



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 13 April 2021

by Rachel Hall BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/21/3267907

The White House, Trehowell Lane, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry SY10 7SQ

- 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 & Mrs Phillips against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/04568/FUL, dated 4 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as '2 storey extension to provide living accommodation for elderly parents'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 2 storey extension to provide living accommodation for elderly parents at The White House, Trehowell Lane, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry SY10 7SQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/04568/FUL, dated 4 November 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1921-MA(00)0001 rev A; 1921-MA(00)0004 rev A; 1921-MA(00)0005 rev A; except in respect of the following: the proposed porch roof detail shown on plan 1921-MA(00)0001 rev A; the 'first floor plan' shown on plan 1921-MA(00)0004 rev A; and the 'front elevation' shown on plan 1921-MA(00)0005 rev A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description of development reproduced in the banner heading above, the proposal involves the demolition of existing single storey structures to the rear of the property and erection of two storey and single storey extensions, raised decking, steps and a ramp.
3. The appeal proposal is the resubmission of an application for a similar proposed development of broadly the same scale and massing, refused in June 2020 (Council Ref 20/01724/FUL). The principal changes to the development now proposed are to the roof style of both the two storey extension and the proposed porch, with the intention of creating a more cohesive design.
4. There are some small discrepancies between the appeal plans, which in my view are not so significant that they undermine a proper assessment of the

scheme. The proposed 'front elevation' on plan reference 1921-MA(00)0005 rev A does not show the roof line of the proposed two storey extension to the rear, which would be visible to either side of the existing roof. As such, I have avoided that error in the approved plans condition above, an approach which I do not consider would be prejudicial to any party. The front elevation itself is largely unaffected by the proposals and those elements that are altered are clearly identifiable on other parts of the approved plans.

5. I have taken a similar approach in respect of the proposed 'first floor plan' on plan reference 1921-MA(00)0004 rev A, and the 'site plan – proposed' on plan reference 1921-MA(00)0001 rev A, where the porch roof is incorrectly shown as a straight apex roof. I have avoided both instances of that error in the approved plans condition above. The correct, raked back porch roof is shown on the 'rear elevation' and 'side-1 elevation' on approved plan reference 1921-MA(00)0005 rev A.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

7. The appeal site is located off Trehowell Lane which leads out of the village of Weston Rhyn. The character and appearance of the existing building is derived from its white rendered walls contrasting with its tiled roofs. The front elevation is quite striking with its slightly projecting gable and hipped roof. The plot is surrounded by fields and has a pleasant rural feel. A number of houses in the village are visible from the site, and vice versa, some of which are only a short distance away. As such the house is viewed as a standalone residential dwelling in a rural setting, but not remote from the village.
8. The front (south west) elevation of the house is visible from the south on approach from the village, over hedges that border the lane. On Trehowell Lane from the north, the house appears slightly elevated from the lane, allowing some views of it over hedges. The side (south east) and rear (north east) elevations of the house are partially visible from The Meads, a residential road around the edge of the village. The house appears less prominent in these views due to undulations in ground levels across the intervening fields.

Scale and massing

9. Demolition of the single storey structures to the existing rear of the house and the proposed two storey extension, whilst substantial, effectively squares-off the footprint of the existing brick-built elements of the house. As such it would not feel excessively large or out of scale with the existing building. The house sits within a substantial plot, well set back from Trehowell Lane. The proposed scale and massing of the proposal does not feel out of proportion for a standalone property in this setting.
10. The proposed single storey extension along the majority of the rear elevation, with its tiled roof, will furthermore have the effect of breaking up the appearance of this elevation, to the extent that it is visible from the surrounding area.

Design and appearance

11. The proposal effectively reorientates the house by 90 degrees by altering the current side (north west) elevation to look and feel like the front of the house. The proposed gable feature on this elevation is reminiscent of the gable on the existing front elevation. The proposal before me differs in design from the previous scheme; the former appearing more clearly as an existing dwelling plus extension rather than comprehensive redevelopment. The new brick porch, together with the proposed gable feature and connecting roof line, will create a sense of arrival. This improves the legibility of the building and integrates the extension with the existing house.
12. With the exception of the roof line of the two storey gable roof that will be visible in some views, the existing front elevation of the building will remain largely unchanged. Whilst I accept that the changes to the property would be extensive and substantial, they have nevertheless been designed sensitively in terms of the scale and architectural detailing of the property and would represent a coherent and acceptable redesign. As such, the development is not out of keeping and will not unduly impact the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
13. The extension has been designed to match the materials of the existing house, including the rendered walls, uPVC windows and tiled roofs. Contrary to the Council's view, I consider the brick porch, using a brick to match existing brickwork at ground level, will help to draw the new and old elements of the building together.

Main issue conclusion

14. The proposed extension, including reorientation of the building, whilst visible to varying degrees in the local landscape, will result in a form of development that is not out of scale with the existing house and garden. Reorientation of the building will aid legibility. The proposed form of the extension and use of materials to match the existing building will appear sufficiently integrated with the existing house, without harm to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area.
15. Consequently, the development accords with Core Strategy policy CS6 which, amongst other things, aims to ensure development is appropriate in scale and design, taking into account the local context and character, as well as achieving a high quality of design. I find no conflict with Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan policy MD2 which, inter alia, requires developments to respond appropriately to the form and layout of existing development, and reflect locally characteristic architectural design.
16. For the above reasons the proposal accords with chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework which provides guidance on achieving well-designed places. Similarly given the particular proposal and circumstances of this case, the scheme would not conflict with the overarching aim of the Shropshire Type and Affordability of Housing SPD which provides guidance, amongst other things, as to how residential extensions may be designed so as to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the original building.

Conditions

17. I have imposed conditions in line with those suggested by the Council on the appeal form. This includes the standard time limit condition. In the interests of certainty, I have further imposed a condition specifying the approved plans and those elements that are excluded. As set out in Procedural Matters above, this is for clarity on the approved design, in compliance with the relevant elements of policy referenced in paragraphs 15 and 16 above, avoiding the small degree of conflict between plans. I have, for similar reasons, imposed a condition requiring materials to be used in construction of external surfaces to match those used on the existing building. This is to ensure the development integrates effectively with those elements of the existing building that will remain.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or the surrounding area. On that basis the appeal should succeed.

Rachel Hall

INSPECTOR