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## **Green Belt Assessment**

Proposed Single Storey Side Extension

at

Davises Farm, Mather Road, Bury BL9 6TJ

## INTRODUCTION

1. This report is an assessment of the Green Belt considerations relevant to the application to Bury Council, reference 71355 to erect a single storey side extension to the existing dwelling.

## PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

2. The application site is in the Greater Manchester Green Belt which was first established in the Greater Manchester Structure Plan in 1981 and subsequently detailed in the Greater Manchester Green Belt Local Plan 1984. It was first incorporated in the current adopted development plan for the area in the Bury UDP. The Bury UDP policies on Green Belt, including Policy OL1, were consistent with government policy at the time as set out in PPG2. PPG2 was withdrawn in 2012 in favour of the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy OL1 has subsequently been replaced by Policy JP-G9 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), which was formally adopted in March 2024. Policy JP-G9 does not seek to replicate the detailed guidance in NPPF on development in the Green Belt.
3. The current national policy on Green Belts is set out in Section 13 of the December 2024 edition of the NPPF, and the section relevant to this planning application is set out at §154. This established a general presumption that the erection of new buildings is inappropriate in the Green Belt but provides exceptions to this, including:

*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;*

4. The government's National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides details on the implementation of national planning policy, including changes made on 22/07/2019, to take account of a number of High Court decisions on matters affecting the openness of the Green Belt<sup>1</sup>. The guidance now includes:

*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:*

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<sup>1</sup> PPG Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722

- *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. Bury Council provides detailed guidance on extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt in its Development Control Policy Note 8. Whilst it was adopted in 2007, it remains relevant as Green Belt policy on extensions has not changed in a way that would render the Council's approach to extensions out-of-date.
6. It states at §4.25:

*Residential extensions should be proportionate to the size of the original dwelling, excluding any previous extensions carried out under permitted development rights or with planning permission. In general terms, the Council may allow an extension to be up to a third of the volume of the original dwelling. However, each proposal will be considered on its own merits and even an increase up to a third may not be appropriate in certain situations (e.g. if the site is a particularly sensitive area or if there are other amenity issues).*

## **THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS**

7. The application proposals are for a single-storey residential extension on the southern gable of the dwelling. The dwelling as originally built had a volume of 304.0m<sup>3</sup> and had subsequently benefitted from an extension of 26.9m<sup>3</sup> forming a porch. The proposed further extension has a volume of 74.4m<sup>3</sup> which, together with the porch, gives a total extension volume of 101.3m<sup>3</sup>. This is less than a third of the volume of the dwelling as originally built.
8. The scale and siting of the proposed extension ensures that it remains subservient to the main dwelling, and this is emphasised by it being set back from the main elevation. The facing materials that will be used in its construction will match those of the original dwelling.

## IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT

9. The scale of the proposed extension is compliant with the council's policy guidance and there are no site-specific considerations that indicate a more restrictive policy should be applied. The site forms part of a well-contained group of several dwellings and outbuildings on the site of the former Davises Farm. This group is not overlooked from any other properties and the only public viewpoint is from the PROW<sup>2</sup> along the access lane. In approaching the site along the PROW from the south, the group of buildings, including the proposed extension, is largely screened from view by a mature evergreen hedgerow and other planting. Past this screen, the extension will be seen in the context of adjacent buildings, to which it will form only a small addition. Its site is significantly below the level of the lane, and being only a single storey in height, the extension will have even less visual impact than if the viewpoint were at site level rather than elevated.

## CONCLUSIONS

10. The above assessment shows that the proposed extension is of a size and volume that does not exceed the LPA's guidance on the scale of residential extensions in the Green Belt, and its form, location or visibility to not require a more restrictive policy to be applied. There is therefore no Green Belt reason why the proposal should be considered as inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore there is no Green Belt reason why planning permission should not be forthcoming.

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<sup>2</sup> Public Right of Way