



GREEN BELT IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND POLICY STATEMENT

Proposed single storey rear extension to
existing dwelling

At 4 Back Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, L39 6SX

On Behalf of

Mr M McClean

November 2023

LANDOR Planning
Consultants Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Green Belt Impact Assessment and Policy Statement has been prepared by Landor Planning Consultants Ltd on behalf of Mr M McClean, the owner occupier of 4 Back Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, L39 6SX. It is submitted in support of an application for planning permission for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension with a flat roof.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Green Belt and Impact Policy Statement is to justify the proposal in the setting of current National and Local Planning Policy.
- 1.3 This Green Belt Impact Assessment and Policy Statement should be read in conjunction with the architectural plans prepared by Gary Morris.

2.0 LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located on the western side of Back Lane approximately 5 kilometres to the south of Ormskirk and 4.5 kilometres to the north of Maghull.
- 2.2 No. 4 Back Lane is a one of a pair of two-storey, symmetrical, semi-detached dwellings which originally was constructed as a terrace of four houses. Immediately adjacent to No. 4 is a short terrace of 3 dwellings, Nos 5-7 Back Lane. As a collective group these residential properties are of a similar age and style and surrounded by open countryside.
- 2.3 No. 4 Back Lane is located in the Green Belt in accordance with the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027.
- 2.4 The site is located in Flood Zone 1, a location with the lowest risk of flooding.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The development proposal is to construct a small, single storey rear extension with a flat roof. The additional accommodation will provide a garden room off the existing ground floor kitchen, dining and living room. The proposed extension has an external footprint of 13.91m² and a volume of 33.4m³.

4.0 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The Council’s Register of Building Control applications confirms that building works to convert Nos 3 and 4 Back Lane into one dwelling were completed on 27 October 1998. This constitutes the ‘original dwelling’ for planning assessment purposes. The volume of the ‘original dwelling’ is **294.4m³**.
- 4.2 A search of West Lancashire Council’s Public Access Planning Records indicates the following relevant site planning history:

Table 1: Site planning history (Source: Online Planning Register, courtesy of West Lancashire Borough Council)

Reference	Description	Outcome	Date
1998/0918	Detached garage at rear.	Approved	17/11/1998
2006/0768	Single storey rear extension	Approved	28/06/2006
2022/0414/FUL	Proposed first floor extension to rear of dwelling with additional single storey extension to rear.	Approved	11/08/2022
2023/0523/LDP	Single storey extension to existing outrigger to maximum projection to the rear of the existing house no greater than 6 metres.	Refused	07/06/2023

- 4.3 The site planning history indicates that planning permission has been granted for additional accommodation on three occasions since the ‘original dwelling’ was created in 1998. Planning permission for a detached garage was granted planning approval in 17/11/1998 and has been implemented. This outbuilding has a volume of **51.3m³**.
- 4.4 A single storey rear extension was granted planning permission on 28/06/2006 to which a first-floor rear extension was added subsequently together with a single storey rear porch. Both these additions were approved on 11/08/2022 and have been implemented with a combined volume of **64.7m³**.
- 4.5 The volume of the extensions and garage referred to above total **116m³**, representing a 39% increase compared to the volume of the original dwelling.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed development is to be considered in light of all extant local and national planning policy considerations. The planning policy framework for the area comprises the following national and local documents:

- West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document (DPD), (October 2013)

- National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023)
- Supplementary Planning Document- Design Guide (January 2008)
- Supplementary Planning Document-Development in the Green Belt (October 2015)

5.2 Planning law dictates that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan (adopted Local Plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Meanwhile, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

5.3 The application site is located outside of any settlement boundary, situated in the West Lancashire Green Belt. Therefore, the relevant policies of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD (WLLP) are:

- GN1: Settlement Boundaries;
- GN3: Criteria for Sustainable Development;

Policy Assessment

5.4 Policy GN1 of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 DPD relates to Settlement Boundaries. Section b) of the Policy concerns development outside of settlement boundaries. It states that, *“Development Proposals within the green belt will be assessed against national policy and any relevant Local Plan policies.”*

5.5 The application therefore falls to be determined by National Planning Policy Framework published in September 2023 (the Framework). In Paragraph 149, the Framework sets out that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt subject to the Exceptions set out in 149a)- 149h). The applicant relies on Paragraph 149 c) which allows:

c) 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.

5.6 The term, “original building’ is defined in the Glossary of The Framework as:

A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built.

5.7 As already noted in Paragraph 4.1 of this Statement, the ‘original building’ in this case corresponds the dwelling created on 27 October 1998 when works completed to convert the former Nos. 3 and 4 Back Lane into one dwelling were completed. The original building has a volume of 294.4m³.

