The Planning Inspectorate

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

**by AJ Steen BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 19 June 2017**

**Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/17/3174500**
**Yew Tree Cottage, The Street, East Clandon GU4 7RU**

- 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 M Gee against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
- The application Ref 16/P/02486, dated 13 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2017.
- The development proposed is the construction of a two storey rear extension including demolition of the existing porch and garage.

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

    - Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and any relevant development plan policies;
    - The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
    - Whether there are other considerations weighing in favour of the proposal; and
    - Would the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations. If so, would this amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

## Reasons

*Inappropriate development and openness*

3. Yew Tree Cottage is located within the small settlement of East Clandon that is washed over by the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) confirms that new buildings should be considered inappropriate within the Green Belt with a number of exceptions. One such exception is the extension of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Policies RE2 and H9 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan (LP) reflect that in confirming that limited extensions to dwellings within the Green Belt would not be inappropriate.

4. The original building in this case comprised a floor area of 77m$^2$, the existing building being 113m$^2$ and the proposed extension would result in a building of 125m$^2$, an increase of approximately 61% over the original dwelling. This indicates that cumulative extensions would be substantial and result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Nevertheless, this is only one means to consider the size of extensions.

5. The extension would be over two floors and extend to the rear of the dwelling with a catslide roof to the side, along with removal of the garage and an earlier porch extension. The height and bulk of the proposed extension would be substantial and would result in considerable extra volume to the dwelling that would be disproportionate to the size of the original.

6. The previous extension, garage and oil tank that protrude from the building would be removed, and the extension would be in close proximity to the large garage of the neighbouring property, Dolphin Cottage. The attached dwelling has a similar sized extension to the rear and the proposed extension would reflect the proportions of that neighbouring extension. I have not been provided with any evidence as to the age of the neighbouring extension or whether it was granted planning permission. Reference has been made to an appeal for the extension of another property within the borough[1], but in that case the neighbouring extension was apparently authorised and I need to consider this case on its individual merits.

7. Whilst these factors go some way in reducing the visual effect of the proposed extension, they would not overcome the disproportionate size of it over and above the size of the original building, such that I conclude the proposal would comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Consequently, it is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt as set out at paragraph 87 of the Framework and be contrary to Policies RE2 and H9 of the LP. In addition, the proposed extension would reduce the openness of the Green Belt in this location and contrary to the Framework which, among other things, seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

*Other considerations*

8. The proposed extension would reflect the character and appearance of the existing building, its attached neighbour and surrounding buildings. The Council have granted listed building consent for the extension. I see no reason to disagree with their conclusions that the proposed extension, along with removal of the existing extension, garage and oil tank, would conserve the character and appearance of the listed building and East Clandon Conservation Area.

9. The proposed extension would result in a dwelling that would meet modern living standards and would be functional and desirable in a manner that would not harm the character or appearance of the listed building. However, whilst I accept the existing is small for a family house, it is not clear in what ways the existing dwelling is not suitable for modern living or whether there would be other means to maintain and protect the building as a heritage asset.

[1] Appeal reference APP/Y3615/D/16/3160653

## Conclusion

10. In conclusion, I have found that the proposed demolition of the existing porch and garage and construction of new two storey extension would be inappropriate development that harms the openness of the Green Belt. I note that the proposed extension would reflect the character and appearance of surrounding development, would not harm the significance of the heritage assets and would reflect modern living standards, but I do not consider that these matters are sufficient to overcome the harm that I have found. For these reasons, the substantial weight to be given to Green Belt harm and any other harm is not clearly outweighed by other considerations sufficient to demonstrate very special circumstances. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Policies RE2 and H9 of the LP and the Framework that seek to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

11. For the above reasons and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*AJ Steen*

INSPECTOR