



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2025 by M Long BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N0410/D/25/3364128

1 Plough Lane, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire SL2 4JR

- 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 & Mrs Bains against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - South Bucks Area.
 - The application Ref is PL/25/0125/FA.
 - The development proposed is a replacement single storey rear extension.
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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.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies;
 - the effect on the openness of the Green Belt; and,
 - whether any harm by reason 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 the proposal.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Whether there would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt

4. Paragraph 154 outlines that development in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, save for a number of exceptions. One of these is 'c) 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. Insofar as Policies GB1 and GB10 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (adopted March 1999, consolidated September 2007 and February 2011) seek to avoid inappropriate development in the Green Belt and require that extensions to existing

dwelling, they are broadly in conformity with the Framework. Whilst these policies have therefore been material to my assessment, I have given greater regard to the up-to-date requirements of the Framework.

6. The proposal would modestly increase the footprint of the dwelling when compared with the conservatory it would replace. Even so, when taken cumulatively with previous extensions to the original building, the evidence before me suggests that the total additions would equate to an approximate 65% uplift in floor area. On this basis, I find that the total additions would be considerable and would represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. For the same reasons, the cumulative extensions would neither be limited or small scale in relation to the size of the original dwelling.
7. Consequently, the proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having regard to the Framework and the development plan.

Openness

8. Paragraph 142 of the Framework sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
9. The proposal would have a modestly larger footprint than the conservatory it would replace and so in spatial terms would encroach upon openness to a small extent. The location of the host dwelling within a 'Green Belt settlement' that includes sizeable and extended houses, and the close association of the extension with the main house would limit the visual effects. Taking the spatial and visual effects together, the effect of the proposed development on openness would be limited.

Other considerations

10. I have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. I have also had regard to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
11. In these respects, I have no reason to doubt the evidence before me which indicates that a member of the appellants' family requires accommodation that caters to their particular accessibility, comfort and care needs. In this regard, the proposal has the potential to be beneficial to the indicated family member.
12. However, it has not been demonstrated why the existing accommodation is unsuitable. For example, the ground floor layout plan for the existing dwelling indicates that there is already a bedroom and a shower room on the ground floor. The existing shower room is larger than the proposed ensuite and it has not been explained how the proposal would provide more accessible facilities. Therefore, it is unclear how the proposal has been configured to meet the specific needs of the indicated family member. Furthermore, no justification has been provided as to why the extension needs to be the size proposed and why the current floor space could not be reconfigured to meet the identified family member's needs.

13. Consequently, it has not been demonstrated that dismissing the appeal would interfere with the appellant's family member's right to peaceful enjoyment of their possessions, and to a private and family life and home, under Article 1 of the First Protocol and Article 8 as set out under the Human Rights Act 1998. Therefore, I only afford this matter moderate weight.
14. I have been provided with details of developments that have been approved at sites located in the wider Green Belt area. Whether or not these examples indicate inconsistencies in what the Council considers to constitute disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, this does not fetter my own planning judgement. In that regard, I have considered the individual merits of the appeal proposal against the requirements of the Framework and the development plan.

Green Belt Balance and Recommendation

15. The proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. As part of the assessment, I have also found that the proposal would result in some limited harm to openness. Paragraph 153 of the Framework specifies that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
16. For the reasons set out, the other considerations put forward carry no more than moderate weight and so do not clearly outweigh the harm identified. As such, the very special circumstances that would be needed to justify the proposal do not exist.
17. Overall, a refusal of planning permission is a proportionate and necessary approach to protecting the Green Belt. Therefore, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Long

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR