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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 August 2020

by **Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MIEnvSc**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/20/3253724**

**The Woodlands, The Wrekin District Boundary Howle to Pine Ridge, Ercall Heath, Shropshire TF10 8NH**

- 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 V & S Eli against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref 20/00437/FUL, dated 29 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2020.
  - The development proposed is two storey extension and alterations.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. Although it is not illustrated on the plans, the application form refers to roofing materials for a gym. Moreover, while the plans illustrate a tennis court, it is not referred to in the application form. Neither structure is included in the description of the development. Therefore, I have determined the appeal on the basis that the proposal is extensions and alterations to the appeal property and it does not include a gym or a tennis court.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

### Reasons

4. The Woodlands is a large 2 storey 4 bedroom detached dwelling finished in brick with a hipped tiled roof. The elevation that overlooks the garden and faces towards the road is a rear elevation with a central 2 storey bay feature, a ground floor bay window and a patio door. The property has a single storey flat roof extension and a conservatory on one side. Irrespective of its large size, the property has a modest character and appearance.
5. The property is accessed via a long private driveway and it is set well back from the road in a substantially large plot with extensive lawns, mature woodland and tree planting. The surrounding countryside is sparsely developed, although the property is one of several detached properties on the same side of the road set in generous mature grounds. Elsewhere, where properties are visible, they tend to be modest and traditional in appearance.

6. The conservatory and side extension would be demolished and replaced by a substantial 2 storey extension that would be the same height as the roof of the appeal property. The extension would have protruding gable features to the front and rear elevations. The other side elevation of the property would be altered and extended to match. The central recessed part of the rear elevation would have a pair of matching 2 storey bay features and there would be extensive glazing in the protruding gable features. The property would be finished in painted render at ground floor level with timber cladding above.
7. There would be a significant increase in the size and scale of the dwelling. The extensions would be dominant features that would not be subservient to the host property. Except for the chimneys, part of the roof, and window openings in the retained front and side elevation, the original building would be substantially altered and overwhelmed by the proposal. Therefore, the proposal would not respect the character and appearance of the existing building.
8. While the appeal property has no particular architectural merit, it is nevertheless an unassuming building that is in keeping with other brick properties in the area and it is assimilated into its surroundings. In contrast, by virtue of its large size and overtly modern and discordant design and materials, the proposal would not be typical of the traditional rural built environment. Consequently, although the proposal would not be out of scale with its plot, it would be a conspicuously discordant feature in its wooded countryside setting.
9. The appeal property is set back in its plot and, while it can be glimpsed from the road, it is screened by mature planting and trees. Although it seems reasonably likely that future occupiers would retain the landscape screening, nevertheless the proposal would be incongruous and visually obtrusive. In this respect, while landscaping can soften and integrate built development into its surroundings, vegetation is not permanent and it should not be relied upon to screen inappropriate development from view. In this case, the proposal might be screened but it would not be integrated, and the large mature garden setting would not mitigate the adverse visual impact of the proposal.
10. Therefore, the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the property and the rural countryside. It would conflict with Policy CS6 of the Shropshire Council Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy March 2011 and Policy MD2 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan Adopted December 2015. These require, among other things, that development respects and contributes to local character and distinctiveness, reflecting locally characteristic architectural design and details including building materials.
11. The proposal would conflict with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that require development to be sympathetic to local character including its built and landscape setting. It would not be an outstanding or innovative design that promotes high levels of sustainability for the purposes of paragraph 131 of the Framework. However, paragraphs 132 and 133 of the Framework relate to advertisements and to the Green Belt and therefore they do not appear relevant to the proposal.
12. The reasons for refusal refer to conflict with the Shropshire Local Development Framework Type and Affordability of Housing Supplementary Planning Document Adopted September 2012. I have found that the proposal would not be sympathetic to the character and appearance of its host. However, while the

proposal would be a significantly large and expensive dwelling, the existing property is not a smaller or lower cost dwelling. Therefore, the proposal would not result in the loss of a property that is suitable for people on lower incomes including those with a need to live or work in a rural area.

**Conclusion**

13. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

*Sarah Manchester*

INSPECTOR