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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2025

by **A O'Neill BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 July 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/25/3363445**

**Sutton House, 11 Old Rose Drive, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 6FJ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Sonia Abbas against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/00117/FUL.
  - The development proposed is the erection of extensions, installation of 2 No. dormer windows and erection/alteration to brick boundary wall.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The description above is taken from the decision notice which is more concise than the planning application form and adequately describes the proposal.
3. During my site visit I saw that some construction works have taken place at the appeal property, however, it is not clear whether these are in accordance with the submitted plans. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal based on the submitted plans.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
  - the character and appearance of the host building, having regard to its significance as a non-designated heritage asset, and;
  - the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with particular regard to privacy and noise.

### Reasons

#### *Character and appearance*

5. The appeal property is a large detached traditional brick farmhouse located at the junction of Old Rose Drive and Thorn Croft. The Council's evidence explains that the farmhouse and boundary walling was set aside as part of a recent residential development in the surrounding area. The farmhouse is now surrounded by modern, predominantly detached, two storey houses. There is some variation in the appearance of the new houses in the vicinity of the site, but it is evident they have taken design cues from the farmhouse in terms of their materials and window details. The appeal building is three storeys high and, although it has a larger scale and mass than the adjacent houses, it integrates well with its surroundings.

6. The Council identifies the building as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) with reference to its Historic Environment Record entry. Developed in the late 18th or early 19th Century, its significance and special interest derive from its historical role as part of the, now redeveloped, Sutton Grange farmstead. Architectural interest comes from its brick construction and relatively uncomplicated appearance which is typical of this type of historic farmhouse.
7. Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) confirms that the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining an application. A balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
8. The building's front elevation is characterised by a regular window arrangement, which, along with the simple roof design, gives a horizontal emphasis to the front elevation. The submitted plans show an existing single storey porch to the front elevation, which is also shown on the submitted photographs, although this feature was not visible at the time of my site visit.
9. The scale and design of the proposed three storey, projecting central bay to the front of the building would be at odds with the existing uncomplicated appearance of the building. The gable and elongated dormer windows at the top floor would break the eaves line on the existing roof and detract from the existing horizontal emphasis. This forward extension would unacceptably dominate the front elevation and appear as an incongruous addition to the existing building.
10. I have had regard to the images submitted of other farmhouse properties characterised by gables and dormer windows. However, I have not been provided with details of their locations, nor how they came to exist. In any event, they do not justify the appeal development in light of the harm I have found.
11. The two storey addition proposed to the southwest side of the building would further complicate the building's appearance and detract from its current simple form. The relatively blank gable end would also appear at odds with the front elevation of the building which is characterised by its regular fenestration.
12. The proposed rear first floor balcony and its ornate enclosure would also not be in keeping with the traditional farmhouse appearance and would represent another incongruous addition to the building.
13. It is proposed to render both the front extension and the rear façade of the existing building. Whilst render is featured on some of the surrounding new houses, such extensive use on the appeal building would unacceptably detract from its appearance as a traditional brick farmhouse.
14. The Council's reasons for refusal raise no objection in relation to the boundary wall. Based on the evidence before me, including the observations I made on site, I find no reason to conclude otherwise.
15. Taking all of the above into account, the proposed extensions, balcony and extensive use of render would erode the character of the host building and would unacceptably alter its farmhouse appearance. Furthermore, the proposal would detract from the architectural significance of this NDHA. As such it would conflict with Policies CS6 and CS17 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework:

Adopted Core Strategy (2011) (the CS) and Policies MD2 and MD13 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan (2015). Taken together these policies require, amongst other things, development to be of high quality design which conserves and enhances the built and historic environment, taking account of local context and character, avoiding harm to or loss of the significance of NDHAs. The proposal would also not accord with paragraph 216 of the Framework, which calls for a balanced judgement of any harm against the significance of the NDHA.

### *Living conditions*

16. The rear elevation of the appeal building currently has three windows in the upper floors which allow oblique views to the rear gardens and rear elevation windows of 1 and 3 Thorn Croft. As such, the neighbouring properties currently experience some level of overlooking from the appeal building.
17. The proposed balcony would create an accessible space at first floor level which would allow direct lines of sight to the neighbouring properties, resulting in a significant increase in the opportunity for overlooking. This would be exacerbated by the fact that the appeal building is sited at a higher level than the neighbouring properties.
18. The use of the balcony also has the potential to cause noise and disturbance to neighbouring occupiers. Due to its elevated and unobstructed position, sound is likely to travel more freely compared to noise generated in the rear garden, where a tall boundary wall helps to contain it to some extent.
19. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. As such, it would conflict with Policy CS6 of the CS which requires development to safeguard residential amenity.

### **Other Matters**

20. I appreciate that the building is in need of refurbishment in order for it to be used as a house and that there is support from local residents for the building to be brought back into use. I also acknowledge the appellant's intention to improve the energy efficiency of the building, although it has not been demonstrated how the appeal proposal would achieve this. Whilst the general improvement of the housing stock is a benefit, one dwelling would make a limited contribution to the housing supply. These considerations therefore attract limited weight in favour of the proposal.

### **Conclusion**

21. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

*A O'Neill*

INSPECTOR