Impact on the Green Belt

5.8 Assessing whether a proposed extension is disproportionate relative to the size of the original dwelling is a matter of judgement as the Framework does not provide a quantitative value or

guideline. Where such judgements are to be made National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) provides some assistance. NPPG Paragraph 64-001- 20190722 states that:

Assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. By way of example, the courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in making this assessment. These include, but are not limited to:

- *openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
- *the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and*
- *the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.*

- 5.9 Applying the above criteria, the application proposal for a single storey flat roof rear extension involves a modest spatial extension to the existing dwelling. The footprint of the extension, measures just 13.91m², equivalent to a small sun patio. As such the application proposal will have no impact on the scale or proportions of the host dwelling. Discretely sited to the rear of the property, it will have no visual impact on the street scene and would not be visible from Back Lane. Therefore, the proposal has no effect on the appreciable character or rural charm of the host property and its immediate environs.
- 5.10 With regard to the second criterion, it is acknowledged that the proposed extension is permanent and not intended to be reversible. However, it will provide a lasting and sustainable extension of the property designed to enhance the living conditions of the current and future occupiers of the property.
- 5.11 With regard to the third criterion, the application is neutral as no intensification of use is proposed.
- 5.12 With regard to local planning policy guidance, the SPD – Development in the Green Belt refers to a figure of 40% of the volume of the original building as a guide. It suggests that it is more likely that a development would have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt if this figure is exceeded. However, the SPD is equally clear in stating that there are occasions when extensions in excess of 40% volume of the original building will have less impact on openness than those with a lesser volume. This is explained by reference to Figures 1-3.
- 5.13 The applicant has calculated the volume of existing extensions and additions as representing 39% of the volume of the original building. This includes the garage, which is not original, and a rear porch and a two-storey rear extension. The proposed extension would add a further 10% taking it slightly over the 40% threshold. The applicant maintains that the overall extensions (existing and proposed) would not constitute disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

- 5.14 The reasons for this contention are based on the above analysis in respect of the spatial and visual elements referred to in NPPG. The LPA's SPD- Development in the Green Belt is consistent with NPPG. Likewise, it refers to the other factors which must be taken into account when assessing the impact of a proposed development on openness. In this case, regard is to be taken of the location of the proposed extension which is solely contained at the rear of the house. In addition, the proposed extension is set well within the gable ends of Nos. 1 and 4, because of the linear character of the 'building' taken as a whole. Finally, the approved rear extension is not visible or discernible from the main highway. It is also the case that the existing approved extension and garage have no discernible impact on the character of the property as seen from Back Lane. The character of the property is unaltered.
- 5.15 With regard to impact on the Green Belt and, having regard to all of the above matters, it is concluded that the application proposal meets the exception criteria of The Framework Paragraph 149c) in that it would not constitute disproportionate additions over and above the size of original building. As such, the proposal is not regarded as inappropriate development and otherwise complies with the requirements of the Framework and Policy GN1 of WLLP.

Design/Layout

- 5.16 Policy GN3 of the WLLP requires that new development should be of scale, mass and built form, which responds to the characteristics of the site, its surroundings and, in the case of extensions or alterations to existing buildings, the proposal should also relate to the existing building, in terms of design and materials.
- 5.17 The proposed single storey rear extensions, by virtue of location, scale, size and form is discrete and subservient to the original dwelling. It will be constructed in materials to match the host dwelling. Taking into consideration that the proposed development would be solely contained to the rear of the dwelling, this would not compromise the architectural style or character of the host building and would not result in incongruous additions within the street scene. The proposed development would accord with Policy GN3 of WLLP and SPD – Design Guide.

Impact on surrounding land uses

- 5.18 There is a neighbouring residential property (No. 1 Back Lane). There are no issues arising with regard to overlooking or loss of privacy. The application does not impact on the outlook from the adjoining property as it is a single storey extension with no side windows. It is also separated from the adjoining property by a solid boundary fence and established vegetation. The proposal is therefore in accordance with WLLP Policy GN3, Supplementary Planning Document- Design and the provisions of NPPF in this respect.

Highways and Access

- 5.19 There are no changes to the existing vehicular or in-curtilage car parking arrangements. The application proposal therefore accords with WLLP Policy IF2 and the provisions of NPPF.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 No 4 Back Lane is a one of a pair of two-storey, symmetrical, semi-detached dwellings. Extant alterations to the original dwelling include a rear porch, two storey rear extension and a detached garage.
- 6.2 The application proposal is to construct a small, single storey rear extension with a flat roof to the rear of the property. The additional accommodation will provide a garden room off the existing ground floor kitchen, dining and living room.
- 6.3 When assessed against the Framework and relevant NPPG criteria the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is very limited and in terms of visual impact negligible. The proposal would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and no other harm has been identified.
- 6.4 Whilst the volume of the proposed extension together with the volume of previously approved extension and garage exceeds the 40% volume of the original house, this threshold figure is referred to in the SPD as a guide only. The SPD, when referring to development and impacts on the Green Belt, advises that other factors must also be considered. In this case the location of the proposed extension is solely contained to the rear of the house and is set well within the gable ends of Nos. 1 and 4, because of the linear character of the 'building'. Moreover, the approved rear extension to No 4 is not visible from the main highway. All previously approved extensions and alterations are similarly obscured from the main highway and as a result the character and appearance of the property is unaltered from when originally constructed.
- 6.5 For all the reasons set out in the Statement, the applicant contends that the proposal meets the requirements of the Framework and Policies GN1 and GN3 of WLLP and planning permission should be granted.