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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2018

**by Roger Catchpole DipHort BSc(hons) PhD MCIEEM**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/17/3189838**  
**Hayes Barn, Coton, Whitchurch SY13 3LU**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Edwards against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref: 17/04218/FUL, dated 10 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 2 November 2017.
  - The development proposed is the conversion of an outbuilding into 'granny flat' ancillary accommodation in conjunction with the main house.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the host building.

## Reasons

3. The appeal building forms part of an irregularly-shaped courtyard in conjunction with an articulated main dwelling. It comprises a single storey, detached, rectangular outbuilding. Another outbuilding, of similar design, projects from one end of the main dwelling. The appeal building is in close proximity to the latter and flanks a narrow opening to the courtyard. The proposal would convert and extend the appeal building in order to provide accommodation for an elderly relative. Permission has already been granted (Ref: 17/01726/FUL) for the conversion of the building without a sun lounge extension. As such, the Council has accepted the principle of converting the outbuilding to provide ancillary accommodation for independent, day-to-day living.
4. I observe from the plans and my site visit that the proposal would lead to an overly suburbanised, domestic conversion of the outbuilding. This would arise from the extensive glazing in the extension to the southern gable end, most notably on its western and southern elevations. This would be at odds with the simple, vernacular, red brick appearance of the outbuilding and would significantly erode its agricultural character. As such, the extension would appear as an incongruent afterthought rather than part of an integrated design that respects the character of the original building. This harm would not be avoided through the use of an oak frame design. Whilst I appreciate that the extension is intended for use as an oil painting hobby space, I have no evidence before me to suggest that alternative solutions, based around a more

sympathetic design, are not possible. In any event, this does not outweigh the harm that would be caused.

5. The appellants are of the opinion that the Council has approved similar schemes elsewhere and that this supports the design approach they have taken. Whilst I accept that there are some similarities, in terms of the sun lounge, I am not aware of the full circumstances of those permissions nor do I have exactly the same information before me that was available to the Council. In any event, each case must be determined on its individual merits and site specific circumstances. Consequently, I give this limited weight in the planning balance of this appeal.
6. Turning to the size of the proposed accommodation, I note the Council's concerns regarding the increased footprint of the building and the greater potential for it to become a separate planning unit from the main dwelling. In relation to the first point, I accept that the established space standards<sup>1</sup> would be exceeded. However, this would also be the case for the extant permission and, in any event, these standards are relevant only in determining compliance with the minimum space standard for new dwellings and have no other statutory meaning or use. Consequently, they should not be used to limit the size of new dwellings which should, more appropriately, be controlled through development plan policies. As such the standards carry negligible weight in the planning balance of this appeal.
7. In relation to the second point, the Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (as amended) clearly states that conditions can enable development proposals to proceed where it would otherwise have been necessary to refuse planning permission, by mitigating the adverse effects of the development. In this particular instance I am satisfied that a suitably worded condition would prevent the creation of a separate planning unit and that this would be capable of satisfying the necessary tests, as set out in paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the Framework).
8. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and the host building contrary to policies CS5 and CS6 of the *Shropshire LDF Core Strategy 2011* and policy MD2 of the *Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan 2015*. They seek, among other things, to ensure that proposals reflect locally characteristic architectural design, respect local distinctiveness and make a positive contribution converted rural buildings. As a result the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

## **Conclusion**

9. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Roger Catchpole*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard. March 2015. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.