



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 October 2025

by **P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A4710/D/25/3373047

Upper Reap Hurst Cottage, Stocks Lane, Luddenden, Halifax HX2 7SZ

- 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 G Sweeney against the decision of Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 25/00360/HSE.
 - The development proposed is a first-floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the proposal would amount to inappropriate development within the Green Belt; whether there would be any other harm to the Green Belt; whether there would be harm to the setting of the neighbouring listed building; and whether the 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 necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

3. The dwelling lies within the Green Belt. Policy GB1 of the Calderdale Local Plan 2023 advises that within the Green Belt, the construction of new buildings is inappropriate development except in certain listed circumstances. Of most relevance is part (c) which allows 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 National Planning Policy Framework 2024 was published after the local plan was adopted and includes changes to some elements of national policy. However, with regard to this element of policy GB1, the wording remains identical to that of paragraph 154(c) of the Framework. The appellant has not suggested that newer elements of the Framework are relevant, and it appears that policy GB1(c) and Framework paragraph 154(c) are the most appropriate policy provisions in this particular case. The Framework defines the original building as the building as it existed in 1948.
4. The original building has been extended. It has a ground floor extension over which this proposal would be built. It also has a large, detached garage with accommodation above. Although detached, it is closely related to the dwelling and

can be considered as an extension for the purposes of Green Belt policy. The officer report indicates that there is disagreement between the parties as to the percentage increase in volume and the volume of the original building. I do not have the relevant measurements, but the appellant advises in the Grounds of Appeal that the additional volume increase of the proposed extension would be 8%, bringing the total cumulative increase to 81%. Neither national nor local policy specify a figure as to what represents a disproportionate addition. An overall figure of 81% does however suggest that the additions cumulatively have resulted in a significant increase in scale compared to the original building.

5. Setting aside the numerical calculations, the existing large two storey garage building together with the side extension to the main property, represent very considerable additions to the original dwelling, both in terms of size and spread of development across the site. The further addition of a first-floor extension would add to this scale, consolidating development at first floor level. In these circumstances, the visual and spatial increase in the scale of development would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The numerical calculations support this finding.
6. Given the circumstances of this case, the overall increase in the size of the original building would represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposal does not therefore fall within the exceptions with regard to extensions in the Green Belt that are set out in the Local Plan or the Framework. The proposal therefore represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Openness

7. The extension would increase the scale of development and would therefore reduce the openness of the Green Belt. The scale of the reduction would be limited given that the footprint of development would not be increased and it would be located between two existing two storey elements. Although resulting in some harm with regard to openness, the scale of the harm would be limited.

The setting of the neighbouring listed building

8. The council suggest that the property would have originally made an important contribution to the setting and significance of the neighbouring listed building but go on to say that incremental development at the site has somewhat eroded this relationship and the legibility of the historic form of the cottage has been diminished. No historic information has been provided in relation to the form of the cottage as first built. I am unclear whether it remains similar to its original form, and I am not satisfied that the historic extent of the cottage and its relationship to the listed building is entirely legible as suggested by the council.
9. The proposal would represent a very limited addition when compared to the scale of the new garage building and would sit between the two main built elements. It would only be obliquely viewed from the listed property and would be viewed against the backdrop of the new garage building. The openness of the outlook and surrounds of the listed building would not be materially altered. The changes would not undermine the ability to appreciate the subservience of the cottage to the listed farmhouse and whilst the cottage may have once been a small agricultural dwelling, this is not currently the case. In any event, the proposed addition would

remain distinguishable from the main element of the existing dwelling and would be of a design that would complement it.

10. Given the above, I am not persuaded that this extension would materially alter the experience of the listed building from any vantage points or harm its setting. It would also not increase the enclosure of that building or harm its outlook. The proposal would not therefore result in any further harm to the setting of the listed building. As the extension would be well designed with good quality materials, it would not result in conflict with the design or heritage objectives of the Local Plan or the Framework.

Other considerations

11. It is acknowledged that the proposed extension is limited in size, does not increase the footprint of the property and would generally be screened from view. It would also be of an appropriate design and materials. In this respect, it would not detract from the character or appearance of the area and would not conflict with the five purposes that the Green Belt serves. These are neutral matters in the planning balance.
12. The development would create employment for local builders and trades people which in turn would result in benefits to the economy of the local area. It would provide additional habitable space which would be of benefit to the living conditions of the residents. It would also make more efficient use of previously developed land. These are positive matters in the planning balance.
13. I note the other appeals referred to which included much greater percentage increases in size. Whilst I note the reasons for presenting these cases, I must consider this proposal on its own merits and in the light of the local development plan policies. The other cases do not therefore weigh in favour of this proposal.
14. It is appreciated that the council accepted the large garage, and this was not considered to represent inappropriate development, despite the significant increase in the overall size of the property. I note that it was determined under a previous development plan. However, this offers some support for the limited greater increase in scale of development proposed.

Conclusions

15. The cumulative increases in size of the property are such that the proposal must be considered to result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. The proposal therefore represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
16. The Framework establishes that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and substantial weight should be given to that harm. Policy GB1 advises that approval for inappropriate development will not be given, except in very special circumstances. The Framework includes similar guidance and is clear that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
17. Whilst there would be harm from inappropriateness, I have not found that there would be harm to the nearby listed building. There would be some very limited harm to openness. No other harm has been identified.

18. A number of matters have been put forward in support of the proposal as set out above. However, the considerations put forward would not clearly outweigh the harm from inappropriateness, even if the limited reduction in openness was set aside. The considerations do not therefore represent the very special circumstances that are necessary to justify the development. The proposal would be contrary to policy GB1 of the Local Plan. It would also conflict with the specific policies of the Framework, relating to the Green Belt, that indicate that the development should not be approved. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR