



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 August 2023

by B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/D/23/3317510

Rendy Mead, Chew Road, Winford, North Somerset BS40 8EZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant [outline] planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Kelly Bewley against the decision of North Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/2394/FUH, dated 4 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as a 'proposed two storey front extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The appeal site is located within an area of Green Belt. Accordingly, the main issues are:
 - Whether the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') and relevant development plan policies;
 - The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt; and
 - If the development would be inappropriate, whether the harm to the Green Belt by way 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

3. The Framework states that the construction of new buildings is to be regarded as inappropriate development subject to the exceptions which are set out in paragraph 149. Part c) of this paragraph lists 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, as one such exception. This is also set out in Policy DM12 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (2016) (SSPP), which advises that the floorspace of the extended dwelling should not exceed 50% of the floorspace of the original dwelling and should not be disproportionate in terms of scale and bulk.
4. There is no dispute that the additional proposed floorspace represents less than the 50% limit set out in this policy.

5. However, there would be a considerable increase in the massing of the first floor element of the house, when viewed from the front and from both sides, particularly the eastern side. The extensive front gable and extension of the ridge projecting forward would amount to a substantial increase in the form, bulk and overall scale and size of the original building, and its original asymmetrical pitched roof form would be completely altered.
6. In light of the above I conclude that the addition proposed would comprise a disproportionate addition in terms of scale and bulk over and above the size of the original building and would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as described in SSPP Policy DM12 and paragraph 149 of the Framework.

Openness

7. The proposal would increase the massing of the property at first floor level and give it a new prominence. Whilst there are no immediate neighbours to the property, it is visible from the highway. There would be therefore a visual impact upon openness in addition to the spatial impact that would result, and openness would be reduced.
8. In this regard, the Framework makes it clear that openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt.

Other Considerations

9. Whilst the appellant has set out that the development would not cause harm with regards to matters such as, amongst others, impact on the living conditions of neighbours, this to be expected in any development and does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
10. The appellant also references a number of developments nearby, however little detail of these planning permissions is provided, which limits my ability to compare with the proposal in front of me. As such, I cannot give these other developments any weight in this regard.

Other Matters

11. The proposal would provide additional living space for the appellant, improve the standard of accommodation and would generate some economic benefits during the construction phase. However, these are modest benefits that are common to most developments of this type and size.
12. I note that no objections were received, and that Winford Parish Council supported the scheme. However, this does not alter my conclusions on the main issues.
13. The Council reference Policy CS6 of the North Somerset Core Strategy (2017) however this specifically relates to the boundaries of the Bristol – Bath Green Belt, and so is non-determinative in this case.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would reduce openness in this location. The Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. Even when taken together, I conclude that the other considerations do not clearly outweigh the

harm in this case. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist. The proposal is therefore contrary to SSPP Policy DM12 and guidance contained in the Framework relating to Green Belts.

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

INSPECTOR