



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2025

by **E Worley BA (Hons) Dip EP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/25/3372113

Oak Apple, Abbey Park Lane, Burnham, Buckinghamshire SL1 8PJ

- 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 & Mrs Jim & Fiona Greenfield against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - East Area (Chiltern).
 - The application Ref is PL/25/1415/FA.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front and rear extension with associated landscape work.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

- whether the proposed extensions would amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies;
- the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt; and
- if the proposal would be inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to very special circumstances to justify it.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

3. The Framework sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It goes on to state that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 154 of the Framework establishes that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it meets one of the exceptions listed. The extension or alteration of a building is not inappropriate development, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The Framework does not provide a definition of disproportionate additions, therefore an assessment of whether a proposal would amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building is a matter of planning judgement.

4. Policy GB1 of the South Bucks District Local Plan 1999 (the LP) outlines that within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for development unless in the specific circumstances listed. These include (e) the limited extension of existing dwellings, in accordance with Policies GB10 and GB11 of the LP. Policy GB10 sets out that extensions to existing dwellings in the Green Belt will normally be permitted provided that a range of criteria are met, including that (b) the extension together with any earlier extensions, would be integral to, and (with the exception of very small dwellings lacking in basic amenities) of a small scale, in relation to the size of the original dwelling.
5. Policies GB1 and GB10 are generally consistent with the aims of the Framework, in that they resist inappropriate development, and require an extension to a dwelling to be small scale in relation to the original dwelling. However, they do not refer to very special circumstances. As such, in this case, I therefore attribute greater weight to the Framework in the determination of the appeal.
6. The appeal property has been extended previously, with 2 storey and single storey additions of a considerable scale and volume when compared to the original dwelling. The proposal would add further floor space to the front and rear of the dwelling and would result in an overall increase in terms of volume, footprint and external dimensions. While the proposed extensions would be modest additions, when combined with the previous extensions to the dwelling, they would result in disproportionate additions in terms of size.
7. For these reasons, the appeal proposal would fail to meet the exception at paragraph 154 c) of the Framework and would compromise inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which attracts substantial weight in my decision. The proposal would therefore conflict Policies GB1 and GB11 of the LP, and the associated policies of the Framework.

Openness

8. The appeal scheme would increase the footprint and volume of the host dwelling. While the extensions would be single storey and would not project beyond the existing outer parameters of the walls of the dwelling and could therefore be considered to be 'infill', the proposal would nevertheless introduce development in a space which is currently free from built development. Consequently, the proposal would harmfully reduce the openness of the Green Belt, albeit the resulting harm in that regard would be limited due to the nature and modest scale of the extensions.
9. The extensions would not be visibly conspicuous, given their height, scale, ground level and position set back from the highway, from which they would be viewed against the backdrop of the host dwelling. As such, the proposal would have a very limited effect on the Green Belt in visual terms.
10. For the foregoing reasons, the proposal would have a limited effect on the openness of the Green Belt. Substantial weight is to be given to this harm, as set out in the Framework.

Other Considerations

11. The proposal to modernise the dwelling would provide additional space and an improved layout for the appellants and their family and would enhance the energy

efficiency of the property. It would also accord with the aims of the Framework which encourage the effective use of land. However, given the modest scale of the scheme, the weight to be attributed to the benefits in these regards is limited. Furthermore, there is no substantive evidence to demonstrate that the appeal proposal would be the only way in which the appellants could achieve the desired outcomes. As such, the weight to be attached to these considerations is limited.

12. The proposed extensions would be visually subservient to and sympathetic in design terms to the existing dwelling. However, the absence of harm in relation to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area are normal expectations of new development and are therefore of neutral weight. Moreover, given the existing appearance of the dwelling, there is no clear evidence to justify the proposal in terms of the enhancement of the aesthetics of the property.
13. Even if the proposal did not conflict with development plan policies of the neighbouring authorities, I have determined the appeal on its own merits considering the evidence before me, having regard to the relevant development plan for the area in which the appeal site is located.

Green Belt balance and Conclusion

14. The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, and would lead to a small loss to its openness. The Framework indicates that such harm should be given substantial weight. In this case, the other considerations do not clearly outweigh this harm and, therefore, the very special circumstances required to justify the development do not exist.
15. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

E Worley

INSPECTOR