

Representations

Coppull Parish Council raises no objections.

In total 2 representations have been received which are summarised below

Objection

Total No. received: 2

- No objection to the proposal to develop the existing garage to a first floor extension
- Object to the extension of the width of the existing garage.
- Extension will go right up to neighbouring boundary and effect the access only area
- Overlooking to bedroom window
- Previous permissions meant that the 2011 proposal was well in excess of the provisions of the then PPG2: Green Belts and also local policies relating to residential extensions in the Green Belt.
- The very special circumstances that were demonstrated to allow the application were based upon a doctor's recommendation and that concluded that the ground floor accommodation comprising a bedroom and bathroom is required in this case as the feasibility of helping the applicant's daughter to the existing first floor accommodation is becoming severely less practicable.
- The statement that accompanies the application indicates that the medical condition that gave rise to the earlier extension has in some way changed and no comment can be made about that. The previous extension was located in such a way as to have little impact outside the site.
- Clearly the applicants have to fall back on very special circumstances and it is anticipated, if it has not already been done so, that the medical details will be supplied to back up the application and there is no doubt that nobody would want to resist a development on those grounds.
- One question that has to be raised particularly in the light of the explanation of the medical condition is why the extension in 2011 was inadequate when presumably what was applied for was the one that was granted.
- The applicants now have to make fairly radical changes to their dwelling to accommodate the latest scheme involving losing parking spaces in a location which already deals with accesses to two adjoining properties.
- The special care needs of the applicants' daughter in terms of carers/health visitors means that there can be a number of cars parked on the driveway at any one time and this new proposal in terms of its location can only exacerbate the situation.
- It is questionable why new improved accommodation could not be located in a ground level location elsewhere in what is a fairly generous curtilage. It would be possible to preserve the garage and help towards alleviating any potential traffic conflict.
- The NPPF makes it clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt (paragraph 87) and when considering planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt (paragraph 88). Furthermore, the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness.
- The test is whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, such as parking, traffic generation, noise disturbance from comings and goings, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to very special circumstances necessary to justify the developments.

Consultees

Consultee	Summary of Comments received
Coal Authority	Standing Advice
CBC Conservation Officer	<p>The proposals at Ivy Cottage have the potential to have an impact upon the significance of Lynwood, which is a Grade II listed building and therefore a designated heritage asset as defined by the Framework.</p> <p>A Heritage Assessment has been submitted in support of the application and the Conservation Officer concludes that the assessment is acceptable and the proposals will not adversely impact the designated heritage asset or its setting.</p>

Assessment

Principle of the Development

Background information

1. The application site comprises Ivy Cottage which is one in a small group of properties positioned off a lengthy track from Preston Road. The site is to the south of Coppull and is within close proximity to the borough boundary with Wigan.
2. The application dwelling comprises a two storey converted barn within a rural area of the borough. The dwelling has stone elevations, a slate roof and wooden double glazed windows. From the front the dwelling retains some features of the original barn, however, the property has been extended on numerous occasions in the past, which has somewhat eroded its character.
3. In terms of recent planning history, a planning application was submitted and approved in 2011 (ref: 11/00870/FUL) for a "*single storey side/rear extension to provide disabled accommodation*". The application was accompanied by a Disability Living Allowance statement and a signed doctor's letter stating that the applicant's daughter needed to be looked after in ground floor accommodation. The case presented in support of that application amounted to very special circumstances in the context of inappropriate development within the Green Belt.
4. The current application has been submitted because the circumstances of the applicant's daughter have now changed significantly in the intervening period and the previously approved extension has not been proven to work given the deteriorating nature of the applicant's daughter's disability.
5. The applicant states that their daughter is now maturing into a young lady with a medical condition that is unpredictable and the extension approved by the Local Planning Authority in 2011, no longer meets her requirements either now or going forward.
6. The current application has therefore been submitted in response to the changing personal circumstances and again the application is supported by medical reports from a doctor and professor.

Principle of the development

7. The application site is within the Green Belt as identified by the Adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan.
8. Policy DC1 of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review (which was adopted in relation to Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts) deals with the types of development which can be considered appropriate in the Green Belt. Policy DC1 states that planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development except in a case of very special circumstances. The Framework is the current national guidance concerning Green Belt development.
9. Policy DC8A relates to extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt and confirms that the proposed extension should not result in a significant increase in the volume of the original dwelling. This is reiterated in Policy HS5 of the emerging Local Plan which confirms that house extensions within the Green Belt should not result in a disproportionate increase in the volume of the original dwelling. Increases of up to 50% (volume) are not considered disproportionate.
10. At paragraph 79 The Framework 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*".
11. Paragraph 80 of The Framework sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt, including amongst other things, "*to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*".

12. Paragraph 89 of The Framework prescribes certain types of development which can be considered appropriate within the Green Belt. Where development does not fall within the appropriate types of development, The Framework states that it must be inappropriate development by definition. The Framework goes further to state that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances'.
13. The Framework also states that 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, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
14. Bullet point 3, paragraph 89 of The Framework states that the extension or alteration of a building can be appropriate development within the Green Belt provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
15. To quantify this policy requirement, the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document (RDSPD) states that any extensions should not exceed a 50% increase in volume over that of the original building. Disproportionate additions are inappropriate development within the Green Belt and are harmful to the open and rural character of the area.
16. As established with previous applications at this site, the converted barn has been extended significantly over recent years and so any further extensions to it would result in disproportionate additions to it. As such, the proposal must be inappropriate development by definition and therefore could only be approved in the event very special circumstances were presented to clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm.
17. As established at the outset of this report, the proposed extension has been submitted in this case to alleviate changing difficulties faced by the family in respect of the applicant's disabled daughter.
18. The applicant states that the proposed extension is required to secure and enhance specific residential accommodation and provide on-site care facilities for specialist 'carers' to be able to attend. As the applicant's daughter grows older, the level of care and intensity of care also grows.
19. The applicant's daughter was born with a severe disability and due to the nature of her condition is unable to walk, talk or eat independently. She is fully dependant on others for her care, and always will be. The applicant's daughter now requires 24 hour attention and as she gets older, requires 2 carers at any one time.
20. The proposed extension would help alleviate difficulties experienced by the applicant's daughter in respect of her irregular sleeping patterns. It is argued the proposed arrangement would provide facilities for the applicant's daughter to be able to stay at the family home rather than having to go into residential care and to benefit from sleep when activity is going on in the house throughout the day.
21. The creation of the additional room will allow the applicant's daughter to have physio treatment at home and the first floor bedroom will hopefully help her sleep patterns and allow for proper care. The ground floor and first floor of the modified dwelling would be linked by a purpose built lift to assist with moving and handling.
22. In respect of the previously approved extension, the applicant states that this unfortunately has not resulted in facilities which were originally envisaged to accommodate for their daughter's long-term needs and has turned out unworkable.

23. Whilst the applicants' specific requirements have been taken into account, it is considered that minimal impact on the openness of the Green Belt is also an important consideration and in this regard several options have been discussed with the applicants and their agent. One of these options included utilising the existing ground floor accommodation which was constructed specifically for their daughter's needs and creating a first floor bedroom over which would reduce the extent of new built development and enable an integration of accommodation already created.
24. In response to this suggestion, 2 letters have been provided, one from a doctor and one from a professor in Child Health and Paediatric Endocrinology. The letters state that the applicants' daughter needs to be rehoused in separate accommodation attached to the house consisting of two rooms. A large standard bedroom providing enough space for a carer to stay and a second room which can be used as a play area for physiotherapy and occupational therapy.
25. The doctor does not consider that building on top of the existing accommodation is a good idea as building work may take 2-3 months to complete which will be disturbing and unsettling for the applicants' daughter and could have a detrimental effect on her health. The professor considers that accommodation separate to other areas within the house will give the applicants' daughter the privacy she deserves.
26. First floor accommodation at the rear of the property would involve less built development than the originally submitted proposals. In response to this the plans have been amended since originally submitted so that the proposal no longer involves increasing the width of the garage (so that at ground floor the proposals purely involve converting the garage) and consequently the width of the proposed first floor extension has been reduced.
27. The volume of the new built development (approximately 75.7m³) roughly equates to the amount of accommodation which would be provided if a first floor rear extension (approximately 72.93m³) was constructed and as such it is considered that the harm to the openness of the Green Belt would be very similar for either a side/ rear extension.
28. It is noted that the proposed conversion of the garage, which is an existing built feature, would in itself have no impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
29. It is regrettable that the accommodation already constructed for the applicants' daughter has not met her needs. However it is considered that the 'very special circumstances' submitted by the applicant demonstrate that the proposed extension is essential for their daughter and outweigh the harm that would be caused to the openness of the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. In terms of specific harm to the openness of the Green Belt and notwithstanding the 'very special circumstances', the issue of the design, scale and impact on the locality is assessed below.

Design and impact on the streetscene

30. At a national level The Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
31. The Framework also states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments (amongst other things) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.
32. The Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy identifies the delivery of good quality new housing as a priority and states that this will include applying the 'Code for Sustainable Homes' to encourage an overall increase in the sustainability and efficiency of new housing. Policy 6 of the Core Strategy seeks to improve the quality of housing by, inter alia, the use of higher standards of construction.
33. Policy 17 of the Core Strategy states that the design of new buildings will be expected to take account of the character and appearance of the local area. It states that this will

include a consideration of siting, layout, massing, scale, design, materials, building to plot ratio and landscaping. Policy 17 also seeks to promote designs that will be adaptable to climate change and which adopt the principles of sustainable construction.

34. Policy GN5 of the Chorley Borough Local Plan Review stipulates that the design of proposed developments will be expected to be well related to their surroundings.
35. Policy DC8A of the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003 states that the siting, design, external materials and final character of the dwelling do not detract from its surroundings.
36. Policy BNE1 of the emerging Local Plan (2012-2026) outlines the design criteria for new development, stating that a proposal should not have a significant detrimental impact on the streetscene by virtue of its density, siting, layout, building plot ratio, height, scale and massing, design, materials orientation, use of materials.
37. Policy BNE5 of the emerging Local Plan (2012-2026) states that house extensions should respect the existing house and the surrounding buildings in terms of scale, size, design and facing materials, without innovative and original design features being stifled;
38. The proposals incorporate a first floor extension above the existing garage and removal of the existing garage door. The design matches the character and appearance of the original dwellinghouse and the ridge is set lower than the original dwellinghouse so the extension appears subordinate to the original dwelling. As such from a design perspective the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

Impact on the neighbour amenity

39. At a national level, The Framework states within one of its twelve core planning principles that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
40. Policy 17 of the Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy states that the design of new development should take account of the character and appearance of the local area, including ensuring that the amenities of occupiers of the development will not be adversely affected by neighbouring uses and vice versa. The Adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy also states that development should be sympathetic to surrounding land uses and occupiers, and should not result in demonstrable harm to the amenities of the local area.
41. Policy BNE1 of the emerging Local Plan (2012-2026) states that new development should not cause harm to any neighbouring property by virtue of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact.
42. Policy BNE5 of the emerging Local Plan (2012-2026) states that house extensions should not result in an unacceptable adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring properties through overlooking, loss of privacy or reduction of daylight.
43. The Householder Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (HDG) asserts that extensions should be located, and windows orientated, to prevent direct overlooking of habitable rooms or private amenity space that belong to nearby properties. Specifically, it states that windows to habitable rooms at first floor level should be a minimum of 10m from the boundary they face and a minimum of 21m should be maintained between parallel windows of habitable rooms.
44. The immediate neighbours to the dwelling are Rowan Cottage, Lynwood and The Grange. Rowan Cottage is located opposite the application site however as the proposed new first floor windows are no nearer to the neighbouring dwelling than the existing situation on site, and the proposals will not enable overlooking of private amenity space, it is not considered that the proposals will adversely impact on the amenities of the neighbours at Rowan Cottage.

45. Lynwood is located approximately 11m (at its nearest point) to the west of the application property and although the proposed extension will incorporate first floor accommodation closer to the boundary with this property, the width of the extension has been reduced, which was one concern raised.
46. Neighbours have expressed concerns about loss of privacy and it was suggested to the agents/ applicants that the wrap around window should be removed from the scheme to remove the perceived loss of privacy. Although a plan was submitted detailing the removal of this window for which neighbours were incorrectly re-notified about, it is now understood that the applicants do not want to take this option forward and want the wrap around side window to be retained. Neighbours have been informed of this and the plans for consideration include a wraparound window.
47. The angle and siting of the window does not allow any direct views of private amenity space or direct views into habitable room windows and whilst it is acknowledged that, due to the proximity of the window to the boundary, there may be a perceived loss of privacy, it is considered that any loss of privacy to that currently enjoyed would not be so severe as to warrant refusal of the application on these grounds.
48. The Grange is located approximately 21m (at its nearest point) to the rear (south) of the application property. Although first floor rear windows are proposed, they are no closer to the common boundary than the existing rear first floor windows and do not enable overlooking of private amenity space. As such it is not considered that the proposals will adversely impact on the neighbours amenities.
49. It is not considered that the proposals will adversely impact on the neighbours' amenities and as such are considered to be acceptable.

Impact on highways, access and parking

50. In respect of highway safety, The Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impact of development is severe.
51. Policy BNE5 of the emerging Local Plan (2012-2026) states that house extensions should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety.
52. Policy ST4 of the emerging Local Plan states that development will need to make parking provision in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix D of the Plan. However, locations that are considered to be more sustainable and are well served by public transport may be considered appropriate for lower levels of provision. In addition, local circumstances will be taken into consideration.
53. Policy ST4 of the emerging Local Plan states that off-street parking should generally be provided at a ratio of 2 spaces for a two or three bed dwelling, and 3 spaces for a larger property, including garages. It also states that car parking spaces occupy a space of 2.5 metres by 5.5 metres and spaces in front of a garage should be 2.5 metres by 6 metres.
54. The proposals will involve the conversion of the garage which will result in the loss of parking at the site however the agent has provided a plan that demonstrates that there is space for 4 vehicles which ensures that an adequate level of parking is provided on the site. As such the proposals comply with Policy ST4.

Heritage

55. The Conservation Officer has reviewed the heritage assessment and confirmed that the submitted information is acceptable and the proposals will not adversely impact on either the heritage asset or its setting.

Community Infrastructure Levy

56. The agent has submitted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Liability Form with this application; however, the floor space created is below the 100m² figure for house extensions which would not be CIL liable.

Overall Conclusion

57. The proposal would involve inappropriate development within the Green Belt. However as a result of the 'very special circumstances' put forward by the applicant, in accordance with the Framework, the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable in 'principle' given the specific needs of the applicants and their daughter.

58. In terms of the impact of the extension on the openness of the Green Belt, its position above the existing garage means that it will not be prominent in the wider landscape.

59. With regards to design and scale, the extension is considered to be of satisfactory design, and it is considered that it will not adversely impact on the living conditions of local residents given the juxtaposition of the dwellings.

60. Accordingly it is recommended that the application is approved.

Planning Policies

61. In accordance with s.38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan (the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, the Adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review 2003 and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Consideration of the proposals has had regard to guidance contained with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the development plan and the emerging Local Plan 2012-2026. The specific policies/ guidance considerations are contained within the body of the report.

Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
87/00175/FUL	Conversion of coach house to dwelling	Approve	May 1987
95/00567/FUL	Single-storey rear extension	Approve	October 1995
00/00766/FUL	Single storey rear extension	Approve	November 2000
11/00870/FUL	Single storey side/rear extension to provide disabled accommodation	Approve	October 2011
13/01013/FUL	Change of use of part of domestic curtilage to cattery and formation of parking area at the entrance to The Grange.	Withdrawn	

Suggested Conditions

No.	Condition												
1.	<p>The proposed development must be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission. <i>Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</i></p>												
2.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="368 501 1353 689"><thead><tr><th data-bbox="368 501 655 535">Title</th><th data-bbox="655 501 995 535">Drawing Reference</th><th data-bbox="995 501 1353 535">Received date</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td data-bbox="368 535 655 568">Location Plan</td><td data-bbox="655 535 995 568"></td><td data-bbox="995 535 1353 568">25th October 2013</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="368 568 655 629">Existing Elevations and Floor Plans</td><td data-bbox="655 568 995 629">JR/13/123</td><td data-bbox="995 568 1353 629">25th October 2013</td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="368 629 655 689">Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans</td><td data-bbox="655 629 995 689">JR/14/79 Rev R</td><td data-bbox="995 629 1353 689">23rd May 2014</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><i>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning</i></p>	Title	Drawing Reference	Received date	Location Plan		25th October 2013	Existing Elevations and Floor Plans	JR/13/123	25th October 2013	Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans	JR/14/79 Rev R	23rd May 2014
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3.	<p>All external facing materials of the development hereby permitted shall match in colour, form and texture those on the existing building. <i>Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area in general and the existing building in particular.</i></p>												
4.	<p>Prior to the conversion of the garage hereby approved the parking spaces, detailed on the approved plan received 19th June, shall be laid out and made available for parking. The parking spaces shall be retained in perpetuity thereafter. <i>Reason: to ensure sufficient parking is available at this site.</i></p>												