets in the area. However, there is nothing before me to indicate that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the setting of those assets.

Other matters

21. I acknowledge that there are letters of support for the proposal. However, the harm that I have identified exists irrespective of local support.
22. I give no weight to the argument that the site is a former quarry. The buildings associated with that use have been demolished.
23. The site is adjacent to the Linby Quarries Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) but as there is nothing before me to suggest that there would be a negative impact on the SSSI, I have not considered this further.
24. Interested parties have raised other concerns but as I have found harm in relation to the main issues, there is no need for me to consider those concerns further.

Balance and Conclusion

25. It is not disputed that this is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and I have found moderate harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Although other considerations have been advanced in support of the appeal, as set out above, I give these minor weight. As such, other considerations do not clearly outweigh the harm identified in respect of inappropriate development and harm to openness in the Green Belt. The proposal conflicts with the Framework and the LP, and very special circumstances do not exist. The appeal is dismissed.

H Senior

INSPECTOR