



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2020

by S R G Baird BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/19/3244067

Jack Lane Farm, Dunster Drive, Urmston, Manchester M41 6AS

- 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 H and T Jenkins against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 98725/HHA/19, dated 2 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first-floor side extension and a single-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. These are: (1) whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and any relevant development plan policies; (2) the effect on the openness of the Green Belt and (3) would the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Inappropriate Development

3. The Framework identifies that in the Green Belt, the construction of new buildings is inappropriate development except where, the extension of a building does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Development plan¹ Policy R4, indicates that new development will only be permitted in the Green Belt where, amongst other things, it is for one of the purposes specified in national guidance or where very special circumstances can be demonstrated in support of the proposal. Adopted Supplementary Planning Document SPD 4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations indicates that cumulatively extensions that would increase the size of the dwelling to no more than 30% above the original floorspace would not normally be considered disproportionate. Larger extensions are unlikely to be acceptable.
4. The Framework does not define the term disproportionate. A conclusion on whether a proposal would be disproportionate is a matter of fact and degree depending on the size of the original dwelling. The SPD, which refers to

¹ The Trafford Core Strategy January 2012.

floorspace, is a starting point. Here, the proposed extension combined with previous extensions would result in an increase in floorspace of the some 63%. The proposed first-floor extension would have a width of some 9.1m and a depth of some 8.5m with the ridgeline marginally below that of the existing house. In terms of their appearance, the existing and proposed extensions would double the size of the original building. When taken together, the size and floorspace of the extended dwelling, the proposal would be a disproportionate extension and inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Openness

5. One of the essential characteristics of the Green Belt is its openness. When viewed from public vantage points the first-floor extension would be seen against the backdrop of a tall railway embankment and development beyond. In this context, the impact on openness would be slight.

Other Considerations

6. Other than referring to a wish to improve the domestic accommodation and provide additional reception/office space no detail has been provided. There is no indication of the families' circumstances or an explanation why, quantitatively or qualitatively, the existing accommodation no longer meets their needs. The existing layout shows what appears to be an office on the ground floor and this appears unchanged in the proposed layout. There is no indication of the nature of the existing business or evidence of plans to extend or diversify such that the existing office is, quantitatively or qualitatively, insufficient. Given the paucity of the evidence, only limited weight is attached to the benefits of the extension. The absence of harm in relation to design and neighbours' living conditions attracts neutral weight in the planning balance.
7. Substantial weight is to be given to any harm to the Green Belt and "very special circumstances" will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Here, the other considerations do not clearly outweigh the harm identified and the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.

Conclusions

8. The proposed extension represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would result in harm to openness and there are no other considerations that would clearly outweigh that harm. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and national planning policy read as a whole. Accordingly, having taken all other matters into consideration, the appeal is dismissed.

George Baird

Inspector