



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 February 2026

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/25/3375390

Iphigenia, Woodham Road, Rettendon, Wickford, Essex SS11 7QW

- 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 and Mrs G Kidd against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01020/FUL.
 - The development proposed is single storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the proposal 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 Green Belt identified in the Chelmsford Local Plan 2020 (LP). Policy DM11 states that planning permission will be granted for extensions to existing buildings in the Green Belt where it would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size and scale of the original building and would not be out of keeping with its context and surroundings nor result in any other harm.
4. LP Policy DM11 is broadly consistent with paragraph 154(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). This states that the extension of a building is not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It does not require consideration to be given to the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
5. The appeal site comprises a chalet style dwelling, originally built as a bungalow, within a large plot. The appellants own the large space between the appeal building and the neighbouring bungalow at Tyrone but the existing house

otherwise lies within a row of different dwelling types at varying distances from the road. The footprint of the original building is around 44sqm but roof extensions and rear additions over time have increased the size of the property. It is proposed to demolish the conservatory and construct a rear and side extension with a similar height to the existing house. This would create a dwelling with a total floor area of 184sqm, over 300% more than the original floor area.

6. Policy DM11 of the LP and the Framework do not employ a mathematical calculation for determining whether an addition would be disproportionate. However, when viewed cumulatively alongside the existing extensions, due to the increase in volume and floorspace, the appeal scheme would result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
7. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with the requirements in Policy DM11 of the LP. It would not constitute an exception as set out under paragraph 154(c) of the Framework and would thus be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Effect of the proposal on openness

8. As set out in the Framework, the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Openness is the counterpart of urban sprawl and often connotes the absence of development. It is an open textured term and can have both spatial and visual dimensions.
9. The proposed scheme would project a similar distance to the existing addition, but it would add a significant amount of built development to the side of it and be higher than the existing conservatory. Therefore, the house with the proposed side and rear extension would be more substantial in its form and volume than the existing building. This would harm the spatial openness of the Green Belt.
10. The appeal site lies adjacent to Woodham Road from where the appeal scheme would be clearly visible, particularly when travelling north-east bound. As such, the proposed extension would also impact on visual openness. Therefore, there would be a demonstrable loss of openness, in both visual and spatial terms.

Other considerations

11. The appellants state that the conservatory is inefficient and often uncomfortable to sit in due to temperature variations. The proposed addition would provide a larger living space for use by their extended family. Nevertheless, it has not been demonstrated that an improved living environment could not be achieved by a less harmful scheme. As such, I attribute only modest weight to this benefit.
12. There are references to other developments in the vicinity involving the provision of new dwellings and adaptations to existing houses. Given that some do not relate to additions to buildings and there is a lack of information on the cases that do, I am unable to compare them to the proposal before me. As such, I accord the presence of other developments nearby only limited weight.

Other Matters

13. The Council did not find harm or development plan conflict in relation to character and appearance and neighbouring living conditions. Further, there were no objections from neighbouring occupiers or the Parish Council. Nonetheless, even if

I were to agree with the Council on these points, the absence of harm would be a neutral matter which would not carry weight in favour of the proposed scheme.

Whether there would be Very Special Circumstances

14. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. There would also be adverse impacts on its openness. Substantial weight should be given to the harm caused to the Green Belt and very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm are clearly outweighed by other considerations.
15. I accord modest weight to the improved living environment and limited weight to the presence of other developments nearby. However, the other considerations would not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and loss of openness. Thus, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposed development do not exist. As such, it would be contrary to the Framework.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, the proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations, including the Framework and the very special circumstances test therein, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Wright

INSPECTOR