



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2026

by Hannah Guest BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 April 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1825/W/25/3376084

43 Alcester Road, Feckenham, Worcestershire B96 6JD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Dalloway against Redditch Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00604/FUL.
 - The development proposed is domestic garage to front of main property and associated landscaping works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for domestic garage to front of main property and associated landscaping works at 43 Alcester Road, Feckenham, Worcestershire B96 6JD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00604/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal follows the Council's failure to determine the application, reference 24/00604/FUL, within the prescribed period. However, the Council's statement of case indicates that planning permission would have been refused. The appellant has had the opportunity to comment on this position and therefore has not been prejudiced. I have determined the appeal on this basis. The main issues below are derived from the Council's statement of case.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to any relevant development plan policies and the Framework; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

4. Policy 8 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 (2017) (Local Plan) sets out that applications for development in the Green Belt will be determined in line with national planning guidance on Green Belts and other relevant policies within the development plan.

5. Paragraph 154 of the Framework states development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of a closed list of exceptions apply. These exceptions do not explicitly include new domestic outbuildings, such as the appeal proposal. However, there are a number of exceptions that this type of development may be considered under.
6. It has been put to me by the appellant that the appeal site is an infill site between buildings in a village context. Exception e) of Paragraph 154(g) of the Framework identifies limited infilling in villages as a form of development that would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt.
7. Although the appeal site is quite a distance from the identified settlement boundary of Feckenham, I saw on my visit that it is within walking distance of the village's services and facilities. Nonetheless, to determine whether a site is in a village for the purposes of Paragraph 154 of the Framework, an assessment of the extent of the village must be taken on the ground.
8. The appeal site lies at the edge of the village on a section of the B4090, Alcester Road, one of Feckenham's principal highways. This part of the B4090 differs from the more compact village centre, there are no formal footways, dwellings sit slightly above the highway on larger plots, and the pattern of development is more dispersed, albeit with gaps largely comprising the rear or side gardens of those properties. The distances between the houses are not considerable, and there is clear intervisibility between them.
9. Although the appeal property sits further back and higher than the neighbouring dwelling, No. 41 Alcester Road, also known as Yew Tree House, it remains visible in filtered views from the highway and its presence is noticeable in the street scene. The first open fields forming the wider countryside lie opposite and immediately beyond the appeal property, coinciding with the point where the reduced speed limit through the village increases. On the ground, this is where the sense of leaving the village occurs. In my judgement, the appeal property relates more closely to the built form of Feckenham than to the open countryside, albeit it is the last dwelling on this stretch. The appeal site therefore feels part of the village and should be regarded as within a village for the purposes of Paragraph 154.
10. I acknowledge that there are two notable gaps in the street scene. The first between No. 33 Alcester Road, also known as Rose Cottage, and Yew Tree House and another between Yew Tree House and the appeal property. These gaps comprise the gardens of these properties and are enclosed, in part, by fencing and brick walls that are a visible feature of the street scene. Given this, and that the gaps between the houses are not substantial, I am of the view that for the most part there is a built frontage and that the appeal site would represent a small gap within that.
11. Based on the evidence before me and my observations on site, the proposed garage, while sizable for an outbuilding, would represent a modest development, which would comprise limited infilling within a village. The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. It would accord with the provisions of the Framework and subsequently Policy 8 of the Local Plan.
12. Given the proposal complies with Paragraph 154(e) of the Framework, there is no need for me to consider any other exceptions listed under Paragraph 154. Also, as

the proposal would not be inappropriate development, in this case, there is no need for me to consider its impact on openness.

Character and appearance

13. The appeal site lies on a section of the B4090 with a more rural and spacious character than the village centre, deriving from larger plots, the gaps between dwellings and boundary vegetation that contributes to a verdant street scene.
14. The proposed garage would be positioned forward of the host dwelling. The Borough of Redditch High Quality Design SPD (SPD) advises that such positioning will not usually be appropriate as it may harm the character of the street scene. However, in this case, existing planting, particularly the evergreen tree within the frontage of Yew Tree House and landscaping within the frontage of the appeal site, would limit views of the structure largely to short-range vantage points near the Moors Lane junction. Although sizeable and elevated, the proposed garage would appear subordinate to both Yew Tree House and the host dwelling and would not form a dominant feature in the street scene.
15. While no comparable front-sited outbuildings were evident on my visit, I saw that dwellings along this side of the B4090 sit close to the highway. As a result, the proposed garage's forward position would not appear incongruous. Also, the modest loss of spaciousness would not result in any appreciable harm, given the proposed garage would follow the prevailing linear pattern of development. The proposal would therefore align with the broader design aims of the SPD.
16. The Council's concerns regarding potential loss of frontage planting are noted. The Site Plan, Drawing No. 2478/3 Rev A, indicates that the existing hedges will be retained. However, I observed that the existing boundary planting is currently low or sparse. To ensure an adequate and enduring level of planting capable of softening the garage and maintaining the verdant character of this part of the B4090, a landscaping scheme can be secured by condition.
17. Although the half-hipped roof and pitched gable of the proposed garage would not replicate the host dwelling's roof profile exactly, they would not appear discordant. The roof pitches would be broadly comparable, and the overall form would read as complementary to the hipped elements of the host dwelling's roof rather than in conflict with them.
18. Accordingly, for the reasons above, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or wider area. It would therefore comply with Policy 40 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that all development is of a high-quality design that reflects or complements the local surroundings and materials.

Other Matters

19. Yew Tree House, which is adjacent to the appeal site, is a Grade II listed building. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to give special regard to preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
20. The significance of Yew Tree House derives from its architectural value and historic contribution to the evolution of Feckenham. While located toward the edge of the village, it remains part of the built form, and the dwellings along the B4090,

including the appeal property, form part of its setting. Its proximity to the highway makes it prominent in the street scene. It is the spacious and verdant character of its immediate setting that is significant in relation to this appeal.

21. The proposed garage would sit slightly higher than Yew Tree House and, given the current low height of the boundary hedge, it would be a visible new element within the listed building's setting. Even so, adequate separation would remain between the buildings to ensure that the significance of Yew Tree House could still be perceived and appreciated. With the addition of an appropriate landscaping scheme, the spacious and verdant quality of its setting would be maintained
22. Accordingly, I conclude that there would be no harm to the setting of the listed building or its significance as a designated heritage asset.

Conditions

23. The Council has suggested 5 conditions be imposed on any grant of permission, which I conclude on below. In imposing conditions, I have had regard to the approach in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. I have accordingly modified the wording or form of certain conditions without altering their fundamental aims. Pre-commencement conditions were agreed by the appellant.
24. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary for reasons of certainty. For the same reason and to protect biodiversity, a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the recommendations in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is also needed.
25. To protect the area's character and appearance, the details of the external finishes of the proposed garage and a landscaping scheme are justified. I have amended the external finishes condition from that suggested by the Council, as not all the external materials proposed would match the existing dwelling.
26. To avoid increased flood risk and protect highway safety, a condition requiring drainage arrangements to be put in place that ensure surface water is not discharged onto the public highway or into any highway drain is necessary.
27. The Council's suggested condition restricting industrial, trade, or business use of the proposed garage is unnecessary. Any such use would not be incidental to the dwellinghouse and would therefore fall outside the terms of this permission. It would require a further grant of planning permission and failure to secure such permission would leave the development at risk of enforcement action.

Conclusion

28. For the reasons above, I find that the proposal would accord with the development plan, read as a whole. Having had regard to all relevant material considerations, it has not been demonstrated that there are any of sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore allowed, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Hannah Guest

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2478/1 Rev A; 2478/2; 2478/3 Rev A; 2478/5 Rev E; 2478/6; 2478/8.
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Preliminary Ecological report, prepared by TM Building Consultants, dated June 2024, Reference 2478.
- 4) No development shall take place until a detailed scheme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include:
 - identification of and measures to protect existing trees and hedgerows which are to be retained;
 - full details/schedules/specifications of the proposed new planting;
 - details of any walls, fences, retaining structures, gates or other boundary treatments/ means of enclosure;
 - details/samples of proposed hard surfacing materials; and
 - an implementation programme and schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of five years.

The scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and agreed implementation programme. Thereafter the completed scheme shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

If, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, any tree or plant (or any tree or plant planted in replacement of them) is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree or plant of a similar size and species as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place within the first planting season following the removal, uprooting, destruction or death of the original tree or plant.

- 5) Prior to development above slab level full details and/or samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and samples and thereafter the materials retained.
- 6) Drainage arrangements shall be provided to ensure that surface water from the driveway and/or vehicular turning area does not discharge onto the Public Highway. No drainage or effluent from the proposed development shall be allowed to discharge into any Highway drain or over any part of the Public Highway.