



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2022

by Grahame Gould BA MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 FEBRUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/20/3258911

6 Woolings Row, Baker Street, Orsett, Essex RM16 3AS

- 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 Ampitpal Sagoo against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00337/HHA, dated 14 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is for a two storey side extension including carport.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appealed planning application was amended prior to its determination by the Council, with the original proposal changing from a two and a half storey extension to a two storey extension, the ground floor of which comprising a car port. The amended proposal has been described by the Council as a "Two storey side extension including carport" on its decision notice, a description which is similar to that used by the appellant on the appeal form and I have determined the appeal on the basis of the proposed development being for a two storey extension.
3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published by the Government in July 2021 (the Framework), postdating both the Council's decision and the submission of the appeal. The substance of the policy stated in the parts of the Framework cited in the reasons for refusal and referred to in the Council's officer report has not been altered with the publication of the revised Framework. The changes to the Framework concerning this case relate to the Framework's paragraph numbering and I have used the updated numbering below.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposed extension would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the extension on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of Woolings Row (No 6) and the surrounding area; and

- if the extension would be inappropriate, 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 necessary to justify it.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

5. No 6 is a house with three floors of accommodation, the upper floor being within the roof space that is served by a pair of front dormers. No 6 is within an estate of 24 houses of quite recent construction. Woolings Row is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
6. Paragraph 147 of the Framework explains inappropriate development in the Green Belt is harmful by definition and should not be permitted. However, paragraph 149 of the Framework states that some types of built development, in certain circumstances, may be regarded as being not inappropriate development within the Green Belt. In that regard paragraph 149 identifies seven types of built development that are capable of being considered as exceptions to inappropriate built development. The third of those exceptions 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"* (paragraph 149(c)).
7. Policy PMD6 of the Thurrock Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development of 2015 (the TCSPMD) addresses new development in the Green Belt and with respect to extensions states:

"The extension of a building must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. In the case of residential extensions this means no larger than two reasonably sized rooms or any equivalent amount."

8. Policy PMD6 of the TCSPMD is broadly consistent with paragraph 149(c) of the Framework, albeit that the latter does not measure whether a residential extension would or would not be inappropriate development by reference to the number of additional rooms to be provided. The Council has calculated that No 6 has a floor area of 93.46 square metres (sq.m) and that the extension would have an area of 45.3 sq.m. In that regard I consider it reasonable for the area of the carport to be included, even though it would have open sides. That is because the carport would be an element of the extension and it would have the purpose of providing covered parking.
9. The extension's floor area would be close to half that of the original building and I consider in relative terms that would be a disproportionate addition to No 6. Attention has been drawn to a planning permission for a carport at No 6 previously granted by the Council. That permission has not been implemented and from the planning history listed in the Council's officer report it appears no longer to be extant. No other information concerning the carport permission has been provided, although it was for a development that is not directly comparable with a two storey side extension. I therefore consider this planning history for No 6 does not have a bearing on whether the proposed extension would or would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the extension would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. That is because it would not come within the exception referred to either in paragraph 149(c) of the Framework or of Policy PMD6 of the TCSPMD. I attach substantial weight to this harmful aspect of the development.

Openness

11. Paragraph 137 of the Framework states that "*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...*". The extension would add to the amount of built development in the Green Belt although it would not contribute to urban sprawl. The change to Green Belt's openness, in relative terms, would be very modest and I find it would be unobjectionable.

Character and appearance

12. No 6, like the other houses in Woolings Row, has a relatively steep pitched main roof. The extension's roof would be much shallower than the existing roof and its ridge would be 1.5 metres below that of the main roof. I consider the use of a shallower pitch would result in the extension appearing as an obvious addition to No 6 that would not be in sympathy with the appearance of this house, while being uncharacteristic of the rest of Woolings Row. I therefore consider that the extension's roof would be of a poor design, which would detract from No 6's appearance and that of the rest of Woolings Row.
13. The extension's uncharacteristic appearance, most particularly its roof, would be accentuated by No 6 being prominently located at the junction between the main entrance into Woolings Row and Baker Street. There is a public footpath leading from Baker Street and running between the A13 and the paddocks to the east of Woolings Row and I consider that the extension's unsympathetic appearance would be readily apparent to the users of the public footpath.
14. I conclude that the extension would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of No 6 and the surrounding area. I consider the development would be contrary to Policies PMD2 and CSTP22 of the TCSPMD and section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the Framework. That is because the development would not be of a high quality of design and would not make a positive contribution to the area's character.

Other considerations

15. The appellant has submitted that the proposed extension would be no more inappropriate in the Green Belt than the redevelopment that Woolings Row arose from. However, the redevelopment of land in the Green Belt is subject to different policy considerations to extensions to buildings. I therefore attach very little weight to this aspect of the appellant's case.

Conclusions

16. I have found that the effect on the Green Belt's openness would be unobjectionable. Nevertheless, I have concluded that the extension would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. That inappropriateness would by definition be harmful to the Green Belt and paragraph 148 of the Framework explains substantial weight should be attached to that harm. I have also concluded that the extension would have an unacceptable effect on the

character and appearance of No 6 and the surrounding area and that harm weighs against the development.

17. I consider that other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify development in the Green Belt do not exist. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Grahame Gould
INSPECTOR