



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by H Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/D/25/3361711

Upper Lanes Farm, Bridle Stile Lane, Bradford BD13 1NW

- 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 C Powell against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/04483/HOU.
 - The development proposed is extension and alterations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to 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, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Inappropriate development

3. Paragraph 142 of the Framework outlines the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Framework, at paragraphs 154 and 155, sets out the categories of development which may be regarded as not inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to certain conditions.
4. Paragraph 154c) sets out that new buildings within the Green Belt are inappropriate unless the extension or alteration of a building does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
5. The Framework does not define what a disproportionate addition would be. An assessment of whether the proposal would be disproportionate to the original building is therefore a matter of planning judgement but the overall size of the building (either in terms of footprint, floorspace or volume) is clearly an important factor. An original building, the Framework explains, is a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if it was constructed after that date, as it was built originally.

6. In this case, whilst I do not have details of the original building, I note that it has been previously extended through a number of previous approvals. The extensions now proposed, in addition to those already constructed, would significantly increase the footprint, floorspace and massing, including at the first floor.
7. Taking the above factors into account, the proposal would be a disproportionate addition to the dwelling and would not therefore fall within the exception set out in paragraph 154c) of the Framework. It therefore follows that it would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Openness

8. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics are their openness and permanence. The openness of the Green Belt has a spatial as well as a visual aspect, so the physical and visual presence of built forms may affect openness.
9. The proposal would increase the mass and bulk of the building both at first floor level, as a result of the rear extension and construction of the verandas, and at ground floor level through the rear extension. The resultant building would be deeper than the current dwelling and its bulk and massing would be significantly increased. There would also be an increase in the footprint of the building, and I conclude that, as a result of the increase in built form, the proposal would harm the openness of the Green Belt in spatial terms.
10. The rear extensions would be largely screened from the road and public vantage points due to the position of the dwelling. In visual terms the effect on openness would be limited.
11. For the above reasons the proposal would cause limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt in addition to harm by reason of being inappropriate. I therefore conclude that the development would lead to a harmful loss of Green Belt openness, contrary to the main aims of the Green Belt policy set out in the Framework.

Other Considerations

12. The Framework states that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
13. The appellant has indicated that the property could be extended under permitted development rights set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. I have no reason to consider that permitted development rights do not exist. There is therefore a possibility that if the appeal were to fail, alternative development in the form of single storey extensions could be constructed. However, the appellant has not applied for a Certificate of Lawfulness for this development and as the accommodation proposed would not necessarily provide the same first floor bedroom accommodation the appellant is seeking, there is no certainty that the alternative development would be carried out.
14. In addition, the degree of weight to be given to the fallback position depends on whether or not it would be equally or more harmful than the scheme proposed. As

set out above, the fallback position differs from the appeal proposal in that the form of the development in that it would be restricted to single storey elements. For this reason, the proposal, although more limited in terms of its increase in footprint, due to the increase in bulk and massing at first floor level, would have a greater impact on the Green Belt than the fallback position. Taking all these matters into account, the fallback position carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

Other Matter

15. I have had regard to the previously approved extension to the dwelling¹. However, I note that there are clear material differences between the proposal and previous approval. These include the enlargement of the footprint of the building and the increase in the bulk and massing to the first floor of the dwelling leading to an increase in the volume of the proposal over and above that previously granted permission. In addition, I have determined the appeal on the site specific circumstances of the site.

Green Belt balance and Conclusion

16. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. The Framework states that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
17. For the reasons set out above, the development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, there would be limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The other considerations put forward in support of the proposal attract moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
18. I conclude that the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist and the proposal would conflict with the Framework and Policy SC7 of the Bradford Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2017 which together seek to protect the Green Belt.
19. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given the appeal should be dismissed.

H Senior

INSPECTOR

¹ Ref 16/06594