



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 December 2025

by **P Storey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/25/3374778

High House Farm, Turner Lane, Addingham, Bradford LS29 0LJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr C Readshaw of Readshaw Interiors against City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/02252/FUL.
 - The development proposed is construction of single storey workshop and office extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission for construction of single storey workshop and office extension is refused.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal has been submitted against the Council's failure to determine the planning application within the statutory timescales. Although no formal decision was issued, the Council's Statement of Case outlines the reasons it would have given for refusing planning permission. I have taken these putative reasons into account in establishing the main issues.

Main Issues

3. 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 the development plan; and
 - if it would be inappropriate, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations that would amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Site and development context

4. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt and is a former working farm. It now accommodates an established furniture manufacturing business operating from a cluster of existing buildings, together with associated residential accommodation.
5. The proposed development is a single-storey extension to an existing workshop building. The submitted plans show that the existing building has a footprint of

216 sq.m, and the extension would add a further 270 sq.m, with a similar profile and height to the host structure. The resulting combined building would therefore have a footprint of 486 sq.m.

6. Two structures would be removed as part of the scheme: an existing shed with a footprint of 93 sq.m, and a marquee of 80 sq.m. Whilst the Council accepts the shed is lawful, it advises that the marquee is currently unauthorised.

Whether inappropriate development

7. Paragraph 154 of the Framework makes clear that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of its specified exceptions.
8. Paragraph 154.c) allows for the extension or alteration of a building, provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Neither the Framework nor the development plan defines a specific threshold for “disproportionate”, leaving the assessment to planning judgement.
9. The proposed extension would have a larger footprint than the retained host building, resulting in a combined structure more than double its footprint. Although the removal of the 93 sq.m shed would offset some of this increase, the lawful built footprint of the building would still increase by more than 50%. Although the extension would broadly match the host building’s height and profile, the magnitude of the horizontal spread and the resultant mass and volume would nevertheless represent a substantial enlargement.
10. The 80 sq.m marquee carries little weight in this assessment. The evidence indicates it is unauthorised, and my site observations confirm it is of a temporary and lightweight character, with very different implications on openness compared to that of a permanent building. In any event, including it in the calculation would still leave a significant net increase in footprint of approximately 25%, with a building that would be taller and bulkier than both structures it would replace. The effective increase in built form would therefore remain pronounced.
11. Accordingly, I find the proposal would amount to a disproportionate addition and would not meet the exception at paragraph 154.c). It would therefore be inappropriate development when assessed against this test.
12. Another possible exception to inappropriate development falls under paragraph 154.g). This permits the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, provided it would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
13. Although the site is previously developed, the scale and spatial extent of the proposed extension would have a pronounced impact on openness. Spatially, it represents a substantial increase in permanent built mass. Visually, the enlarged building would appear perceptibly larger in views from public vantage points such as Cocking Lane, even if those views are predominantly long-range. Although it would be read alongside the established building group, the expanded form would nonetheless create a heightened sense of enclosure and urbanisation within an open rural setting. These combined spatial and visual effects would, to my mind, amount to substantial harm to openness.
14. Even when the shed and marquee are taken into the baseline, the proposed extension would still create a markedly larger and more permanent form of

development than the structures it replaces. The marquee's temporary and lightweight nature limits its relevance, and the overall increase in built mass would continue to result in substantial harm. The proposal therefore fails to meet the exception at paragraph 154.g) of the Framework.

15. Accordingly, the proposal does not fall within any of the Framework's exceptions. I therefore conclude that it would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Other considerations

16. Paragraph 153 of the Framework establishes that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Such 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.
17. The appellant highlights several benefits, including safeguarding existing jobs, creating new employment opportunities, improving production efficiency, supporting the local supply chain, and providing clearer separation between manufacturing, storage and office functions. There is no dispute that this is a successful and well-established local enterprise, reflected in the support expressed by the Council's Growth Manager and other representations. The Framework attaches significant weight to supporting economic growth and the expansion of rural businesses, and these considerations weigh in favour of the proposal.
18. The appellant also refers to operational pressures such as congestion within the existing buildings, double-handling of materials, health-and-safety concerns, and the use of part of the on-site dwelling as temporary office space. However, no compelling evidence has been provided to demonstrate that these issues could not be resolved through internal reconfiguration, changes to working practices, or more efficient use of the existing accommodation. Nor has the appellant shown that alternative premises, potentially more suitable for the current scale of operations, have been explored or ruled out. No business case has been submitted to explain why remaining at this site is essential, and no sequential or alternative sites assessment has been undertaken. Without such information, I can give only limited weight to the operational needs put forward.
19. Although the Council's Landscape Architect did not object to the proposal, the extension would be utilitarian and of substantial scale. The removal of unsympathetic features and general tidying of the site may deliver a modest visual improvement, but this amounts to an absence of harm rather than a meaningful benefit. I therefore attach neutral or limited positive weight to this matter. These matters are also distinct from openness, where I have identified harm.
20. I have had regard to the appeal decisions cited by the appellant, but each case turns on its own facts. In this case, the quantum and spatial spread of development are such that Green Belt harm is identified, and the outcomes of other cases do not alter my conclusions on the specific circumstances before me.

Green Belt balance

21. I have found that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. I have also found harm to openness in spatial and visual terms. I attach

substantial weight to this harm. No other harms have been identified that add further weight.

22. Against those harms, I attach considerable weight to the economic and operational benefits put forward, including the support the proposal would provide to an established local business and the wider supply chain. However, there is limited substantive evidence that alternative solutions, such as internal reorganisation or relocation, have been reasonably explored. In the absence of such evidence, and given the scale of the permanent increase in built form, I am not persuaded that the identified benefits would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
23. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant's references to the December 2024 revisions to the Framework, including the shift to a 'substantial harm' threshold in paragraph 154.g) and the increased emphasis on supporting economic growth, these changes do not alter my conclusions. For the reasons already given, the proposal would still result in substantial harm to openness, and the strengthened economic policy support does not remove the requirement for the harm to be clearly outweighed. That has not been demonstrated in this case.
24. Accordingly, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.
25. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and there are no other considerations that would amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development. The proposal would therefore conflict with Strategic Core Policy 7 (SC7) of the Local Plan for the Bradford District, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, Adopted July 2017 (the CS), and Saved Policy GB1 of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan for the Bradford District, Adopted October 2005 (the UDP). Collectively, these policies seek to strictly control development within the Green Belt to protect its openness and distinctive rural character, establishing a strong presumption against inappropriate development unless justified by very special circumstances. It would also conflict with the relevant provisions of the Framework, which have previously been set out and have similar aims.

Conclusion

26. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed and planning permission refused.

P Storey

INSPECTOR