



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 September 2025

by **M Clowes BA (Hons) MCD PG CERT (Arch Con) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/25/3371360

White Oaks, Brook Lane, Alderley Edge SK9 7QQ

- 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 and Mrs Mark and Clare Pearson and Delaney against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0980/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a single storey side and rear extension to existing dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a single storey side and rear extension to existing dwellinghouse at White Oaks, Brook Lane, Alderley Edge SK9 7QQ, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/0980/HOUS, subject to the following conditions;
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings;

Existing and proposed block plan and location plan - ref Bregs100

Existing and proposed elevations - ref Bregs101

Existing and proposed floor plans - ref Bregs102.
 - 3) The external materials of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Procedural Matters

2. At the time of my visit, the shell of the proposed extension had been completed on site without windows, doors and some external facing and roofing materials. Whilst the development appears to accord with the submitted plans in terms of its overall size and position, there are deviations regarding the installation of openings, particularly within the eastern elevation. I am satisfied that there is sufficient detail on the proposed plans to determine the appeal in relation to the main issue. In reaching my decision, I have assessed the development as shown on the submitted plans and not as built on site.

Main Issue

3. Whether or not the appeal site could be considered to constitute previously developed land, the appellants accept that the host dwelling has been previously

extended and that when taken cumulatively with the proposed extension, it would amount to a disproportionate addition to the original building. On the basis of the evidence presented, the parties do not dispute that the proposal would be inappropriate development. It would thus conflict with Policy PG3 of the Cheshire East Local Plan; Site Allocations and Development Policies Document 2022 and paragraph 154(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

4. The main issue of this appeal is therefore whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

5. The Framework is clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
6. My attention is drawn to 2 previous prior approvals for a single storey side and a rear extension at the appeal site¹ which the appellants suggest provides a fallback position that could be implemented were the appeal to fail. The evidence before me indicates that the proposed extension would be sited in the same location as the 2 prior approval developments. It would have a very marginally smaller floor area and footprint but a larger volume than the fallback position².
7. The fallback extensions would nonetheless cumulatively provide a comparable sized addition to the dwelling, albeit with a marginally different configuration to that proposed. However, they would have an awkward visual relationship with the host dwelling and each other, as they would be required to be built as independent structures with a small gap between the two.
8. The Council has suggested that the prior approval developments would be unrealistic to implement, as there would be limited space for access or maintenance between the extensions and windows to a habitable space would be covered over. However, there is nothing to prevent the appellants from implementing both approvals if they so choose and they have indicated that would be the case. The 2 prior approvals show a clear intent to extend the host dwelling. I am satisfied that there is a greater than merely theoretical prospect of the fallback being implemented were the appeal to fail, even if that would necessitate modification to the development as constructed.
9. The Council has confirmed that the proposed extension would provide an acceptable appearance to the dwelling and would fit in with the character of the area. I see no reason to disagree. In contrast, the fallback extensions would result in a piecemeal and less contained form of development that would not achieve a high-quality external appearance. Nor would it function well internally. As the fallback would result in extensions of comparable size and more harmful appearance to that proposed, it carries significant weight as a material consideration.
10. Although the prior approval applications did not specify what type of accommodation the extensions would provide, there is no suggestion that they

¹ Planning reference numbers 24/1910M and 24/4871/PRIOR-1A as cited in the Council's officer report.

² As cited by the Council at paragraphs 10.25 and 10.26 of its officer report.

would not deliver habitable accommodation for a dwelling house. Otherwise, the Council would not have been able to grant prior approval.

Other Matters

11. The exception specified in paragraph 154c) of the Framework for extensions and alterations to existing buildings makes no mention of Green Belt openness, unlike other Green Belt exceptions. Openness is not therefore relevant, when determining whether the proposal would amount to a disproportionate addition and I am not required to consider this further including the Mansell judgment³. Even if I could consider that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt, the impact would be comparable to that exerted by the fallback scheme.

Green Belt Balance

12. The proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and that substantial weight should be given to that harm. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt is outweighed by other considerations.
13. The fallback schemes would deliver comparable sized extensions to that proposed. However, they would not contribute positively to the appearance of the host dwelling and character of the wider area if both were built out. In contrast, the proposal would result in an improved appearance that would enhance the living accommodation of the dwelling. Taking into account the fallback position, I find that harm by reason of inappropriateness would be clearly outweighed by other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal. This leads me to the view that the appeal should succeed. I have considered the appeal on its own merits and I have not referred to the other approvals and appeal decisions referenced by the appellant as they would not be determinative in this instance.

Conditions

14. Along with the standard time limit and to list the plans in the interest of certainty, I have attached a condition requiring the proposed extension to be constructed in matching materials to protect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons outlined above, the appeal is allowed.

M Clowes

INSPECTOR

³ Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling [2016] EWHC 2832 (Admin).