



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 January 2026

by N Teasdale BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/25/3375904

Ecklindale, C358 Smallburn to Hiddlestone, Smallburn, Northumberland NE20 OAD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Ennis against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/02433/FUL.
 - The development proposed is single storey detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for single storey detached garage at Ecklindale, C358 Smallburn to Hiddlestone, Smallburn, Northumberland, NE20 OAD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/02433/FUL, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The facing materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the development shall be in accordance with details contained in the application.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans. The approved plans for this development are:-
 - Location Plan drawing no. PL_837_001 Rev A
 - Proposed Site Plan drawing no. PL_837_102 Rev E
 - Proposed Garage Floor Plan drawing no. PL_837_301
 - Proposed Garage Elevations drawing no. PL_837_302

Main Issues

2. The main issues of the appeal are:
 - Whether the proposal would be 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, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. The appeal site is located to the north of Ponteland and hosts a two-storey detached dwelling that is set well back from the highway which was constructed as part of a redevelopment of the site. The appeal site is situated in the open countryside and is on land designated as Green Belt.
4. The proposed development seeks to introduce a detached garage to the front of the dwelling which would be 8 metres deep with a width of 11.5 metres and height of 4 metres to the ridge.
5. Policies STP 1, STP 7 and STP 8 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036 (NLP) relate to the spatial strategy and strategic approach to development in the Green Belt. Policy STP 8 explains that in assessing development proposals within the Green Belt, development that is inappropriate in the Green Belt, in accordance with national planning policy, will not be supported except in very special circumstances where other considerations clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm resulting from the proposal. It then goes on to state that development, which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, as defined in national planning policy, will be supported.
6. Paragraph 154 of the Framework explains that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the exceptions applies. Amongst others, this includes c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
7. The NLP does not set out a definition of 'original building' but the glossary at Annex 2 of the Framework does define this as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally. In relation to buildings constructed after 1 July 1948, the definition of 'original building' in the glossary to the Framework does not expressly deal with replacements. For the purposes of the Framework, it would be reasonable to conclude that the 'original building' in such a case would be the replacement dwelling itself, as originally built, and that should form the baseline against which subsequent extensions and alterations should be measured.
8. It is my understanding that planning permission was granted on the 1st October 2018 under reference 17/03532/FUL for the demolition of the existing house and portal frame storage shed and the construction of a new 2 storey house. The delegated report for that scheme explains that the proposed footprint would be 298 square metres with a ridge height of 6.88 metres. The appellant sets out that when the new dwelling is used as the baseline, the proposed garage represents an increase of approximately 14% in volume and 32% in footprint over the existing dwelling. Based on the evidence before me, I have no compelling reason to disagree. Such an increase in volume and footprint would clearly be a proportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
9. Further, in context of the host dwelling, the proposed garage would be a relatively modest, single storey structure of domestic appearance, positioned close to the dwelling and contained within the residential curtilage of the site which is large enough to accommodate the proposed garage. Its bulk and height would be

subordinate to the house, and it would read as an ancillary building within a single domestic plot.

10. For the above reasons, the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposed development would not therefore be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and thus would accord with paragraph 154 c) of the Framework. For the same reasons, the proposed development would also accord with Policies STP 1, STP 7 and STP 8 of the NLP.
11. Given that I have concluded that the proposed development would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, there is no requirement to assess the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt nor whether there are any very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal.

Other Matters

12. Concerns have been raised regarding the requirement for an additional 3 bay detached garage given that the original consent included an integrated garage. However, this would not alter my findings on the above main issue when assessed against the relevant Green Belt test.

Conditions

13. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council including the standard time for commencement of development which I have applied. I also agree that a plans condition is necessary in the interests of certainty. A condition relating to materials is also required in the interests of the satisfactory appearance of the development.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

N Teasdale

INSPECTOR