
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

by Siobhan Watson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T3725/D/17/3174469
Elmhurst, Honiley Road, Beausale, CV35 7NU

- 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 Chris Bird against the decision of Warwick District Council.
 - The application Ref W/16/1511, dated 16 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of side and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The appeal site is within the Green Belt so the main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework);
 - the effect upon the openness of the Green Belt; and
 - if the proposal is found to be inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the development.

Reasons

Whether or not the proposed development would represent inappropriate development

3. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
4. Paragraph 89 of the Framework states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, unless they fall within various specific categories. One of these categories is the extension of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
5. Policy RAP2 of the Warwick District Local Plan (WDLP) defines the original dwelling as what stood on 1st July 1948. The appellant has drawn my attention

to some details of the building in its 1925 form but this is before the date specified in Policy RAP2. Furthermore, although I have a 1925 Ordnance Survey plan, this plan does not show the height of the previous additions. I have examined the old photographs of the site but the one of the rear is very unclear and the building is obscured by hedging.

6. I also acknowledge the existence of the garage and workshop. Evidence suggests that the workshop existed in 1948. However, Policy RAP2 says that detached buildings are not to be included in the calculation of the original building. I accept that the porch is part of the original building but this small structure would not make much difference to the overall calculation.
7. Taking into account the above policy, the Council has calculated that the proposed extensions would represent some 69% increase in gross floorspace above that of the original building. This is substantially in excess of the 30% limit set out in Policy RAP2. I therefore find that the proposed extensions would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would be contrary to Paragraph 89 of the Framework and to WDLP Policy RAP2. Paragraph 88 of the Framework says that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt.

Openness

9. The large increase in the size of the dwelling would have an effect upon openness, especially as the 2-storey rear extension and one of the side extensions would be seen clearly from the road and across fields. However, this is somewhat mitigated by the fact that the dwelling is within a row of other residential development. Overall, I find the harm to openness to be moderate.

Other Considerations

10. The appellant has put forward a scheme which he considers to be permitted development. However, it is of a somewhat smaller size and scale to the appeal scheme so the weight I afford to it is limited.
11. The garage and workshop would be removed from the site. However, they are relatively modest structures and although the garage, which fronts the highway, is somewhat tired looking, they are not particularly obtrusive features within the general street-scene. I give their removal only a small amount of weight in favour of the appeal.
12. I note the appellant's comments that other properties nearby have large extensions but as I do not know the background to these developments, I give their existence minimal weight.

The Green Belt Balance and Conclusion

13. The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the Framework requires that the harm by reason of inappropriateness be given substantial weight and that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is clearly

outweighed by other considerations. Added to this is the harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

14. In conclusion, the other matters do not clearly outweigh the totality of substantial harm that would arise as a result of the development's inappropriateness. The very special circumstances necessary to justify it do not therefore exist.
15. I have considered all other matters raised, including those from interested parties, but none outweigh the conclusions I have reached.
16. For the reasons set out above, I dismiss the appeal.

Siobhan Watson

INSPECTOR