

- The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt in relation to Policies D38 and D39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan, Policies DS2 and DS13 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and the NPPF.
- The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 7: *Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt* advises that new curtilage buildings located more than 5m from the dwelling will normally be treated as inappropriate development. The proposed garage would be more than this distance from the nearest point of the cottage. I conclude on this issue that the proposal would constitute inappropriate development which paragraph 87 of the Framework states is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and would be in conflict with relevant development plan policy.
- The proposed development would have an adverse effect on the open character of the locality and the reduction in openness would conflict with this most important attributes of Green Belts. The proposed development would involve the siting of a substantial curtilage building in an open gap fronting the highway. The garage would be positioned with its long side parallel to the carriageway and the end gable clearly visible through the gap in the existing fence and planting that would be created by the new driveway. The hedge and any gate erected would screen the lower part of the structure but due to its height and proximity to the front boundary the proposal would be readily visible from Bournheath Road and would increase the sense of enclosure within the street scene and harm the visual amenities of the area.
- No very special circumstances exist to justify the inappropriate development. The appellant argues that he could erect the garage further back within the garden using permitted development rights and that this fall back position would have a greater effect on the Green Belt than the appeal proposal. However, the laying of a longer drive would not have a significant effect on the openness of the Green Belt and as the trees on site are not protected it would be open to the appellant to remove them at any time. The Inspector noted the comments of the appellant regarding the varied positions of nearby houses in relation to the highway and specifically that the arrangements at 24 Bournheath Road are similar to those proposed. Nevertheless, this does not justify further development that would cause harm to the Green Belt. The Inspector balanced the substantial harm already identified against the other considerations put forward by the appellant as weighing in favour of the development. The benefits of the scheme did not clearly outweigh the harm arising and the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposals do not exist.

Therefore, having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Costs of application

No application for costs was made.