



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2019

by G Jenkinson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/19/3222628

The Dell, Cadsden Road, Cadsden HP27 0NB

- 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 and Mrs Pepin against the decision by Wycombe District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/07187/FUL, dated 17 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 3 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is replacement of existing shallow pitched part hipped gable roof with new steeper pitched structure in traditional plain clay tiles, straight gable ends, associated roof lights and chimney stack.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council submitted the Emerging Wycombe District Plan for Examination in March 2018. As it has not yet completed the Examination stage these policies have attracted limited weight in your decision.

Main Issues

3. The site is within the Green Belt. Accordingly, the main issues are:
 - i) whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies;
 - ii) the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt; and
 - iii) if the proposal is 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 necessary to justify the proposal.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a white washed detached bungalow with a pitched tiled roof area that contains first floor accommodation. It sits centrally within a large plot. The host dwelling is sited reasonably close to one neighbouring

property but has a large gap between it and the other neighbouring property. The site is located within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Green Belt. The host dwelling is located within a ribbon of development along Cadsden Road, whereby there is a range of dwelling types and styles. It adjoins open countryside to the rear with the Whiteleaf Golf Club on the opposite side of Cadsden Road. The host dwelling has grey concrete roof tiles, a hipped gable roof at the original end of the building and a gable ended roof on the newer extension end.

Whether the proposal is inappropriate development within the Green Belt

5. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The Framework states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are set out in Paragraphs 145 and 146 of the Framework; one being the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
6. Policy GB2 of the Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 (as saved, extended and partially replaced) (LP) and Policy C9 of the Wycombe Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2008) (CS) reflect national Green Belt policy as far as they reinforce its strong protection. Policy GB6 of the LP sets out a limit of a 50% increase in floorspace in extensions to residential dwellings within the Green Belt, as is relevant to this appeal. The emerging local plan policy attributes more weight to the volume of extensions in the Green Belt; however, as stated above, I give little weight to these emerging policies.
7. It appears that the original dwelling has been extended following planning permissions granted in 2011 (Ref A11/06207/FUL). Based on the observations from my site visit, the details presented by the parties and the floor plans before me, it seems that the original dwelling was the western part of the building, including the front entrance and porch. The parties are in agreement that the original dwelling comprised ground floor accommodation only.
8. The existing additions are in the form of a side extension and the conversion of loft space to habitable living accommodation. The Council Officer Report states these previous additions increased the gross floorspace of the original dwelling by 50%, and that the proposal would result in a total gross floorspace increase of 138%. This is disputed by the appellant and the Council has not included the roof gross floorspace in the calculations arising from the previous additions. Much of the evidence put forward by the appellant relates to volume and headroom, although the limit applied by the existing development plan policy, GB6, concerns floorspace only.
9. I find that the increase in gross floorspace from the proposal itself would be fairly modest, in considering all of the evidence before me. However, such an increase must be considered with the existing extensions under Policy GB6 and the Framework. This includes both the floor space already created by the side extension and the conversion of loft space to habitable living accommodation.
10. The cumulative increase in gross floor space would be significant from that of the original dwelling and, in addition, the proposed roof would increase the bulk and volume of the dwelling. Accordingly, when taken cumulatively with previous extensions, the proposal would result in disproportionate additions

over and above the size of the original building. Nor would any of the criteria under Policy GB6 apply which concern where the limit may be exceeded. The proposal would not result in a situation where the resultant dwelling would otherwise be relatively small compared to other dwellings in its vicinity.

11. Consequently, the proposal would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would conflict with policies GB2 and GB6 of the LP, and with Policy C9 of the CS. The proposal would also be contrary to Paragraph 145 of the Framework.

Openness of the Green Belt

12. The Framework states that an essential characteristic of Green Belts is their openness. I note that the appellant reduced the proposed ridge height by 5% during the course of the application and altered the roof design to incorporate hipped gable ends. However, the height and bulk of the proposed roof alterations would make the dwelling more prominent, both spatially and visually and there would be a moderate reduction in the openness of the Green Belt.

Other Considerations

13. No harm has been demonstrated with regard to the effect of the proposal upon living conditions and I note the support of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling. I acknowledge that the host dwelling is set within substantial grounds. However, the site and dwelling are clearly visible from the road. These matters attract neutral weight.
14. The appellant states the proposal is necessary to introduce better quality insulation for the occupiers of the building. It would accommodate clay roof tiles, which are a common feature of the Chilterns AONB, and I find no harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. These attract limited weight in favour of the proposal.
15. The matters raised in relation to how the Council dealt with the planning application are not for my consideration, beyond what I have set out above. The design credentials of the architectural practice have also been brought to my attention. This does not, however, address the Green Belt concerns.

Conclusion

16. Paragraph 143 of the Framework states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 144 states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
17. The proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it would result in a moderate reduction in openness. There would be some limited environmental benefits. However, I find that the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the totality of the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal do not exist.

18. For the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gemma Jenkinson

INSPECTOR