



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2025

by H Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/25/3371653

Tara, Welsh Row, Nether Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 4TY

- 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 Steven Thomas against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0803/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is two rear dormers and one side dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

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

Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development

3. The appeal site lies within the designated Green Belt and is a single storey dwelling with bedrooms in the roof space, set back from the road behind a vegetated frontage. Welsh Row forms a ribbon of development within the Green Belt.
4. Paragraph 142 of the Framework outlines the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Framework, at paragraphs 154 and 155, sets out the categories of development which may be regarded as not inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to certain conditions.
5. Paragraph 154c) sets out that new buildings within the Green Belt are inappropriate unless the extension or alteration of a building does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

6. The Framework does not define what a disproportionate addition would be. An assessment of whether the proposal would be disproportionate to the original building is therefore a matter of planning judgement but the overall size of the building (either in terms of footprint, floorspace or volume) is clearly an important factor. An original building, the Framework explains, is a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if it was constructed after that date, as it was built originally. Policy RUR11 of the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2022) (SADPD) seeks to protect the Green Belt by limiting the increase in size of the original building to no more than 30%.
7. In this case, the dwelling has been previously extended substantially beyond 30% of the size of the original building through previous planning applications. Whilst I do not have the full details of the applications before me, they appear to be related to single storey extensions. In this case, although the footprint of the dwelling would not be increased, the dormers would increase the bulk and massing of the dwelling, particularly at first floor level. They would also alter the form of the dwelling and appear as prominent additions to the rear elevation.
8. I acknowledge that the dwelling lies within a ribbon of development consisting of a number of detached dwellings of different designs. This was a reason for the previous approvals allowing an increase in the size of the original building over and above 30%. However, as described above the previous approvals were for a form of development which did not increase the massing of the building at first floor level.
9. Taking the above factors into account, I conclude that the proposal would be a disproportionate addition to the dwelling and would not therefore fall within the exception set out in paragraph 154c) of the Framework. It therefore follows that it would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It would also be contrary to Policy PG3 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017) and Policy RUR11 of the SADPD which together and amongst other matters seek to protect the Green Belt.

Effect on openness

10. One of the five purposes of a Green Belt, outlined at paragraph 143 of the Framework, is that it should assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
11. The proposal would increase the mass and bulk of the dwelling at first floor level. Consequently, albeit to a limited degree, the proposal would, in both visual and spatial terms, harm the openness of the Green Belt.
12. I therefore conclude that the development would lead to a loss of Green Belt openness and would impact on the Green Belt purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, contrary to the Framework.

Other Considerations

13. The proposal would increase the size of the bedrooms on the first floor and allow the installation of a bathroom. The dormer windows would also allow for an additional exit from the dwelling in an emergency. I attach moderate weight to these matters.

Other Matters

14. I have had regard to the previous appeal decision¹ that I have been referred to. However, I note that there are clear material differences between the proposal and the individual circumstances surrounding it. These include that the appeal was for two dwellings and was considered under a different exception of paragraph 154 of the Framework.

Green Belt balance and Conclusion

15. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. The Framework states that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
16. For the reasons set out above, the development constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, there would be limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The other considerations put forward in support of the proposal attract moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
17. I conclude that the other considerations in this case do not clearly outweigh the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist and the proposal would conflict with the Framework, Policy PG3 and Policy RUR11 which together seek to protect the Green Belt.
18. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given the appeal should be dismissed.

H Senior

INSPECTOR

¹ Ref APP/R0660/W/21/3288419