



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 June 2022 by Ms S Maur

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/21/3286898

Vine Cottage Lee Road, Saunderton HP27 9NU

- 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 & Mrs P Burnham against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/07471/FUL, dated 6 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is a first floor front extension and porch roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The appeal site is within the Green Belt and therefore the main issues are:
 - i. whether the proposal would be inappropriate development for the purposes of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework;
 - ii. the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - iii. the effect of the oriel window on the character and appearance of the existing property; and
 - iv. if the proposal would be inappropriate development, whether the harm by reasons of inappropriateness, along with any other harm resulting from the proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify it.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

4. The appeal property is located within the Green Belt as defined in the Wycombe District Local Plan 2019 (Local Plan). The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) directs that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, save for a number of exceptions. One of these 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.

5. Policy DM43 of the Local Plan states that the extension of a dwelling will only be considered appropriate, where the volume of the original dwelling is between 240 and 720 cubic metres, the total volume of the resulting building is no more than the volume of the original building plus 50%.
6. The Council states that the dwelling had an original volume of 272.129 cubic metres and the dwelling has been extended since. When the existing and proposed extensions are taken together, the Council state that this would increase the volume of the original dwelling by 94.88%. These figures have not been disputed.
7. The proposed extensions may be seen as relatively modest when considered in isolation. However, the cumulative increase in the volume would be substantially larger than the original building and significantly above the threshold in the Policy. Consequently, the proposal would amount to disproportionate additions above the size of the original building which would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Openness

8. The proposal includes a suspended first-floor front extension and an extended roofline to form a canopy over the main entrance door. The proposed development would be tucked into the building, the oriel window would only be at first floor level and the extensions would be very modest in scale. Therefore, these would have an extremely limited impact on openness.

Character and appearance

9. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling with an attached garage with a simple cottage appearance and fenestration. The area is rural in character.
10. The proposal includes a floating first-floor oriel window extension located in the corner section of the front/side elevation. This would appear as unsympathetic to the simple design of the existing dwelling and would be an incongruous addition to the character and appearance of the host property.
11. For the reasons detailed above, the first-floor extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. This would be contrary to Policies CP9, DM35 and DM36 of the Local Plan which requires development to improve and respect the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area and the way it functions through attractive, high-quality and the detailed design and form.

Other Considerations

12. The appellant states that the previous extension related to an elderly parent who was disabled and enabled them to visit and use a downstairs toilet. The appellants themselves are now having problems with mobility and they wish to connect the rooms upstairs to reduce the distance to walk between these rooms which would also be beneficial when their grandchildren stay with them.
13. The property has already been extended significantly over the 50% requirement and there is no evidence that the proposal is the only suitable way to deal with the interconnectivity. This factor is therefore given limited weight.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. The Framework directs that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It goes on to explain that substantial weight should be afforded to any harm to the Green Belt and inappropriate development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. The Framework advises that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
15. I conclude that the proposal would amount to inappropriate development, in addition to this there would be a very modest impact on the openness of the Green Belt and harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling relating to the oriel window. The other considerations do not clearly outweigh this harm and therefore very special circumstances do not exist. Having regard to the above, the development would fail to accord with Policy CP8 of the Local Plan which seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ms S Maur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR