

**TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING ACT 1990**

**Planning, Design and Access
Statement**

**Single storey rear extension
with roof terrace**

**Beechurst
Caddington Common
Markyate
St Albans
AL3 8QF**

**Statement on behalf of
Mr & Mrs Titmuss**

October 2023

**Prepared by
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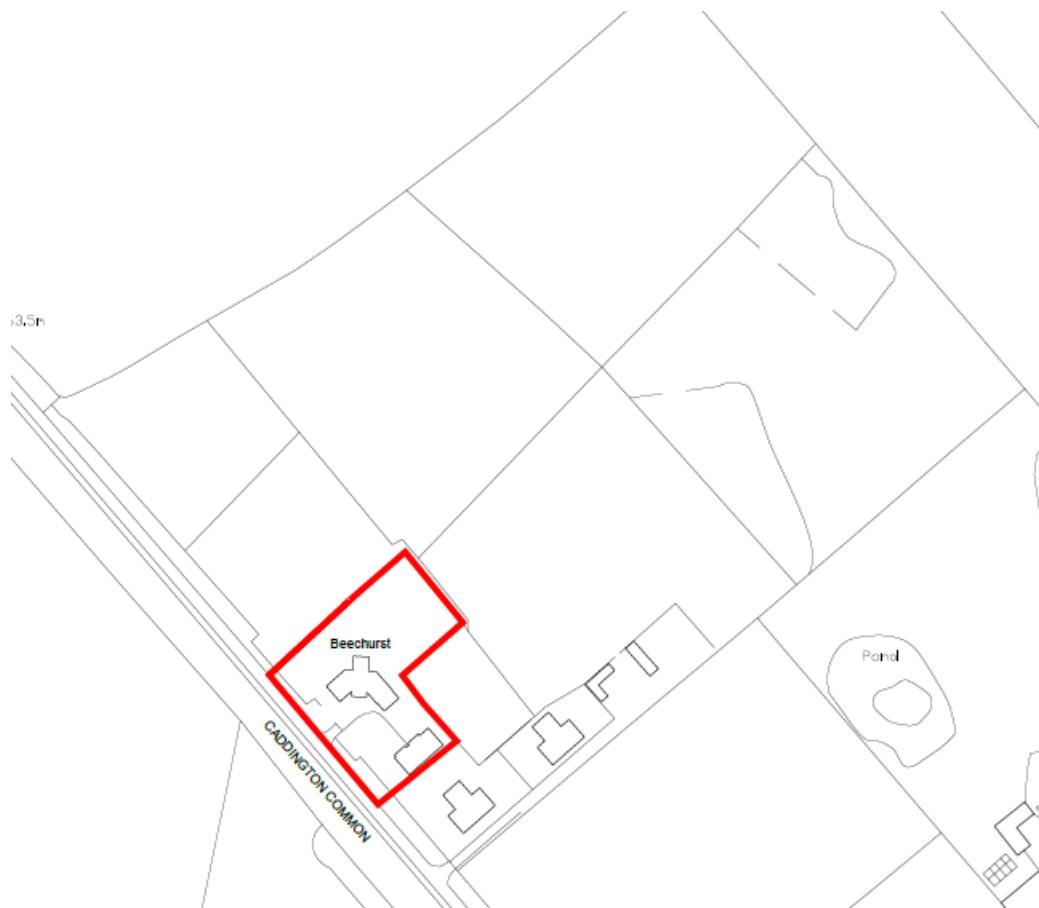
1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Hayden Todd and I am an Associate Director with Aitchison Raffety, Chartered Town Planning Consultants. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental and Resource Planning (Hons) and am a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- 1.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a Householder application for single storey rear extension with roof terrace at Beechurst, Caddington Common, Markyate, St Albans AL3 8QF.
- 1.3 This Statement provides an assessment of the proposed development against national and local planning policies and sets out the reasons why it is acceptable in planning terms.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDINGS

Application site

- 2.1 The application site is an "L" shaped residential plot, located on the northeast side of Caddington Common. It is on the edge of a small hamlet that is positioned approximately 1 kilometre northeast of Markyate and 1.5 kilometres south of Caddington.



Application site outlined in red

- 2.2 The site consists of a two storey detached dwelling that is set back from the highway on a generously sized plot. The dwelling has a main central gable section with two angled projections on either side. The first floor is partly set within the loft, resulting in a low profile. The side (east) roof slope extends down to ground floor level (catslide), forming an integral garage. The dwelling is constructed in facing brickwork, with timber cladding on the upper section, flint detailing and a tiled roof.



