



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 June 2025 by J Reed MPlan

Decision by K Savage BA(Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/25/3365476

2 Killy Hill, Chobham, Woking, Surrey GU24 8RF

- 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 Joe Verlander against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 25/0055/FFU.
 - The development proposed is erection of two storey side/rear extension following part demolition of existing dwelling.
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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 appeal site is within the Green Belt. Therefore, the main issues are:
 - whether the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of development plan policy and the National Planning Policy Framework;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt, and;
 - if the proposed development would be 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 it.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Whether Inappropriate Development

4. The Framework identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It goes on to state that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
5. The Framework adds that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development but lists exceptions in paragraph 154. One such exception 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.

6. The existing building, which has seen various alterations over time, is a modest two storey end terrace property with a porch to the front and single storey extension to the rear. The appellant does not dispute that the proposal would entail an 85.8% increase in floorspace, and a 70.5% increase in volume over that of the original building.
7. The two storey extension would occupy the full depth of the side elevation of the original building and, together with the single storey element to the rear, would notably increase the width of the house on its plot. Whilst the additions would be below the main ridge height, the overall volume of the dwelling would be significantly increased. Overall, the proposal would result in a substantial increase in the size of the property.
8. While the house is located on a generous plot and surrounded by houses of varying size, including some larger properties, these do not provide reasons to alter the above assessment under the Framework, which relates to the size of extensions relative to the original building.
9. For the reasons given, the proposal would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It would not conform to the exception to inappropriate development given by the Framework and would be inappropriate development by definition.

Openness

10. The openness of the Green Belt has a spatial aspect as well as a visual aspect. Therefore, the absence of visual intrusion does not in itself mean that there is no impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
11. Killy Hill is a residential road with houses of varying scale and design set within deep plots. Thick woodland flanks the appeal site to the east and north. The openness of the surrounding area is derived from the generous plots of the houses including the spaces around them.
12. The proposal would decrease the spatial aspect of the site's openness through increasing the size of the property and the extent of built form on the site. While limited to localised views from Killy Hill and Broom Lane, the proposal would also have visual effects on the Green Belt's openness due to the increase in the scale and prominence of the building, including its width and coverage of the plot resulting in the loss of the existing gap between the existing property and the adjacent greenery. The proposal would therefore cause harm to both the spatial and visual aspects of the Green Belt's openness.

Other Considerations

13. The appellant refers to nearby developments argued to set a precedent for the proposal. However, I am not provided with full details of these other schemes to understand the particular planning and site circumstances present at the time they were approved. Consequently, I cannot be certain they are sufficiently similar to the appeal scheme and so the weight to be afforded these is limited. Ultimately, I have considered the proposal on its own merits and against the planning policies and guidance in force, in particular that of the Framework.

14. I have noted the letters of support for the proposal and that the works would create more living space for the appellant's family; however, these factors carry only a limited amount of weight in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. The Framework makes clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. It adds that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness, and 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.
16. The proposal would amount to disproportionate additions to the original dwelling such that it would amount to inappropriate development. Harm to the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt would also arise. The other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Therefore, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal do not exist.
17. The Council's case does not refer to any Green Belt policies of the development plan. Nonetheless, the application of policies in the Framework which protect Green Belts provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. The proposal would not, therefore, benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11d) of the Framework.
18. For the above reasons, having taken account of the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, along with all other relevant material considerations, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reed

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Savage

INSPECTOR