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167 Wardle Road
Wardle
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Green Belt Assessment

PROPOSED TWO STOREY SIDE & SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION

Introduction

This green belt assessment has been written to support the associated Planning application for the above property.

The assessment will look to provide an overview of the site, its location and significance within the allocated green belt space as well as assess the proposals impact on the area and green belt while referencing relevant Planning Policy set forth by the Local Authority.

Site Analysis

The site is located along Wardle Road in Wardle, Rochdale. Immediately facing a row of similar style properties. Wardle road is straddled by open fields and the green belt washes over. The site belongs to a row of semidetached properties lining the eastern side of Wardle Road. Each dwelling along the road offers a generally consistent street scene, aesthetically with a predominant wash of red brick facades and white Upvc window and door frames.

Aerial site photographs illustrate that most dwellings along the row have been developed in some way with extensions being situated mainly to the rear and sides of the properties with a mixture of single and two storey extensions.

Planning Policy

RMBC provides guidance to developments within the Green Belt. A number of Local and National policy aids in the design of developments in the green belt as well as provides guidance to restrict inappropriate development on sites belonging to the green belt.

As per RMBC Unitary Development Plan (2016), policy G/D/2 outlines that the Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development in order to maintain the framework of open land separating and surrounding the urban areas of the borough.

Additionally Core Strategy policy G4 seeks to restrict development within the Green Belt to the limited types of development which are deemed appropriate by national planning policies unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF state that, 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. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special 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.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF indicates that "a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt", subject to the following exceptions:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- **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;**
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - – not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Therefore, the main consideration in assessing the principle of development is whether the proposed scheme constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and, if so, whether very special circumstances have been demonstrated which may outweigh the presumption against development.

In respect of the above policy guidance, Section 5.20 of the of the Council's adopted 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development '(2016) Supplementary Planning Document states that normally, in principle, extensions that result in up to a 35% increase in floor space or volume over and above the original dwelling would normally be considered appropriate and not disproportionate (this calculation would include previous extensions to the original dwelling, which is defined as the dwelling as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948). However, the guidance goes on to state that the characteristics of properties and proposals will vary significantly and there may be instances when a 35% increase would be considered disproportionate and other occasions when a greater than 35% increase may be considered proportionate.

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF also states that “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”.

The five purposes of including land in the Green Belt are outlined in paragraph 80 of the NPPF as follows:

- 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; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

Proposal

The proposal looks to provide a two storey side and single storey rear extension to the host dwelling increasing the overall living space to the rear and side of the dwelling. In addition to this, the proposal seeks to build over an existing side garage area that was built at the same time the dwelling was built. This volume helps within the mass calculations and works very close to the 35% increase statement within the green belt policy (calculations and volumes are indicated on the submitted drawings).

Assessment

When applying Planning Policy to the proposal, it is key to first understand the nature of the proposal largely matches that of developments to houses in the immediate area, this would indicate that the proposed development is considered appropriate in principle.

The combined nature of the proposal allows the extension to sit comfortably within the site while respecting the scale of the host dwelling in accordance with the policy and volume increase, whilst taking in to account the removal of the detached garage and the existing kitchen to the rear. The scale of the proposal is considered to have a balanced impact, when viewed with the volume calculations provided, on the green belt given the amount of development in the area. The extension does not contribute to urban sprawl and conversely looks to respect the Green Belt and policy and also provide an opportunity for current and future users of the site to enjoy the green belt to its fullest.

With regards to appropriateness of the development, as previously mentioned, the development constitutes additional residential living space within a single and two storey design which, as evidenced by local development, is an appropriate use.

EXISTING VOLUME CALCULATIONS

TOTAL = 410m³

PROPOSED VOLUME CALCULATIONS

Total Existing = 410m³

Total Proposed = 134m³

Total Previous Extension = 24m³

Final Total Proposed (134 + 24) = 158m³

This Equates to a Total Extended Volume of 38%

As described the proposed volume is 3% over the required 35% volume increase to the host dwelling set out within RMBC supplementary planning document and although does not comply fully with section 'C' of Paragraph 145 of the NPPF, the removal of 3% extended area is not significant and would not necessarily reduce the major bulk of the extension within the greenbelt.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, it is the opinion of this report that the development, by virtue of its scale and design, meets the requirements set forth in the SPD guidance. It is considered that the proposal does not consist of inappropriate development given the proposal is very close to the 35% requirement and does not contribute any negative factors to the green belt. It is also considered the development has little to no impact on the openness of the green belt given the nature of the extension and the scale and design of approved / allowed development within the area since 2016.