Front elevation of the existing dwelling

- 2.3 There is a single vehicle access from Caddington Common. A detached garage/outbuilding is located in the southern section of the site. The site frontage is partly covered in hardstanding, providing a large vehicle parking and manoeuvring area.

Surroundings and designations

- 2.4 To the north and east of the site are open fields. To the south are rows of residential properties extending along Caddington Common and Luton Road. This area has a rural character.

Designations

- 2.5 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It is in Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding. There are no topographical features that would constrain development.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for a single storey rear extension with roof terrace.
- 3.2 The proposed extension is positioned on the northern elevation of the building. It would have a simple flat roof form that measures 5m wide, by 2.3m deep and 2.9m high (although the house is set into the existing ground level by approximately 1m to the rear, reducing the visible height to 1.9m). Full height openings and glazed panels would be installed in the side and rear elevations of the extension, creating a lightweight appearance and replicating the existing

building. The extension would be constructed in matching brickwork, blending the proposal into the main building form.

- 3.3 The roof of the proposed extension would be used as a terrace which would require the installation of a balustrade constructed in glass.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application site

Basement (20/00378/FHA)

- 4.1 A planning application for construction of a basement was granted conditional permission on 27 April 2020. This permission was not implemented and has now lapsed.

Replacement dwelling (4/03423/16/FUL)

- 4.2 A planning application for a replacement dwelling with associated landscaping and demolition of existing outbuildings was granted conditional permission on 15 March 2017. This permission was implemented and resulted in the current building form. It is noted that the replacement dwelling had a smaller footprint and volume than the previous dwelling and associated structures that were demolished as part of the redevelopment.

Other relevant applications

Car Port at Hazelwood, Leafy Lane, West Leith (4/02241/17/FHA)

- 4.3 A planning application for a carport extension to side of garage was granted conditional permission on 25 October 2015. This application is relevant as it approved a larger extension on a recently constructed dwelling. No reference was made to the pre-existing, and now demolished, dwelling in the assessment of this application.

5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Local Planning Policy

- 5.1 The starting point for assessing development proposals is always the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states *“if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”*.
- 5.2 The Development Plan relevant to the assessment of this application consists of the Dacorum Borough Council Core Strategy (adopted 2013) and saved policies within the Local Plan (adopted 2004). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also an important planning consideration.

Core Strategy – Adopted 2013

- 5.3 The Core Strategy sets out the strategic vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the Borough for twenty years. Policies relevant to the assessment of this proposal include:
- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Policy NP1 | Supporting Development |
| Policy CS5 | The Green Belt |
| Policy CS10 | Quality of Settlement Design |
| Policy CS12 | Quality of Site Design |
| Policy CS13 | Quality of the Public Realm |
| Policy CS25 | Landscape Character |

Dacorum Local Plan – Adopted 2004

- 5.4 The Local Plan was adopted on 21 April 2004. A number of its policies have been saved and it remains part of the Development Plan. Policies relevant to the assessment of this proposal include:
- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy 22 | Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt and Rural Area |
| Policy 58 | Private Parking Provision |
| Appendix 5 | Parking Provision |
| Appendix 3 | Layout and Design of Residential Areas |
| Appendix 7 | Small-Scale House Extensions |

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 5.5 Central Government advice relevant to this application is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The most relevant aspects of the Framework are summarised below.
- 5.6 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.7 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8 identifies the three dimensions to sustainable development, which are economic, social and environmental.
- 5.8 Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development as the central aspect of planning policy and decision taking. In terms of determining development proposals, this means approving schemes which accord with the Development Plan without delay. Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 5.9 Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places', at paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 5.10 Section 13 'Protecting Green Belt land', states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 5.11 Paragraph 138 identifies the five key purposes of the Green Belt:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land
- 5.12 Paragraph 147 confirms that inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 5.13 Paragraph 149 states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, various exceptions to this are listed, which includes 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.
- 5.14 Paragraph 219 confirms that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. It states that due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the Plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The main issues to consider in the assessment of this application are the principle of the development, impact on character and appearance, neighbouring amenity and highway safety.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

- 6.2 The application site is in the Green Belt where the below policies are applicable.

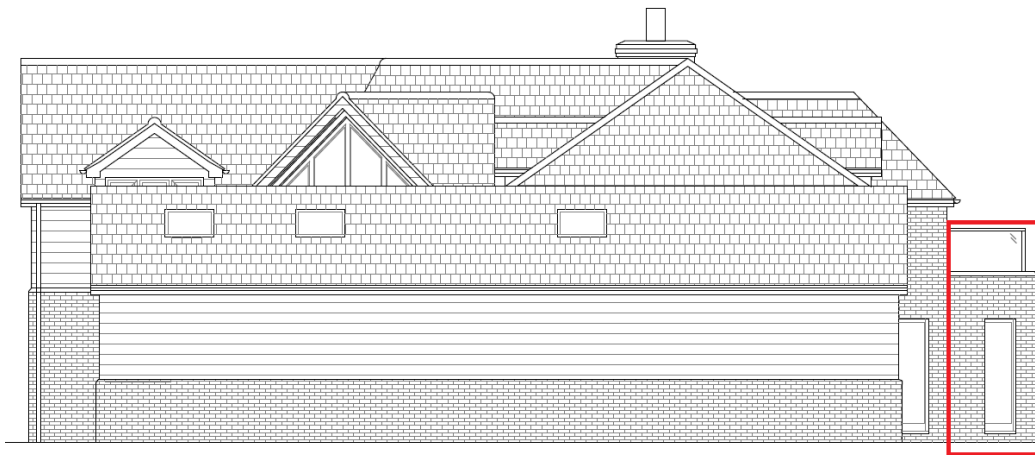
- 6.3 The NPPF places a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl, by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 6.4 Paragraph 147 of the NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 advises that local authorities should regard *'the construction of new buildings'* as inappropriate in the Green Belt. An exception to this includes the extension of a building, providing it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- 6.5 Policy 5 of the Core Strategy is broadly consistent with the NPPF and confirms that small scale developments will be permitted, which includes *'limited extensions to existing buildings'* providing they have no significant impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 6.6 Policy 22 of the Local Plan has been recognised by the Council as only partly consistent with the NPPF. It states that extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted if they are compact and well-related to the existing building, well designed, not visually intrusive in the skyline or on the open character, do not prejudice the retention of any significant trees or hedgerows, and are limited in size.
- 6.7 Having regard to the above, the NPPF and Development Plan permits proportionate extensions in the Green Belt. The proposal complies with this exception and is therefore an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

The proposal represents a proportionate addition to the original dwelling

- 6.8 The proposed development is for a very modestly sized rear extension, which would only amount to a 6 percent increase in floor space when compared to the original building. It is noted that Dacorum have withdrawn their previous percentage policy guidance (30%). However, this minor and inconsequential percentage increase and objective assessment provides clear and quantitative evidence that the proposal represents a limited and proportionate extension to the original dwelling.
- 6.9 The NPPF defines *'original building'* as the building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally. The dwelling was constructed approximately 5 years ago and has not been extended. As such, the existing form should be considered the *'original building'* for the purpose of this type of assessment. This interpretation is supported in an appeal decision at Harkaway, Annables Lane, Kinsbourne Green ([Appendix 1](#)) where the Inspector made the following observations:

Reference is made in the submissions to a previous dwelling on the site. However, the assessment in terms of any size increase relates to the original replacement building and not to the building it replaced, which no longer exists.

- 6.10 Whilst this appeal decision related to a proposal in a neighbouring District and was dismissed for a separate reason, the Inspector's findings are clear that the replacement dwelling should be considered the '*original building*', as the previous property no longer exists.
- 6.11 Notwithstanding the above, it is important to note that the application dwelling resulted in an overall reduction in footprint and volume when compared to the now demolished house and associated outbuildings, adding to the case the proposal would not result in a disproportionate increase.
- 6.12 Whilst quantitative assessments can provide useful information, it is also important to consider the visual aspects of the scheme. The proposal is for a modestly sized single storey extension with a low profile, which would have a subservient appearance when viewed in the context of this two storey detached dwelling. The proposal would only result in a very minor increase in the footprint and maintains the main form and character of the building. The use of glazing would give the extension a lightweight appearance, further reducing its visual prominence. As such, the proposed extension represents a limited and proportionate addition to the original dwelling.



The proposal is for a 'limited extension' to the original building

- 6.13 The proposal includes the formation of a terrace with associated balustrade on the roof of the proposed rear extension. This type of minor external alteration would not result in any additional floor space or have any implications on the perceived size of the extension or resulting dwelling. The balustrade would be modest in size and glazed, reducing its visual prominence and ensuring it would not add bulk or change the character of the dwelling.

