



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2026

by **S Bennett-Matthews**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th June 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/M2840/W/25/3373096

10-12 Pytchley Road, Orlingbury, North Northamptonshire NN14 1JQ

- 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 T Turnell against the decision of North Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is NW/25/00265/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a storage building to store agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles for personal/hobby use and area of hardstanding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a storage building for the storage of agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles for personal and hobby at 10-12 Pytchley Road, Orlingbury, North Northamptonshire NN14 1JQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref NW/25/00265/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application form describes the development as “*Erection of a storage building*,” whereas the appeal form refers to the wording used in the decision notice, namely “*Erection of a storage building to store agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles for personal/hobby use and area of hardstanding*.”
3. Whilst there is a discrepancy, a Certificate of Lawful Development (CLEUD) under reference W/24/00157/LDE establishes the lawful use of the appeal site for the open storage of agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles for personal and hobby use. In that context, the appeal principally relates to the erection of a storage building to facilitate that existing lawful use. The intended use forms a central part of the appellant’s arguments, and the extent of the hardstanding is clearly shown on the submitted plans. I have therefore determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - Whether the proposed development would be in a suitable location having regard to the development plan’s spatial strategy for the area; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Reasons

Spatial Strategy

5. The appeal site lies in open countryside and occupies part of a larger rectangular parcel of agricultural grassed paddock adjacent to a field associated with No.14 Pytchley Road. It is located outside the defined settlement boundary of Orlingbury.
6. The submitted plans do not definitively show the orientation of the rear and side elevations of Nos. 10-12 Pytchley Road. However, the location plan and my observations during the site visit indicate that the appeal site lies to the rear of that property.
7. The wider agricultural paddock is bounded by the rear garden boundaries of residential properties along Isham Road, the curtilages of dwellings on Pytchley Road, a field in the ownership of No.14 and open countryside beyond. Access to the appeal site is provided via a gated grassed access track located between Nos.10-12 and No. 14 which leads to the hardstanding area in front of the proposed storage building. The appeal evidence indicates that the appeal site is under the sole ownership of the appellant.
8. The proposal is for a storage building with a dual-pitched roof, measuring approximately 5.2 metres in height to the ridge and 4 metres to the eaves. It would be constructed in forest green box-profile cladding and would include 8 rooflights, a roller shutter door (approximately 4.5 metres wide) on the western elevation and a pedestrian access door on the southern elevation. The proposal comprises a building to be used for the storage of agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles for personal and hobby related use including vehicles and mowing equipment associated with the maintenance of the paddock, which is occasionally used for charity events. The proposal would not introduce any commercial use.
9. The Council argues that the proposal would conflict with Policies 11, 13, and 25 of the North Northampton Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and paragraphs 88 and 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'), which collectively seek to restrict development in rural areas to limited circumstances, such as where it supports the rural economy or meets a defined local need.
10. The appellant contends that the proposal is appropriate having regard to the established lawful use of land and that insufficient weight has been given to the fallback position.
11. Notwithstanding this, given the non-commercial, hobby related nature of use and only occasional association with charity events, I find that the proposal would not fall within the categories of development supported by Policies 11, 13 and 25 of the JCS. It would therefore give rise to harm, and conflict with the development plan in principle.
12. I also find that the proposal would not fall within the scope of development supported by paragraphs 88 and 89 of the Framework. I address the fallback position within my Planning Balance.

Character and appearance.

13. The Council contends that the building would be overly high for its intended storage use and that, as a result, its scale and mass would appear visually overbearing within the countryside setting.
14. The appeal site is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Orlingbury Conservation Area (CA). I have therefore had regard to the significance of the conservation area as a designated heritage asset including its setting in accordance with the Framework.
15. I note the Council's Conservation Officer raised no objections to the proposal, and the impact on the CA does not form part of the reason for refusal.
16. The proposed building would be positioned adjacent to the existing dwelling at Nos. 10-12 and constructed in forest green box-profile cladding which would reduce its visual prominence and assist in assimilating the building into its rural surroundings.
17. In terms of its form and appearance, the building would reflect the functional and practical characteristics of farmyard buildings and agricultural structures commonly found in rural areas, particularly through its simple design and use and colour.
18. When viewed in the context of the surrounding paddock and its relationship to existing built development at Nos. 10-12 and No. 14, the building would not appear unduly dominant or overbearing. Subject to appropriate landscaping, I find the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the countryside and the setting of the CA.
19. The Council's Landscape Officer raised concerns regarding the provision of screen planting using broad-leaved species. I am satisfied that this matter can be appropriately addressed through the imposition of conditions.
20. Taking these matters into account, I conclude that the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the countryside or the setting of the CA and would accord with Policy 8(d) (i) and (ii) of the JCS, which seeks to ensure that development responds positively to its surroundings.

Conditions

21. I have considered the suggested conditions against the tests set out in the Framework. I have made some amendments to provide better clarity. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a plans condition is necessary in the interests of certainty.
22. Conditions 3 and 4 requires the submission and implementation of a hard and soft landscaping scheme and biodiversity enhancements in the form of bird and bat boxes. These are reasonable and necessary to ensure that the development assimilates effectively into its rural setting and provides ecological benefits, in accordance with Policies 3 and 4 of the JCS.
23. Condition 5, requiring the submission and approval of external materials, is necessary to ensure that the appearance of the proposed building is appropriate in its rural setting. Whilst, I have found that the overall scale and mass of the proposed building would be acceptable, the precise choice of materials will be

important in ensuring that the proposed development satisfactorily assimilates into its rural surroundings. This condition is therefore reasonable and would ensure compliance with Policy 8 (d)(ii) of JCS.

24. Given that the fallback position relates to the open storage of items across the site, it is necessary to ensure that the benefits of the proposal in consolidating that use in a single building are realised. I have therefore imposed condition 6 which restricts the storage of machinery, equipment and vehicles to within the approved building.
25. The Council has also suggested a condition requiring the submission and implementation of a security statement. Whilst I have had regard to the duty under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, there is no substantive evidence before me of existing or anticipated crime issues associated with this site.
26. Given the small-scale, non-commercial nature of the development, and the appellant's indication that appropriate security measures are already in place, I am not persuaded that such a condition is necessary to make the development acceptable. I have therefore not imposed the condition.
27. The Council's Archaeology Officer advised that the proposal has the potential to affect heritage assets of archaeological interest and recommends a condition to secure a programme of investigation and recording. Such conditions are often imposed on a precautionary basis to establish whether archaeological remains are present.
28. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to indicate that the site lies within an area known for archaeological interest, or that remains are reasonably likely to be present. Given the limited scale and nature of the proposed development, I am not persuaded that such a condition is necessary to make the development acceptable. I have therefore not imposed an archaeology condition.
29. The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment indicate that the proposed development would have limited ecological impacts and could deliver biodiversity enhancements through the improvement of existing grassland.
30. The Council's Ecology Officer raised no objections. The development would be subject to the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements, and the associated condition would apply as a matter of law. In these circumstances, I am satisfied that the ecological impacts are addressed and no additional condition is necessary.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

31. Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that decisions be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is also reflected in paragraph 2 of the Framework.
32. I have found that the proposal would conflict with the development plans, in particular its spatial strategy for development in the countryside.
33. However, the appeal site benefits from CLEUD which establishes the lawful use of the site for the open storage of agricultural machinery, equipment and vehicles is

lawful. During my site visit, I observed that this use was taking place, including within the area proposed for development. I therefore attach significant weight to this fallback position, which represents a realistic and extant use that could reasonably continue

34. The proposed development would not introduce a materially different use but would consolidate that lawful use within a single building. This would reduce the visual impact arising from the dispersal of machinery, equipment and vehicles across the site. In comparison, the fallback position would result in a greater degree of visual harm. I attach further weight to this visual improvement.
35. I also give weight to the biodiversity benefits arising from the proposal including biodiversity net gain.
36. Taking all matters into account, I find the proposal that the material considerations, including the fallback position and associated benefits, carry sufficient weight to outweigh the identified conflict with the development plan and the Framework.
37. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the proposal would result in conflict with the development plan. However, I find the material considerations, including the benefits cited, to weigh in its favour to the extent of outweighing the development plan conflict and the harm. I therefore allow the appeal.

S Bennett-Matthews

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Block Plan, drawing reference 2503-03B received on 07 May 2025
 - Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations, drawing reference 2503-01 received on 07 May 2025
3. No development above ground level shall take place until details of the materials for the external walls and roof have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved material samples and maintained as such thereafter. The scheme shall include:
 - details of planting, including the use of native broadleaved species;
 - proposals for screen planting;
 - details of all boundary treatments; and
 - details of existing trees and vegetation to be retained or removed.

The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the development being brought into use, or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs or plants which, within five years of planting, die, are removed, destroyed or becomes severely damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with trees, shrubs or plants of similar size, species and quantity.

4. The building hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until details of a bird and bat box plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to being brought into use and shall be subsequently retained in that form thereafter.
5. No development above ground level shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external walls and roof 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.
6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development (ref.W/24/00157/LDE), once the development hereby permitted is first brought into no machinery, equipment or vehicles shall be stored outside of the approved building.