



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by C Coyne BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/20/3245792

14 Standard Road, Downe, Orpington BR6 7HL

- 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 Ms Meehan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/19/04408/FULL6, dated 11 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'demolition of existing rear extension and replacement ground floor rear extension, replacing current shared wall along the line of boundary with 12 Standard Road'. (sic)
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing rear extension and replacement ground floor rear extension at 14 Standard Road, Downe, Orpington BR6 7HL in accordance with the terms of the application Ref DC/19/04408/FULL6, dated 11 October 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing and proposed floor plans and section Drawing Number STA14/ 1.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. When on my site visit, I observed that the existing rear extension had been demolished and that renovation works had begun inside the appeal property. Notwithstanding this, I have considered the appeal based on the plans originally submitted to and considered by the Council, which form the basis of the scheme that is before me.
3. The Council have described the development as 'Demolition of existing rear extension and replacement ground floor rear extension'. I note that the appellant has also utilised this description on their appeal form. I consider that this revision provides a succinct and accurate description of the proposal and I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and any relevant Development Plan policies.

Reasons

5. 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.
6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The construction of new buildings is regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt save for several specified exceptions as set out under paragraph 145. One such exception is 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. The Framework does not specify what might be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
7. The parties are in agreement that the floor area of the original dwelling is approximately 47.8 square metres. They are also in agreement that taking into account the floor area of the existing extension to be retained that the floor area of the proposed extension would be approximately 24 square metres and that this would represent an increase of approximately 50%.
8. Policy 51 of the adopted Bromley Local Plan (BLP), contains a criterion that extensions which comprise development which is over 10% of the ground floor area will not normally be permitted in Green Belt. However, it does not give any guidance in terms of a consideration of a proposed extension in relation to its overall size and relationship with the original building in terms of scale, form, massing, bulk and height. Therefore, for this reason, I afford moderate weight to Policy 51 and greater weight to Green Belt policy in the Framework.
9. In the context of the above, while I acknowledge the fact that the proposal's floor area would be a large increase to that of the original dwelling, I consider that its scale would not be disproportionate when compared to the scale, form, massing, bulk and height of the larger main house. Indeed, when compared to the size of the previously permitted extension it would only be approximately 3 square metres larger.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would not amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building, and that therefore the proposal would not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Some tension would arise with the restriction within BLP Policy 51 with regard to floor area. Nevertheless, I am satisfied that the proposal would accord with the overall aims of Policy 51 of the BLP, Policy 7.16 of the London Plan, and paragraph 145 of the Framework to protect the openness and permanence of the Green Belt and to prevent inappropriate development within it.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a necessary condition to define the plans with which the scheme should accord in the interest of precision. I have also imposed a condition requiring that the proposal's external materials match those of the main dwelling in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposal would not be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and that consequently the appeal should be allowed.

C Coyne

INSPECTOR