



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2024 by Andreea Spataru BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/D/23/3329234

155 Long Line, Sheffield S11 7TX

- 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 & Ms Jonathan & Marie Williamson & Wilkins against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00375/FUL (Formerly PP-11909003), dated 6 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of single-storey front and rear extensions, with balcony to the rear, erection of dormer windows to front and rooflights to front and rear of dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. The description of the development has been amended during the application process to reflect the changes made to the scheme. It has therefore been, for accuracy, taken from the decision notice.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are a) whether the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt; b) its effect on the openness of the Green Belt; c) its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring property No 153 Long Line; and d) 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 for the Recommendation

Inappropriate Development

5. The Framework, at paragraphs 154 and 155, sets out what may be regarded as not inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 154 c) concerns the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original.
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6. Policy GE6 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP) states that extensions to existing houses will be permitted where they would form a minor addition to the original house. Guideline 9 of the Designing House Extensions – Supplementary Planning Guidance from the Unitary Development Plan (SPG) outlines that, for smaller houses (cottages, terraced or semi-detached), a minor addition is up to one third of the cubic content of the original house. Larger houses will normally only be allowed more modest extensions, because to extend a larger house by up to one third would be likely to have an adverse effect on the Green Belt. In all cases sympathetic consideration will be given to the need to provide basic modern amenities, such as an adequate-sized bathroom or kitchen.
7. The appeal dwelling, which is a detached property, has been previously extended. Existing two-storey rear extensions have particularly increased the volume of the original building. Whilst the proposed single storey extensions and dormers, when considered in isolation, would be modest in scale, when taken with the previous alterations, they would significantly increase the volume of the host dwelling. Consequently, the Council's volume threshold would be comfortably exceeded.
8. The existing floor plans submitted indicate that the appeal dwelling currently benefits from basic modern amenities. Whilst the development would add to them, in terms of floor space, it is not essential for the functionality of the dwelling. Therefore, in terms of Guideline 9 of the SPG, the private benefit of increased floor space does not justify the development, which would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The proposal would therefore be inappropriate development which, according to paragraph 152 of the Framework, is harmful to the Green Belt by definition.

Openness

9. The Framework indicates that openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt. The proposal would introduce a further element of built form to the site albeit that it would be as extensions to an existing building. The development would inevitably increase the scale and mass of the dwelling. As a result, both in visual and spatial terms, the openness of the Green Belt would be reduced. Given the scale of the extensions and the extent of the Green Belt, the harm arising from the development in this respect would be limited but nonetheless so and would be in addition to that caused by the appeal scheme's inappropriateness. The development would only be partially visible to the public but, it does not follow that would not affect the openness of the Green Belt.

Living Conditions

10. No 153 Long Line is slightly set back in relation to the appeal dwelling and has garden space next the rear of house. Given the siting of the proposed balcony in relation to the existing two-storey rear extensions, it would be set in from the south-eastern boundary shared with No 153, and part of the projection of the balcony would be screened by the existing extension. Moreover, the use of a balustrade would further restrict views over the neighbouring garden and generally channel them away. The existing vegetation would also provide a level of screening between the properties. Therefore, the rear balcony would not result in wide views over the neighbouring garden to an unacceptable extent.

11. The rear garden of No 153 is already overlooked from the existing first floor rear windows, particularly those of the two-storey rear extension located next to the shared boundary. Accordingly, the development would not increase the existing levels of overlooking to such a degree that would adversely affect the privacy of the occupiers of No 153. The proposal would thus accord with Guideline 6 of the SPG which requires, amongst other things, that developments maintain the privacy of rear garden areas particularly near the house.

Other Considerations

12. I do not have all the relevant details regarding the planning application for a neighbouring property cited. It was submitted in 2005, is therefore of some age and predates the first iteration of the Framework. I remain to be convinced therefore that its circumstances are sufficiently similar to the one before me. I have considered the proposal before me on its own merits and the current planning policy landscape. This matter therefore carries limited weight.
13. Neighbouring properties and their additions vary in terms of scale but, they do not provide justification for the appeal development. I am unaware of how they came to be, and the matters taken into account when or if they were granted planning permission. I afford this limited weight.
14. The proposal is sympathetically designed and would improve the living space of the dwelling. There have been no objections to the amended scheme from the occupiers of surrounding properties. These are however a private benefit and a lack of harm respectively. They therefore attract limited weight.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. The proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and there would be a loss of openness. These harms are ascribed substantial weight. The other considerations advanced would be, for the reasons I have set out, worthy of only limited weight. They would therefore, collectively, not be sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt such that the very special circumstances necessary to justify the appeal scheme do not exist. The proposed development would conflict with Policy GE6 of the UDP and the Framework. There are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andreea Spataru

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR