
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 May 2025

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 May 2025

Appeal Ref: D/6000145

Proposal: Replacement roof with minor extensions and the installation of solar panels on the southern roofslope at Suttons Farm, Tomkyns Lane, Upminster, Havering RM14 1TP

Application Ref: P1293.24.

Decision – The appeal is dismissed

Preliminary Matters

1. The description of development above is taken from the Council's decision notice as this provides a more accurate reflection of the proposals.

Reasons

Issue – Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt

2. The appeal property has previously been subject to substantial extensions when compared to the scale and volume of the original dwelling¹. The proposal would further increase the height and volume of the appeal building. Although a modest addition, when combined with previous works, the proposal would be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.
3. Accordingly, it would not meet the relevant exception² of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and is therefore inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful.

Issue – The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

4. Openness is an essential characteristic of the Green Belt that has spatial as well as visual aspects. The appeal property is clearly visible from the adjacent highway. Notwithstanding the existence of other built form within the vicinity of the appeal site, the openness of the Green Belt is clearly evident around the property and the wider area.
5. The appeal proposal would increase the volume, height and massing of the existing building and in doing so would result in a harmful loss of openness, albeit this would be limited given the scale of the proposal. This factor weighs somewhat against the appeal scheme.

¹ As of 1 July 1948.

² Paragraph 154c of the Framework.

Issue – Whether other considerations clearly outweigh the harm resulting from the inappropriate development, to amount to very special circumstances

6. The proposed roof extension would be of a sympathetic design that would improve the character and appearance of the host property. It would also allow for the maximisation of PV panels on the southern slope of the roof, thereby generating renewable energy and reducing carbon emissions. Given the scale of the proposal the extent of renewable energy benefits though is likely to be somewhat limited.
7. The proposal would also not harm the character or appearance of the wider surrounding area. Additionally, it would offer improved accommodation and ease of maintenance for residents of the appeal property.

Green Belt Balance and Conclusion

8. The proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would result in a small loss of openness, in line with the Framework these matters carry substantial weight. Together the matters that the appellant has put forward attract modest weight, but do not amount to very special circumstances that are needed to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR