



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 May 2025

by Mr R Walker BA HONS DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 JUNE 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G4240/D/25/3358415

**Parsonage Fields Farm, The Mudd, Littlemoor Road, Mottram, Tameside
SK14 6JN**

- 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 Jeffrey Coombes against the decision of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00917/FUL.
 - The development proposed is single storey side / front extension to dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - Whether or not 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;
 - The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - If it is inappropriate development whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Inappropriate development

3. Policy JP-G9 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (Development Plan) defines the location and purposes of land within the Green Belt. This includes the appeal site. Paragraph 154 of the Framework states that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is inappropriate development. However, it lists certain forms of development, which are not regarded as inappropriate. This includes, amongst other things, 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.
4. There is no definition of what constitutes disproportionate additions within the Framework or the Development Plan. It is put to me that the scheme should be

assessed within the context of the existing built form. However, paragraph 154 (c) of the Framework is clear that an assessment should be made against the size of the original building. The Framework defines the original building as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

5. The property was created through the subdivision of a building that was of itself a replacement building. The Council indicate that there have been incremental increases in size from the original building through different permissions. However, I have no substantive evidence before me of the amount of increase that has occurred to date.
6. When the property was created through the subdivision of the building, the Council indicate that the building was extended with a two-storey extension to the rear of the attached neighbouring property. I have no substantive details of the percentage increase allowed as part of this development. However, the Council says that cumulatively, the volume of the proposed extension would result in an approximate 21.95% increase in size of the host dwelling. The appellant has not disputed this calculation.
7. From my observations the existing two-storey extension is already a sizeable extension relative to the host building. As such, and based on the evidence before me, even though the proposal is a relatively modest extension, in combination with the previous extension it would amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
8. Accordingly, I find that the proposed development comprises inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It is therefore at odds with the provisions of the Framework and Policy JP-G9 of the Development Plan, when taken together and insofar as they relate to this matter.

Openness and green belt purposes

9. The Framework advises that openness and permanence are the essential characteristics of the Green Belt. Openness is the absence of development and has both spatial and visual aspects.
10. The proposal would appear subservient in scale to the existing property but would still result in additional bulk and massing to the building. Moreover, its location and scale are such that it would be partially seen along Littlemoor Road where it would project out beyond the front building line of the property. As such, it would result in a reduction in openness both spatially and visually.
11. Green Belt purposes that appear to be served by the designation of the appeal site within the Green Belt include, amongst other things, checking unrestricted sprawl and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
12. I recognise that the extent of impact on the openness and thus, the effect on the related Green Belt purposes, would be small. Nonetheless, this adds to the harm that I have already identified by reason of inappropriateness and to the conflict with the aforementioned policy documents.

Character and appearance

13. The appeal premises and its attached neighbour have a distinct linear form, and its front elevation has a horizontal emphasis due to its long plan form, low eaves and fenestration pattern. This is legible from the front entrance along Littlemoor Road.
14. The proposal would project from the side to the front in a prominent position wrapping, to a small degree, around the corner of the front of the building eroding the distinctive linear plan form. Moreover, the design with its flat roof, extent of stonework above the windows rising above the eaves line and long vertical windows would result in a design with a vertical emphasis. This would jar injuriously with the horizontal emphasis of the front elevation. The small wrap around of the front corner would create an awkward juxtaposition between the contrasting designs exacerbating the harm from this matter. Overall, the combination of its design and location on the building would overtly clash and contrast with the vernacular style of the existing building.
15. I recognise that the two-storey extension to the attached neighbouring property erodes the linear form. However, it is set back from the side elevation and projects away to the rear eroding it to a small degree. It does not therefore justify the further erosion or other elements of the design from the proposal before me that would harm the overall character and appearance of the host property.
16. To conclude on this main issue, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, I find conflict with the design aspirations of Policies C1 and H10 of the Tameside Unitary Development Plan, Policies RED5 and RED9 of the Tameside Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document, and paragraph 135 of the Framework, when taken together and in so far as they relate to this matter. These say, amongst other things, that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Other considerations

17. The Framework states 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.
18. The lack of harm in relation to other matters weighs neither for nor against the proposal. I understand that extending the property would meet the appellant's need for increased accommodation. However, personal circumstances will seldom outweigh more general planning concerns and the appellant's desire to extend the property does not, therefore, amount to very special circumstances that weigh in favour of the proposal.

Planning Balance

19. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. Substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm are clearly outweighed by other considerations.

20. In addition to the harm by way of inappropriateness, the proposal would result in a small degree of harm to the openness of the Green Belt and to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
21. Drawing the above together, the other considerations, in this instance, do not clearly outweigh the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposed development do not exist.

Conclusion

22. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole, and there are no material considerations that indicate that the appeal decision should be taken other than in accordance with it.
23. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters before me, the appeal is dismissed.

Mr R Walker

INSPECTOR