



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2025

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/25/3369765

Southend Cottage, Long Reach, Ockham GU23 6PF

- 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 Edd Carlton against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/P/00628.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension and all associated works at Southend Cottage GU23 6PF.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - Whether the development would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and its effect on openness, and
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and on the local area.
 - If the development would be inappropriate, whether the harm, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations. If so, would this amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached cottage on the west side of Long Reach on a bend where the road changes from an east west alignment to north south. There is a scattering of residential and commercial buildings in the vicinity interspersed with fields and all in a rural location. The site lies within the Green Belt.
4. The proposal would replace the existing single storey side conservatory extension with a two storey extension. The ground floor extension would be very slightly larger than the footprint of the existing conservatory with a first floor addition to create an additional bedroom with a front facing dormer.
5. Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate except for a limited

number of exceptions including the extension or alteration of a building providing that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The term disproportionate is not further defined. Policy P2 of the Council's Local Plan Strategy and Sites (LPSS) confirms that Green Belt policy will be applied in accordance with the Framework. There is further guidance set out in the Council's Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document (Green Belt SPD). Both the Glossary to the Framework and Policy P2 of the LPSS confirm that the reference to the original building refers to the building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or if built after that date, the date the building was originally built.

6. The Council has calculated that the proposed extension together with previous additions, including the existing outbuildings in ancillary use, would result in an increase in floorspace of some 201% over the original size of the house. I have not been provided with detailed calculations by either the Appellants or the Council and the Appellants have not put forward any alternative computations or sought to contest the figures presented by the Council.
7. The Appellant is seeking to compare, in percentage terms, the proposed increases against the existing building, whereas both the Framework and development plan policy are clear that the consideration relates to a comparison with the original building. Although individual developments and proposals may be very modest, this approach seeks to safeguard against cumulative increases which, when taken altogether, could create an increase which is disproportionate to the size of the original dwelling.
8. Although the proposal would not in itself add significantly to the increase in floorspace, the two storey addition as well as the introduction of a front dormer would add to the overall massing of the dwelling, and it would become a more prominent building when approaching along Long Reach. This would have some effect on the openness of the Green Belt, particularly in visual terms.
9. Taking all these factors into account and having regard to Policy P2 of the LPSS and the Framework, and the further guidance in the Green Belt SPD, it is my view that the proposed extension would be a disproportionate addition to the original house and would therefore be inappropriate development. The extension would also harm the openness of the Green Belt, in both spatial and particularly in visual terms, through the introduction of additional built form.

Character and appearance

10. The proposed extension over two storeys would be of a scale and design to respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The new roof form would be subservient to the existing roof form in terms of the ridge height and set back at first floor level from the front elevation. It would not follow in full the form of the existing roof, but its subservient form would be assimilated into the overall form and massing of the property. The new dormer would be of an acceptable size, design and siting to sit appropriately alongside the existing dormer.
11. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed extension would respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and of the local area. There would be no conflict with policies H4 and D4 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies, policy D1 of the LPSS, the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD 2018 and the Framework, and in particular Section 12, all of

which amongst other matters seek a high quality of design which respects the local context.

12. No additional harm is therefore added in this respect.

Other Considerations

13. The Appellant has drawn my attention to other extensions and alterations that have been permitted in the local vicinity. Each proposal must be considered on its individual merits, but to the extent that the information has been made available to me, I have taken them into account. There may be some similarities, but I have not been provided with the full details and cannot be certain that they are directly comparable. I have some sympathy with the Appellant's perception of such development, but no two sites are the same and I must determine the appeal on the basis of its own planning merits and in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. No weight in support of the proposal is therefore added in this respect.

14. I have noted the Appellant's desire for additional accommodation in particular a third bedroom as well as improvements in the standard of the existing accommodation. This would add some limited weight in support of the proposal.

15. The Appellant has referred to the requirement for more 3 bedroom market houses and family housing as referenced in the development plan. However, there is insufficient information before me to provide more than very limited weight in support of this contention, particularly as this objective has to be balanced against the location of the site within the Green Belt.

16. There would be no concerns in relation to the effect on neighbouring amenities. However, the absence of harm in other respects is not a positive consideration, as acceptability in amenity terms is to be expected. No weight is therefore added in support.

17. The Appellant has referred me to the five stated purposes of the Green Belt as set out under Paragraph 143 of the Framework. However, the Framework makes clear that the essential characteristics of the Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The approach to assessing development proposals within the Green Belt, once defined under development plan policy as in this case, are clearly set out from paragraph 153 onwards and I have followed this approach. No weight is therefore added in support.

Conclusion

18. The proposal would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would harm openness. In accordance with the Framework, substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. Even taken together, the other considerations put forward provide little support for the scheme. Therefore, they do not outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and 'very special circumstances' do not exist. Therefore, the proposed extension would not accord with the development plan and there are no other material considerations to outweigh that finding.

19. For the reasons given above, the appeal should not succeed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR