



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2025

by **C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/24/3349749

Harefield House, The Chase, Upminster, Havering RM14 3YB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr M Wright against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref is P0651.24.
 - The development proposed is extensions to rear, side and front and alterations to roof configuration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are: (i) whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies; (ii) the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt; and (iii) would the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, be clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether the Proposal is Inappropriate Development

3. Policy G2 of the London Plan, 2021 (the LP) sets out the approach to development within the Green Belt. I am satisfied that the policy is in broad conformity with the Framework.
4. The Framework establishes that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, subject to a number of exceptions. One such exception, set out within paragraph 154(c) 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. In this instance, the Council has indicated that the dwelling, which was approved in 2011, has a floorspace of approximately 128 square metres. The Council has also stated that the proposed works would increase the floorspace to approximately 215 square metres. This would represent a significant increase in percentage terms. I note that the appellant has not disagreed with the Council's figures. On that basis, I simply cannot come to any conclusion other than that the works would

represent a disproportionate extension in terms of floor area. As such, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Openness

6. In terms of spatial openness, the proposed development would increase the floorspace and volume of the dwelling. With regards to visual openness, the works would inevitably make the building appear bulkier and more imposing. The dwelling is also easily visible from the road. Nevertheless, given that the appeal only involves an extension to an existing single dwelling, the overall harm to openness would be limited.

Other Considerations

7. The proposed development would provide additional space for the occupiers of the dwelling. However, this is a private benefit that I attribute very little weight to.
8. The appellant has provided details of various other residential extensions that have been permitted by the Council in the surrounding area. I do not have the full details of these schemes before me. However, even if it was the case that these developments were directly comparable to the scheme before me, the Framework is clear that disproportionate additions are inappropriate within the Green Belt. I have set out why the proposal would represent a disproportionate addition in this instance. As such, the potential existence of other similar extensions does not provide a sufficient reason to depart from the policies in the Framework or those within the development plan.
9. An appeal referenced by the appellant concerns a replacement dwelling rather than an extension and is therefore subject to a separate test within the Framework and is not directly comparable.
10. I note that this application proposes works that would be of a reduced scale compared to a previously refused application. However, this issue does not alter my conclusions in this case.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located within the Cranham Conservation Area. From the evidence before me, and from what I saw when I visited the site, the significance of the Conservation Area, in so far as it is relevant to this appeal, is derived from the visual and historical value of the Grade II listed buildings at its centre. The open fields, which surrounds these buildings, also contribute strongly to the significance of the Conservation Area.
12. In this instance, while the appeal site is within the boundary of the Conservation Area, it is some distance from the collection of historic buildings, and it does not form part of the fields that surround them. Given this, and the fact that the existing dwelling is of a very modern construction, I find that the site makes a neutral contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. Given the distance between the site and the open fields and historic buildings, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not result in harm. Furthermore, I note that the Council has not suggested that the appeal site is within the setting of the listed buildings. From what I observed on my site visit I have no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

13. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt, and very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
14. In this instance, the identified limited harm to the Green Belt is not outweighed by other considerations. As such, very special circumstances do not exist and the proposed development conflicts with LP Policy G2, as well as the relevant aspects of the Framework. For this reason, the appeal is dismissed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR