



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 March 2021

by Euan FS Pearson BA(Hons) BTP FRGS MRICS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/20/3266138

Dunedin, Harlington Road, Toddington LU5 6HE

- 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 Mrs Z Ayub against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/20/03332/FULL, dated 17 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing single storey annex and construction of a new two storey residential annex.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

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

Reasons

Appropriateness of development in the Green Belt

3. The appeal property is a previously extended, two-storey detached dwellinghouse in the Green Belt near to junction 12 of the M1 motorway. There is a place of worship to the north of the appeal property and other premises to the east. I observed from my visit that an additional, substantial single storey building was under construction immediately to the east. Collectively, these form a loose grouping, with limited spacing and a degree of openness.

4. It is proposed to demolish the single-storey extension attached to the southern gable of the appeal property and replace this with a larger two-storey annex: about 10.1 metres (m) deep, 7.2m in length and rising to around a height of 5.8m. This would be connected to the original dwellinghouse by a ground floor corridor also providing independent access to the annex.
5. Even with a ridge height below that of the original dwellinghouse, the proposed annex with such dimensions, occupying a larger footprint than the existing extension, cannot be considered modest. Irrespective of its arithmetic volume, this results in a size, mass and orientation of building creating an appearance of a separate dwellinghouse.
6. The original dwellinghouse, including the front porch, comprises about 165m² floorspace. The proposed development, including the connecting corridor creates about 155m² of floorspace. This would constitute a significant increase in floorspace (93%), as well as overall volume and massing, in excess of the 60% stated in the Design in Central Bedfordshire 2014 (the Design Guide), approved by the Council and thus a material consideration that I attach significant weight to. This results in a loss of subservience and a disproportionate addition to the original building (excluding the later extensions).
7. Therefore, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to policy H13 of South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004 (Local Plan) and guidance in Section 7 of the Design Guide. Among other things, these require extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt not to result in disproportionate additions to the original dwellinghouse.

Openness

8. Although I note that the appeal property is set back from the highway and somewhat screened, the upper floor and roof of the proposed extension/annex would be clearly visible from the west. Due to the proposed height, scale and massing, the proposed built form would reduce the openness of the Green Belt, albeit by a limited amount.
9. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to policy H13 of the Local Plan; Section 7 of the Design Guide; and paragraph 133 of the Framework. Among other things, these require extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt to maintain the openness of the area.

Very special circumstances

10. I have found that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would harm openness. Paragraph 143 of the Framework states that inappropriate development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances.
11. The appellant refers to various previous proposals, in particular: the Council's decision to grant planning permission (Ref CB/14/04873/FUL) for the aforementioned place of worship, and the Inspector's decision APP/P0240/W/19/3235644, to alter the appeal property and construct a semi-detached dwellinghouse. I have taken these matters into account, however, planning decisions are taken on individual merit. I note that these decisions do not relate to extensions to a dwellinghouse in the Green Belt.

12. Therefore, I find that the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm that I have identified, and the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Euan FS Pearson

INSPECTOR