
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2022 by Hilary Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

Decision by Chris Baxter BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/22/3297357

Highfield House, Joy Lane, Burtonwood and Westbrook, Warrington, WA5 4DF

- 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 Simon Verdon against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/39529, dated 2 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing coach house and front porch and erection of a new front porch, new single-storey extension in lieu of existing coach house and loft conversion with rear dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of the existing coach house, new single-storey extension in lieu of existing coach house at Highfield, Joy Lane, Burtonwood and Westbrook, Warrington, WA5 4DF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2021/39529, dated 3 June 2021, 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: 001- Ground & first floor plans, 002- Loft Plan & elevations, 003- Existing site plan & Location Plan, 012 Rev G – Ground & First Floor Plans Options B, 013 Rev H- Second Floor Plan & Elevations Option B, 014 Rev D- Proposed Site Plan.
 - 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.

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.

Preliminary Matter

3. During the determination of the planning application the description of development was amended to remove the proposed loft conversion and roof dormers from the proposal and revised plans were submitted to the Council.

The Council determined the application on that basis and so have I. The amended description has been used in the formal decision above.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is:
 - 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.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site, which lies within the designated Green Belt, is a previously extended detached dwelling in a semi rural area close to a complex of farm buildings. It is accessed via a driveway from Joy Lane.
6. The Framework establishes that new buildings in the Green Belt are inappropriate, except in certain circumstances including where they involve an extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building as set out in paragraph 149c. Original building, the Framework explains, is a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if it was constructed after that date, as it was built originally.
7. The Framework does not explain what a disproportionate addition means. An assessment of whether the proposal would be disproportionate to the original building is therefore a matter of planning judgement. Guidance in the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance (2011) (SPD) states that extensions and additions that result in an increase in size of over 33% will be considered disproportionate.
8. The Council has stated that the proposed single storey extension, when taken cumulatively with previous additions, would increase the size of the dwelling by more than 33%. Indeed, it is agreed between the parties that the dwelling has already been extended beyond 33%. Whilst, I have no details of the size of the swimming pool building, based on purely statistical measurements the proposed and existing extensions would lead to an increase in the footprint and floorspace of the original dwelling. However, it is important to consider this issue in terms of the scale, bulk, massing and built form that would result from the changes sought.
9. The existing conservatory style porch would be removed and replaced with a porch with a smaller front projection and a balcony to the existing first floor windows and constructed of materials to match the dwelling.
10. The proposed rear extension would replace an existing two storey coach house with a single storey extension to link the dwelling with the existing swimming pool. This extension, whilst wider than the existing coach house, would not extend beyond the rear wall of the swimming pool building and have a similar pitch to the roof.
11. Given the modest scale of the development in relation to the dwelling, the extensions would not significantly alter the overall scale or shape of the building. Thus, the effect of the development on the host dwelling would be limited and even when taken cumulatively with the previous extension would

not, in visual terms, result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

12. Whilst the proposal would not be in strict accordance with the SPD in terms of statistical measurements, from my findings above I have still found that the proposals would not be disproportionate additions. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would accord with Policies CC1 and CS5 of the Warrington Core Strategy (2014), and the provisions of the Framework.
13. With respect to openness and the purposes of the Green Belt, given my findings, the proposal would, by definition, not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it. As the proposal does not amount to inappropriate development, there is no requirement to assess if there are other considerations that amount to very special circumstances.

Conditions

14. I have had regard to the Council's suggested conditions, in the event of the appeal being allowed, in the light of advice in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and I have considered them against the six tests, as outlined within the Framework and the PPG. In the interest of proper planning and to provide certainty I have recommended the standard time limit condition and specified that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. In order to protect the character and appearance of the area, a condition requiring that matching materials are used in the development is necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

Hilary Senior

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 allowed.

Chris Baxter

INSPECTOR