Would not result in any other Green Belt harm

- 6.14 The proposed development would not result in any other harm or conflict with the five purposes of the Green Belt, as defined by paragraph 138 of the NPPF:
- The development would not result in the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas as the extension is contained within the existing residential curtilage
 - The extension would not result in neighbouring towns merging into one another

- The extension is very modest in size and would not encroach into the adjacent countryside
- It would not be harmful to the setting or special character of any historic towns
- The proposal would not have any implications on urban regeneration

6.15 Furthermore, as the proposal would not be inappropriate development, it follows that the question of the impact of the extension on openness of the Green Belt is not a separate issue to consider; the reason being that any impact on openness is accepted as being implicitly considered in the exceptions set out in the Framework. This interpretation is confirmed in the Court of Appeal judgment in the matter of *R (Lee Valley Regional Park Authority) v Epping Forest DC and Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd*.

Summary

6.16 In summary, the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building or result in any other harm. Therefore, the proposal constitutes an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt, in compliance with Policy 5 of the Core Strategy, Policy 22 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Character and appearance

6.17 The NPPF seeks a high quality of design and that new development is sympathetic to local character, while not preventing appropriate innovation or change.

6.18 Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is appropriately integrated with the character of the streetscape and respects the scale, bulk and layout of the adjoining properties.

6.19 Beechurst is a two storey dwelling set back from the highway on a generously sized plot. The proposal would introduce a modestly sized and carefully designed single storey extension that respects and responds appropriately to the character and appearance of the dwelling and surrounding area.

6.20 The proposed extension is modest in size with a low profile and respects the form and proportions of the dwelling. The proposal repeats the general arrangement on the opposite side of the dwelling, which has an original single storey projection. The extension is set-in a considerable distance from the boundaries and maintains the spacious character of this area. Additionally, the modest size, position and boundary treatment would reduce the extensions visual prominence, ensuring it preserves the character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area.

6.21 The proposal is appropriately integrated with the dwelling and would simply extend the building lines of the northern projection at ground floor level, resulting in a cohesive and sympathetic appearance.

- 6.22 The extension is of a design and style that respects the existing building and context. The simple form and articulation of the elevations, with full height openings, reflects the arrangement on other parts of the building and is compatible with the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.



The proposal is modest in size and respects the design of the host building

- 6.23 The proposed balustrade is modest in scale and size, reducing its visual prominence. The high quality and simple contemporary design would result in an aesthetically pleasing appearance that introduces some visual interest to this part of the property.
- 6.24 The new openings are compatible with the style and design of the existing fenestration.
- 6.25 The proposed extension would be constructed in matching materials, blending the proposal into the host building and surrounding area. The matching materials, which includes flint detailing, would add to the sympathetic and cohesive appearance.

Amenity

- 6.26 A core planning principle, as set out in the NPPF, is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, which aims to protect the living conditions of residents and states that new development should avoid a loss of privacy to surrounding properties.
- 6.27 The application dwelling is centrally positioned on a large plot and located a considerable distance from the common boundaries. The proposed extension and roof terrace are on the northern elevation of the dwelling where they are positioned over 30 metres from the closest residential property, which far exceeds the 23 metres local privacy standard. This considerable separation distance would ensure the proposal would not harm the visual or residential amenity of the surrounding occupiers, as it would not have an overbearing impact, harm light, or result in a loss of privacy.
- 6.28 The proposed development improves the layout of the property and provides a higher quality environment for modern day living, improving the amenity of the existing occupiers.

Highway Safety

- 6.29 The application site is a large residential property with space for at least three vehicles, in compliance with local standards. The proposal would not have any implications on the existing access or parking provision. As such, the proposal would not harm highway safety.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is for a single storey rear extension with roof terrace. The extension is modest in size and would not result in a disproportionate increase over and above the size of the original building. Therefore, the proposal constitutes an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.
- 7.2 A high quality design has been achieved. The proposal is sympathetically designed and would be compatible with the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.
- 7.3 The proposed development would not harm the visual or residential amenity of the surrounding occupiers.
- 7.4 The proposal would not have any implications on parking provision or highway safety.
- 7.5 For the reasons outlined in this Statement, the proposal therefore represents a sustainable form of development in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix 1

Appeal decision at Harkaway, Annables Lane, Kinsbourne Green



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2016

by Sue Glover BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 1 July 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/16/3149140

Harkaway, Annables Lane, Kinsbourne Green, Harpenden, AL5 3PS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Neil Hadley against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/15/3232, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and development plan policy
 - the effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it
 - the effect on the visual amenity of the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area
 - if the proposed development is inappropriate, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

Inappropriate development?

3. Paragraph 87 of the Framework states, as with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
 4. Paragraph 89 of the Framework indicates that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate. It sets out some exceptions. One exception is 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.
-

5. Saved Policy 13 of the City and District of St Albans District Local Plan Review (LPR) indicates that any extended dwelling in the Green Belt shall be modest in scale. An extension may be permitted unless it would create a building of significantly larger character. This policy is broadly consistent with the objectives of paragraph 89 of the Framework.
6. Reference is made in the submissions to a previous dwelling on the site. However, the assessment in terms of any size increase relates to the original replacement building and not to the building it replaced, which no longer exists. The replacement building has subsequently been extended with a dormer extension over the garage with a cubic content of about 4.68 metres.
7. The proposal is a 2-storey rear extension with an additional footprint of some 16 square metres, and a floor space increase of about 23%. There is some variation between the figures provided by the parties, but the additional mass of the dwelling would be in the order of 226 cubic metres. The original replacement dwelling without the dormer extension had a cubic content in the order of 874 cubic metres.
8. Compared to the size of the original substantial-sized replacement dwelling the proposal is clearly not a disproportionate addition in terms of the proposed increase in footprint, floor space and massing. Taken together with the dormer extension, there would still not be disproportionate additions compared to the size of the original replacement dwelling. There would not be a building of a significantly larger character than the original replacement dwelling.
9. The Supplementary Planning Guidance, Residential Extensions and Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt (SPG) provides guidance of between 20% and 40% in floor space for side and rear extensions over the original dwelling house. It also indicates that the cubic content should be limited to an increase of 300 cubic metres. The proposal, taken together with the dormer extension conforms to the SPG guidelines in this respect.
10. These matters lead me to the conclusion that there would not be disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The proposed extension is therefore not inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it does not conflict with the Framework or development plan policy in this respect.

The effect on openness of the Green Belt

11. Openness implies freedom from built development rather than the visual effect of the proposed extension in the rural area. It is one of the essential characteristics of the Green Belt as indicated in paragraph 79 of the Framework.
12. Taking into account my findings that the proposal would not be a disproportionate addition, the loss of openness beyond the original replacement dwelling would be modest and therefore not of significance in Green Belt terms. There would be no conflict with paragraph 79 of the Framework and no conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt as indicated in paragraph 80 of the Framework.

The effect on the visual amenity of the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area

13. There are a scattering of dwellings in the area, which for the most part are set well back from the lane in a rural and spacious setting. The replacement dwelling is a large house set back behind an extensive driveway within substantial grounds and with fields at either side. It appears as an isolated house on this side of the lane.
14. The proposed extension would infill a rear corner of the house and project beyond the central rear wing. It would add to the massing of the dwelling, most notably in visual terms the long continuous projection on the east side. The roof line would continue at the same height, and with the exception of the chimney, without any visual break, and without any degree of subservience. In this respect, there would not be a high quality of design of the existing building.
15. Whilst there is vegetation screening along the side field boundary and along the roadside from an easterly approach, I am mindful that the massing of the long side elevation would be far more perceptible in the winter months. The appearance of a significant mass of building on the east elevation would be at odds with the rural, spacious character of the area.
16. Taking these matters into account, I find material harm to the visual amenity of the Green Belt and to the character and appearance of the area. There is conflict with saved LPR Policy 69, which requires an adequately high standard of design.
17. LPR Policy 69 is compatible with paragraph 17 of the Framework that seeks to secure a high quality of design. There would be conflict with the Framework in this respect, as well as paragraph 81 that aims to retain and enhance the visual amenity of the Green Belt. I note that saved LPR Policy 72 relates to extensions in residential areas.

Other matters and conclusions

18. I am mindful that the appellant desires more living space for his growing family. There would also be no material effect on the living conditions of nearby residents. I have been told that there are other appeals that have been allowed, although I do not have the full details about these and circumstances may well vary. I have taken into account all other matters, including all the policies in the Framework, and other national planning policy and guidance.
19. Notwithstanding my findings that the proposal is not inappropriate development, and on openness and the other matters, the harm that I have identified to the character and appearance of the rural area and the visual amenity of the Green Belt is significant and overriding. The appeal does not succeed for these reasons.

Sue Glover

INSPECTOR