



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2026

by **N Perrins MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/25/3371514

Land at Coppathorne, Poundstock, Bude, Cornwall EX23 0DD

- 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 Ms Alison Rowland against Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA24/09752.
 - The application sought planning permission for proposed garage and storage building with access and turning space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission Ref: PA18/07568 granted an ancillary domestic garage and storage outbuilding at the site in 2018. The appellant's evidence that seeks to demonstrate that this was lawfully implemented includes an invoice for works undertaken in 2021, an email to the Council enclosing photographs of these works and Google Earth imagery from 2021 and 2022 showing groundworks at the site. The Council disputes implementation on the grounds that the current steel frame and slab do not accord with the approved plans for the 2018 permission.
3. I acknowledge that the type of works undertaken at the site, such as laying a concrete slab, would usually be sufficient to lawfully implement a planning permission within the prescribed time limit. However, the evidence before me does not conclusively establish that the works carried out were constructed in accordance with the approved plans.
4. Notwithstanding, I have assessed this appeal on the basis that the earlier approval is clearly a material consideration in establishing the principle of ancillary domestic development in this location and confirming the Council's previous acceptance of a building of modest scale here. However, I attribute limited weight to it as a fallback position given the significant differences in footprint, form, design and materials between the two schemes.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are (i) whether the scale, bulk and mass of the proposed building is appropriate to its stated domestic ancillary purpose and its impact on the character and appearance of the countryside, and (ii) the effect of the proposal on the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building, Coppathorne Cottage.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site is located in countryside adjacent to a small cluster of dwellings including the host property Coppathorne and the Grade II Listed Building Coppathorne Cottage. The site and its surrounds have a rural character comprising mainly undeveloped fields and few buildings that provide a tranquil countryside setting. While not in a designated landscape, it is within 1km buffer of the Cornwall National Landscape and near the Week St Mary Area of Great Landscape Value. The site is part of the CCA37 Bude Basin Landscape Character Area identified in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study 2023, which recommends amongst other matters protecting the sense of tranquillity and sparsely settled character away from main settlements. The A39 borders the site to the west.
7. PA18/07568 granted planning permission for a partly open fronted oak frame garage and storage building with a floor area of around 74.9sqm featuring a slate roof and oak cladding. In contrast, the proposed building would be around 123sqm with a fully enclosed steel structure with garage doors. Though the ridge height remains the same as the previous approval, the enclosed design would create a much larger building with a substantially more solid and bulky visual presence. The significant increase in size from the previous approval would also create an outbuilding that would not be subordinate to the main property, exceeding what could reasonably be considered as an appropriately sized ancillary structure for a dwelling.
8. The design is also notably different to the previous scheme comprising anthracite grey wood cladding, and grey painted roof, bi-folding garage doors, and a steel structural frame. The use of these materials, combined with the fully enclosed form, would give the building more of a commercial or light industrial appearance rather than the ancillary oak-framed domestic outbuilding previously approved.
9. I acknowledge the appellant's submission that similar materials have been approved in comparable rural contexts, including the nearby agricultural building at Turks Head Field Ref: PA23/10180. However, this other example was approved for agricultural storage and beekeeping with a traditional agricultural appearance that was concluded to conserve the character of the National Landscape. The proposal before me, presented as domestic ancillary development with no established agricultural use of the land, does not benefit from that same context, and the domestic setting places different design expectations on the building.
10. The proposed building would also be positioned further west compared with the 2018 approved scheme. This would bring the building closer to the A39 frontage and to Coppathorne Cottage, increasing its visual prominence. The building would be visible from the A39, the approach road that joins the A39 to the west and from the access road for the site. The steel frame already on site is visible from the A39 above the boundary hedgerow, and a completed and clad building of this height and bulk would be similarly and more prominently visible. While proposed landscaping including the planting of trees and new hedgerow identified in the Habitat Plan would offer some mitigation over time, the scale and form of the building would remain discordantly apparent in the landscape, particularly in winter months before vegetation is fully established.

11. I have considered the appellant's submission that the scale is justified by functional need, including the secure storage of multiple vehicles, a vintage tractor, a campervan, garden and farm machinery, a home gym, bicycles, logs, and holiday let equipment. I note that whilst some of these items may reasonably require secure weather-proof storage, the evidence submitted does not demonstrate why a building of around 123sqm is the minimum necessary in this location for these purposes, or why some elements such as a home gym, holiday let equipment or seasonal items could not be accommodated within the existing host dwelling or its established curtilage. Personal storage requirements are transient in nature, whereas the building would be a permanent feature in the landscape, which limits the weight I attribute to the functional need in this case.
12. To conclude, the appeal building is materially larger and of different character than the previous approved scheme, which by reason of its scale, bulk, mass, and design would have an urbanising effect that would unacceptably detract from local distinctiveness and character. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policies 1, 2, 12 and 23 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030 (CLP) and paragraphs 8, 131, 135 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which together require development to be well-designed and of an appropriate scale, density and mass, to sustain local distinctiveness and character, and to protect and enhance the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Setting of the Listed Building

13. Coppathorne Cottage is a Grade II listed building dating from the eighteenth-century with key features being its thatched roof with gabled ends, colourwashed and plastered elevations, symmetrical two-window frontage with brick gable-end chimneys, and early C20 horned timber sashes. The cottage occupies a prominent position within the immediate streetscene and its setting is defined by an enclosed garden, narrow lane frontage, and surrounding open agricultural land including the appeal site. As such, its significance derives from its architectural and historic interest as an example of traditional Cornish vernacular, its contribution to the rural character of the area, and the relationship between the building and its immediate rural setting.
14. The appeal site is directly adjacent to north of Coppathorne cottage. The proposed building will be visible from the front and rear of the listed cottage, as well as from the A39 to the north. While existing hedgerows and trees offer partial screening, the steel frame already stands out above them, so a finished structure of similar size would also be prominent.
15. The building's new position, around 2 metres further west than previously approved, would bring it closer to the cottage's rear garden area and increase its visual impact on its setting. The proposed building with its industrial appearing grey cladding and roof, would also contrast sharply with the listed building in its size, siting and appearance. Even with vegetation filtering views, the discordant appearance diminishes the heritage asset's setting to a limited degree.
16. I have noted the Council's own assessment of the 2018 permission, which concluded that the previous proposal was not harmful to the setting of the heritage asset having regard to its design, scale, materials and position. That conclusion was reached in respect of a materially different building. The current proposal is larger, of different design, employs different materials, and is sited in a different position. The

assessment that applied to the 2018 scheme cannot be used to justify the current proposal.

17. Taking all the above into account, I find that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II listed Coppathorne Cottage. I place this harm at the lower end of the less than substantial spectrum, acknowledging that it arises principally from the visual impact on the setting of the heritage asset through increased bulk, altered positioning, and discordant materials rather than from any direct physical impact on the fabric of the listed building or its curtilage.
18. Paragraph 212 of the Framework requires that great weight be given to the heritage asset's conservation. Paragraph 215 requires that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. Paragraph 20 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723 makes clear that public benefits must be of a nature or scale to be benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit.
19. The appellant cites benefits such as secure off-road parking, storage, improved site layout, and enhanced biodiversity. While the proposed biodiversity improvements and tree planting exceed previous requirements and offer environmental gains, these would not have a significant positive impact on the public at large. The storage and amenity advantages are also private benefits, not public. As such the benefits presented not outweigh the harm identified sufficient to accord with Paragraph 215 of the Framework. Moreover, although the biodiversity enhancements are positive, they could be achieved separately and do not outweigh the impact on the heritage asset's setting.
20. In conclusion, the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II listed Coppathorne Cottage, which is not outweighed by public benefits. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to Policy 24 of the CLP and paragraphs 210, 212 and 215 of the Framework.

Conclusion

21. The appeal proposal would result in harm to the character of the area and setting of the adjacent listed building due to its size and appearance. None of the material considerations presented in favour of the proposal, individually or in combination, are sufficient to outweigh the identified conflict with the development plan that would arise from the scale and form of the proposed building, which goes substantially beyond what was previously approved, and what would reasonably be expected for a domestic ancillary structure in this rural setting.
22. For all the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR