
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2025 by T Morris BA (Hons) MSc

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/25/3366297

Tawny Hill Cottage, Wapley Road, Codrington, South Gloucestershire BS37 6RY

- 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 C Moon against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application reference is P24/02837/HH.
 - The development proposed is a porch and side extensions.
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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.

Preliminary Matter

3. The appellant has submitted an amended plan with the appeal which seeks to replace the larch cladding on the proposed single storey side extension with stone and to include a window on its front elevation. The amended plan also seeks to reduce the height of the proposed porch. However, the changes to the proposed single storey side extension constitute a substantial difference to the original application. It would be unfair to the Council if I were to accept these plans since they were concerned with the design and appearance of the proposed single storey side extension, and they have not had the opportunity to comment on the changes. Furthermore, the Procedural Guide¹ states that if an applicant thinks that amending their application will overcome the LPA's reasons for refusal, they should normally make a new planning application. Consequently, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the original application plans.

Main Issues

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

¹ Procedural Guide: Planning appeals – England (2025)

- iii) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area; and,
- iv) 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 required to justify the proposal.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Whether inappropriate development

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling situated within the Bristol and Bath Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states, at paragraph 154, that development is inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets certain exceptions. One such exception, at paragraph 154(c), is for 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. The Framework defines an original building as a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.
6. The Council have provided volume calculations for the original building, as well as the two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension. The appellant has however drawn my attention to historic maps which are said to give an indication of the footprint of the original building. While the appellant claims that the existing two-storey side extension is contained in an area where buildings were formally located, there is insufficient detail in the plans before me to confirm this. Furthermore, even if this was the case, the footprint of a building does not provide a full indication of its size, which includes other factors such as volume, height and floor area. Moreover, the appellant has not provided any alternative volume calculations.
7. The Framework does not define the specific meaning of disproportionate in relation to the paragraph 154(c) exception. Policy PSP7 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Policies, Sites and Places Plan (PSPP) (2017) states that as a general guide, additions resulting in a volume increase of up to 30% of the original building would likely be proportionate. Additions that exceed 30% will be carefully assessed, with particular regard to whether the proposal would appear out of scale and proportion to the existing building. Additions resulting in a volume increase of 50% or more of the original building would most likely be considered a disproportionate addition.
8. The evidence before me indicates that the proposed porch and side extensions combined with the previous extensions would exceed the 50% threshold, in conflict with Policy PSP7. However, I accept that the specific criterion of the policy is not consistent with the Framework which simply refers to the size of the original building. Even so, I am satisfied that although in isolation they would be of a modest scale, the porch and side extension together with the previous extensions would add built form and mass to the original building to the extent that they would be disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Consequently, the proposal does not meet with the exception in paragraph 154(c) of the Framework.
9. The appellant has also referred me to the exception as set out in paragraph 154(g) of the Framework. This relates to the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing

use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

10. As the appeal site is outside of a built-up area, I accept that residential garden land can comprise previously developed land as defined in the Framework. Despite this, the wording of paragraph 154(g) relates to the redevelopment of previously developed land. However, the proposal is for a new porch and a side extension, in locations where there is nothing currently to demolish. The appellant refers to the removal of an existing porch, however, this was not included in the development description on the original application form, and it was not in place on my site visit and does not form part of the proposed development. Therefore, to my mind, the proposal before me is for a new development, rather than a redevelopment.
11. The description of development in the appeal decision² provided by the appellant includes the wording 'demolition of single storey rear elements and a detached outbuilding'. The reasoning in that decision further states that the 'proposal would partially redevelop the site through demolition of such structures'. That indicates that a degree of redevelopment would take place in that situation. This is not the same as the appeal before me, which is for a new porch and side extension and is not a redevelopment of the site. Consequently, the proposed development does not meet with the exception in paragraph 154(g) of the Framework
12. Since the proposed development fails to meet any of the exceptions set out in paragraph 154 of the Framework, I therefore conclude that it would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is harmful by definition, and I give substantial weight to this harm, in accordance with paragraph 153 of the Framework.

Openness

13. Paragraph 142 of the Framework states 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. Openness has a spatial and a visual dimension.
14. The proposed porch and side extension would introduce additional built form and mass to the host dwelling. It would therefore inevitably reduce the openness of the Green Belt from a spatial perspective. From a visual perspective, given that the proposal would remove part of the conifer hedge to the front of the property, it would bring the development into greater view along Wapley Road, particularly from the direction of the Nook. Furthermore, due to the height of the side extension which would extend up to the bottom of the first-floor window on the side elevation, it would be visible in glimpsed views from the direction of the chapel on Wapley Road, as well as across the fields to the rear of the site. Consequently, the proposal would therefore also result in a loss of visual openness.
15. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Substantial weight is given to this harm in accordance with paragraph 153 of the Framework. This is in addition to the harm caused by reason of its inappropriateness.

Character and appearance

² APP/T0355/W/3352921

16. The appeal site is situated in a rural area which is generally characterised by small groups of buildings set within the countryside. The majority of buildings in the area are formed of stone, a material which is also replicated in the front boundary walls to many of the properties. Stone is therefore the predominant building material in the area, and its reoccurring use contributes positively to the rustic character of the area. Similarly, the front elevation of the appeal property together with the adjoining semi-detached dwelling are formed of stone and they also feature consistent window proportions. The rustic materials combined with the orderly window proportions makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
17. The absence of a window to the front elevation of the proposed side extension would not be harmful in itself, since this would not detract from the consistent window pattern of the existing front elevation. However, the use of larch cladding would detract from the prominence of the stone of the host dwelling and the adjoining property. Even if timber is used in the area, as it is for an outbuilding at the appeal site, it would unacceptably contrast with the predominant stone material of the host dwelling. Furthermore, even though the side extension would be setback, due to the removal of the conifer hedge, it would become more visible in the street scene. While the choice of materials would be harmful, I accept that the harm would however be limited since it relates to the single storey side extension only. Even so, the use of timber larch for the side extension adds to my concerns with the proposal overall.
18. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, albeit to a limited extent.

Other considerations

19. Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances, and that 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.
20. I acknowledge that the development would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant and their family. Such personal circumstances, however, seldom outweigh general planning considerations and I therefore give them limited weight in the appeal.
21. I am also aware that the appellant has a role in the community in providing essential support to a neighbour. However, there is limited details before me of the particular circumstances of the appellant's role and the needs of the neighbour. Furthermore, there is nothing compelling before me to suggest that dismissal of the appeal would prevent the appellant from continuing to support the neighbour. Consequently, I can only give this matter limited weight.
22. The appellant also refers to the erection of a porch via permitted development. Even if that were to take place, it would be less harmful than the appeal proposal, since it would only comprise the porch and would have a lesser effect in terms of the size of the building and its effects on openness and the character and appearance of the area. I can therefore only give this matter limited weight

23. I have also considered the third-party comments which support the proposal. These include that the proposal would have no impact on neighbouring properties in terms of privacy and outlook, that it would increase the visibility of traffic, and that it would allow for more light to neighbour's property. However, these factors are of a modest scope overall and so I can only afford them limited weight.

Planning Balance and Overall Conclusion

24. The proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is harmful by definition. The proposal would also harm the openness of the Green Belt, as well as the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. Substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt. Overall, the totality of the harm of the proposal would not be clearly outweighed by other considerations. Consequently, very special circumstances do not exist.
25. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would conflict with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) and Policies PSP1, PSP7 and PSP38 of the PSPP. Amongst other matters, these policies require that additions and alterations to buildings in the Green Belt do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and that external materials respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the site and its locality.

Recommendation

26. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which would alter this finding. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

T Morris

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR