



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2022

by **M Bale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X1118/W/21/3284120

The Old Quarry, Corilhead Road, Braunton, Devon EX33 2EW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Scott Delaney against the decision of North Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref 73222, dated 21 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is a wood clad structure for use as equipment store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the development is appropriate in a rural location.

Reasons

3. The site is a former quarry cut into steeply rising land at the edge of Braunton, and classified as countryside in the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2018 (LP). While the proposed development would not be visible from outside the quarry, LP Policy ST07 seeks to limit development to that which is enabled to meet local economic and social needs, rural building reuse and development which is necessarily restricted to a countryside location.
4. LP Policy DM14 permits small scale economic development in the countryside, but the appellant has confirmed that the building would not be used for commercial purposes. Therefore, this policy, and those policies of the National Planning Policy Framework that seek to support the rural economy, are of little relevance and provide no support for the proposal. There is no clear economic and social need, so the appeal turns on whether the proposal is development necessarily restricted to a countryside location, under LP Policy ST07.
5. The building is said to be needed to store forestry related equipment and other tools for managing the woodland, and to improve safety around the quarry, including for children and pets. Items have previously been stolen from the site and there is no on-site secure facility available. The appellant has no storage at his residence, so must use facilities elsewhere. However, I have little detailed information about the off-site arrangements, which have clearly been adequate until now. Moreover, the extent or regularity of any management activities, any associated travel movements, or requirement for on-going storage of forestry equipment is not clearly demonstrated.

6. Although Policy ST07 is a strategic policy and the proposal is for a small building, the Policy seeks to control the distribution of all development across the plan area. Ultimately, in the absence of a clear need, it has not been demonstrated that a countryside location is required for this building. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to LP Policy ST07.
7. I understand that there may be other nearby parcels of land where storage facilities have been permitted, but these have little to do with the requirements for storage at this site. Conditions could be used to restrict the use, but on the basis of my findings, the building would still be unnecessary development in the countryside, so the policy conflict would remain.
8. I, therefore, conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

M Bale

INSPECTOR