
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2017

by I Radcliffe BSc(Hons) MRTPI MCIEH DMS

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

Decision date: 01 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/D/17/3172982

The Lodge Standhills, Long Line, Sheffield S11 7TX

- 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 Neville Wilson against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00452/FUL, dated 1 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 23 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of ground floor extensions to provide additional living space and boot room.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are;
 - whether the proposal is inappropriate development for the purposes of development plan policy and the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework');
 - the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - if the development is inappropriate, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Inappropriate development

3. Policy GE6 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP) states, amongst other matters, that an extension to an existing house in the Green Belt will be permitted only where the proposed extension would form a minor addition to the original house. Supplementary Planning Guidance '*Designing House Extensions*' (SPG) provides guidance as to how policy GE6 should be applied. As the SPG has been formally adopted following public consultation I attach significant weight to it. Guideline 9 of the SPG advises that, amongst other matters, for extensions to smaller houses in the Green Belt, such as The Lodge, a minor addition is defined as up to one third of the cubic content of the original house.
4. The Framework is an important consideration. Paragraph 89 of the Framework advises that the extension of a building, which does not result in

disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, is not inappropriate development.

5. It is common ground that in combination with the existing two storey rear extension the proposed extensions would result in a dwelling 68% larger in volume than the original dwelling. By any reasonable estimate this would be a considerable increase in size that would be well above the up to 33% increase in volume supported by the SPG.
6. Taking all these matters into account, I therefore conclude that the proposed extensions would not constitute minor additions, but instead would be disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, contrary to policy GE6 of the UDP, the SPG and paragraph 89 of the Framework. The proposal would therefore constitute inappropriate development. Such development would, by definition, be harmful to the Green Belt as described in paragraph 87 of the Framework.

Openness

7. Paragraph 79 of the Framework advises that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also advises that the essential characteristic of Green Belts is their openness and their permanence.
8. The proposed side and rear extensions would markedly increase the scale and bulk of the house. The overall effect would be of a significantly larger, more intrusive building whose increase in scale would be readily apparent in public views close to the access to the property on Long Line. The increase in size would also be apparent in medium distance views in gaps between trees from the public footpaths that run parallel to the front and rear elevations of the dwelling. The proposal would therefore also result in notable harm to openness.

Character and appearance

9. The Lodge is located behind large gates with open fields to the front, rear and on the opposite side of the road. The house is a part stone built and part rendered two storey dwelling with a hipped roof. The proposed extensions in terms of materials and features would be well designed and would complement the existing dwelling. The proposal would therefore comply with policy BE5 of the UDP which seeks good design.

Other considerations

10. I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore necessary to consider the grounds put forward by the appellant, to determine whether there are any material considerations which would amount to very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and the harm that I have identified to openness.
11. The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) contained within the government's Technical Housing Standards is not the subject of a relevant current local plan policy. As a result, it does not apply in Sheffield. Nevertheless, it is a useful measure of the size of a home and I have taken it into account as a material consideration. The floor space of The Lodge meets the minimum NDSS for a three bedroom two storey dwelling. The Lodge is also smaller than other predominantly detached houses that are found

intermittently along Long Line. As a result, I agree with the appellant that The Lodge is a small house.

12. The SPG supports the need to provide basic modern amenities, such as an adequate sized bathroom and kitchen. , the house has both facilities and it is clear from the plans showing the layout of the existing dwelling that they are of an adequate size. The proposed development would create a large open plan kitchen / dining room / snug and boot room that would result in a generous increase in living area and usable space. However, whilst I can appreciate this would be desirable this is not necessary in order to ensure that basic modern amenities and acceptable living conditions are provided.
13. The appellant has a growing family. He wishes to stay in the area and I recognise that the extensions would provide larger accommodation. I have given the appellant's personal circumstances careful consideration, however, I am mindful of the advice contained in Planning Practice Guidance¹ that in general planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is also probable that the proposed development would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material.
14. The benefits of the proposal in providing larger living accommodation and addressing the personal circumstances of the appellant are considerations to which I therefore only attach limited weight.

Conclusions

15. The proposal represents inappropriate development, which by definition, would be harmful to the Green Belt. I have also found that there would be material harm to openness. Paragraph 88 of the Framework advises that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. Clearly, the degree of harm caused would therefore be significant and I attach substantial weight to the totality of harm caused.
16. I find that the other considerations put forward by the appellant fall far short of clearly outweighing the harm identified. I therefore conclude that very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist. As such the proposal would be contrary to the Framework, policy GE6 of the UDP, the development plan as a whole and the SPG. As a result, it would not constitute a sustainable development.

Ian Radcliffe

Inspector

¹ Paragraph 008 Reference ID 21b-008-20140306 – 'What is a material planning consideration?'