
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2026

by **H Miles BA (hons), MA, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 April 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/25/3374490

14 Lime Close, West Clandon, Surrey GU4 7UL

- 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 Mark Perry against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/P/00646.
 - The development proposed is single storey extensions to the front and rear following demolition of conservatory.
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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 2024 (the Framework) and any relevant development plan policies.
 - The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt.
 - 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 inappropriate development

3. The Framework states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate and thus should be approved only if very special circumstances exist, unless it falls within one of the exceptions in the Framework. This is broadly echoed by Policy P2 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: strategy and sites (2019) (LPSS)
4. Of relevance to this appeal, paragraph 154c) of the Framework provides an exception 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. Policy P2 of the LPSS also includes detail that the original building should be the building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or if no building existed on 1 July 1948, then the first building as it was originally built after this date.

5. 14 Lime Close was built in 1957 and was a single storey bungalow with a pitched roof and a broadly T shaped footprint with a cranked floorplan incorporating an attached garage. The parties agree that the original building had a floorspace of 163.4sqm. The property has been subsequently altered and extended with the demolition of the attached garage, utility and kitchen and single storey extensions forming the master bedroom and ensuite, a conservatory to the rear, a reconfigured dining, kitchen and utility room, as well as a front bay window and a roof to the entrance. There is also a detached double garage.
6. The proposed development seeks planning permission for a single storey rear extension which would replace the conservatory although it would be wider, longer and taller. It would have two gable end pitched roof features and a part flat roof. A front extension is also proposed which would adjoin the existing front projection and would have a pitched roof and gable. There is disagreement as to the size of the proposed floorplan with the appellant providing the more modest figure of 256sqm which would be a 57% increase in floor area.
7. There is no specific percentage increase which the Council consider to be disproportionate. Notwithstanding, the proposed extensions take the form of three projecting gables which would be large and prominent additions to this property. They would not be taller than the maximum ridge height, but taking into account the eaves and overall height, their scale would be sizeable in this context. Whilst the rear extension would not extend beyond the existing master bedroom, it would extend beyond the original rear elevation of bedroom 3. Taken together the additions to the original dwelling would add a marked increase in bulk and massing across its full width. Overall, the proposed development would result in a considerable increase in size over and above the original building and would be a disproportionate addition.
8. Paragraph 154e) of the Framework also provides an exception for limited infilling in villages. The guidance to Policy P2 of the LPSS sets out that this is the development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, the small-scale redevelopment of existing properties within such a frontage and infilling of small gaps within built development. I am not provided with substantive evidence in this case that satisfies me that the proposed extension to an existing property would meet this exception.
9. As such, for the reasons described above, the appeal scheme is inappropriate development in the Green Belt both in the terms of the Framework and Policy P2 of the LPSS, the aims of which are set out above.

Openness

10. Openness has both spatial and visual dimensions. The rear extension would be located behind the main house and would not be visible from the road. However considering its height, it would nevertheless be likely to be visible from adjoining plots. Moreover, the position of the front extension would be clearly seen from the street. As such there would be harm to visual openness. Furthermore, the proposed development would considerably increase the size of the dwelling for the reasons set out above. Even though it would partially replace the existing conservatory, it would result in development in an area that is currently open and would clearly increase the scale, mass and amount of built form in this location. Therefore, it would be harmful to spatial openness.

11. Consequently, for the reasons above, the proposed development would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. As such, it would be contrary to the Framework in this regard.

Other Considerations

12. I understand that the conservatory is of poor construction. Additionally, the proposed development would provide accommodation for a relative of the occupier who uses a wheelchair. This would be an important benefit to the appellant. However, considering the extent of the works proposed, there is little before me to suggest that the appeal proposal would be the only way to meet the particular needs of the appellant's family and that the works proposed are the minimum required to meet these needs, or to ensure the maintenance or repair of the existing building.
13. There are no restrictions to permitted development rights for the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse for properties in the green belt. Notwithstanding that, it is not in dispute that the proposed development would not be permitted development. Nevertheless, the appellant has put forward an alternative scheme, which occupies a greater footprint than the appeal scheme and is said to be permitted development. However, even if the existing en-suite was demolished, the 'single storey rear extension' shown would extend beyond the side south-east elevation of the hallway to bedroom three. It would also connect to the existing extension to the dining room. The single storey rear extension alone would be greater than half the width of the original dwelling. Furthermore, these proposals would be rear extensions up to 8m in length and have not been subject to a neighbour consultation scheme. As such, the submissions do not satisfy me that a similar development could be undertaken under permitted development. Nor does this alternative include a front extension and therefore it is notably different to the scheme before me now. Consequently, there is not a real prospect that this fallback position would take place, and the effect would be more harmful than the appeal proposal.
14. The appeal site is on a residential street, with large detached homes on both sides and I note that character and appearance is not a matter in dispute. My attention has been drawn to other properties including those at 4, 6 and 8 Lime Close where extensions are said to have been approved for between a 76% and 160% increase in floor area. These properties appear to be different in design and layout to no. 14 and I am not provided with the detail of the considerations in these cases. As such I do not have evidence that their circumstances are comparable to this appeal. There are also properties on Bennett Way which were permitted as limited infilling. However, for the reasons above this exception does not apply to this appeal and therefore the development and circumstances in that case are clearly different. As such these do not alter my decision.

Green Belt Balance

15. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. I have found harm to the Green Belt by reason of the proposed development's inappropriateness. There is also harm to the Green Belt due to the proposed development's effect on openness. These factors weigh substantially against the proposal.

16. The fallback scheme does not justify the development proposed for the reasons set out above and it attracts limited weight. I have also considered that the extension would provide accommodation for an occupant who is disabled. However, I am not satisfied that the proposed development would represent the only or least harmful option for these needs. Dismissing the appeal would interfere with the appellant's private rights to enjoyment of their possessions, to family life and their home and I am mindful of the Human Rights Act 1998. I have also had due regard to the protected characteristics in this appeal for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, including the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equal opportunity and foster good relations between those with protected characteristics and others. Nevertheless, these factors must be weighed against the wider public interest.
17. For the reasons given above, the development harms the Green Belt. I am satisfied that these legitimate aims can only be adequately safeguarded by the refusal of permission for the development proposed. Consequently, dismissing the appeal for these reasons would be a proportionate and justified outcome.
18. The other considerations outlined above do not, therefore, clearly outweigh the totality of the harm. As a result, very special circumstances to justify the development do not exist. As such, the proposed development conflicts with the Framework and Policy P2 of the LPSS, the aims of which are set out above.

Conclusion

19. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, to indicate that the appeal should be determined otherwise. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR