



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 March 2022

by David Smith BA(Hons) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3630/D/21/3283928

256 Almnors Road, Lyne, KT16 0BL

- 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 Mark Greenaway against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RU.21/1111, dated 30 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 31 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is whether the proposed extension would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and, if so, whether other considerations clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt so as to amount to very special circumstances.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. Policy EE14 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan indicates that the extension of a building in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. This reflects the National Planning Policy Framework.
4. The original dwelling had a floor area of 86.54 sq m. Extensions were undertaken following planning permission RU.09/0637 which increased its size by 12.94 sq m. A ground floor side extension/conservatory of 8.1 sq m was added as permitted development. This was confirmed by the Council in 2010. The proposed two storey side extension would add a further 11.48 sq m.
5. Neither national nor local Green Belt policy makes any reference to excluding ground floor development from any calculations or that constructed as permitted development. Rather the correct approach is to consider all cumulative increases in size over time. On this basis the original property would be enlarged by just over 37%. The Council refers to an increase of 72% but based on the agreed figures above this is inaccurate.
6. A bay window and first floor rear addition of 7.41 sq m included within the 2009 permission have not been implemented. The appellant's case is that the proposal would increase the volume of the house at first floor level by less than this amount. However, it is the overall size of the resulting dwelling that

should be considered. Moreover, if permission were granted, there would be nothing to prevent these previously permitted works from being carried out. A condition cannot restrict the completion of development which has planning permission. This can only be achieved by means of a planning obligation.

7. As a consequence the unbuilt floor space permitted in 2009 should be taken into account. If this is included then the resulting house would be around 46% larger than the original. The appellant suggests that the ground floor of the extension could be restricted to storage space but the assessment is not just about habitable areas. Therefore a condition would not alter this finding.
8. Policy EE14 refers to other considerations such as changes in bulk and increases in built footprint. No details have been provided of the overall change in volume but, although the proposal is set back, it would widen the house frontage by around 2.5m. The gain in floor area from all of the previous and permitted extensions would be almost half as much again as the original dwelling. Bearing this in mind and the increase in the width of the property, the proposal would be a disproportionate addition. It would therefore be inappropriate development and would also fail to conform with Policy EE14.

Other considerations

9. The proposal cannot be treated as a 'trade off' for not completing the first floor extension permitted in 2009 as its future construction cannot be prevented by condition. No obligation to that effect has been provided. This possibility is therefore a matter of limited weight in favour of allowing the proposal.
10. The appellant maintains that single storey extensions could be added as permitted development and refers to one of 27.5 sq m on the north-eastern side. However, given that the proposal is to create a bathroom at first floor level it seems unlikely that a ground floor extension would serve the same purpose. There is no evidence of a real prospect that such a development would be implemented. In any event, a single storey extension would not increase the mass of No 256 in the same way as the proposal would. As a result, the potential for extensions to be added as permitted development provides minimal support for accepting the proposal.
11. Other than on Green Belt grounds there are no objections to the proposed extension. However, the absence of harm in other respects is not a positive consideration, as acceptability in design and amenity terms is to be expected.

Conclusions

12. The proposal would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. In accordance with the Framework, substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. Even taken together, the other considerations put forward provide little support for the scheme. Therefore they do not outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and very special circumstances do not exist. The proposed extension would not accord with the development plan and there are no other material considerations to outweigh that finding. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal should not succeed.

David Smith

INSPECTOR