



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2024

by K Reeves BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/D/23/3327567

79 Southbrook Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 6JF

- 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 Steve Dew-Jones against the decision of Exeter City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/0724/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a bike shed on the front driveway, measuring 3x1.5m and height of 1.7m
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Steve Dew-Jones against Exeter City Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The wording of the description of development on the application form appears to be incorrect when having regard to the dimensions on the plans. I have, therefore, used the description of development listed on the Council's decision notice and on the appeal form in the banner heading above, for reasons of clarity.
4. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 19 December and updated on 20 December 2023. Whilst this made certain revisions to aspects of national planning policy, the provisions in respect of the matters relied on by the main parties are unchanged. Therefore, I did not need to consult with the main parties regarding the revised Framework and in determining this appeal, I have had regard to the most recent version.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. 79 Southbrook Road is a semi-detached dormer bungalow situated on a sloping residential road in the city of Exeter. The dwellings are stepped along the road and there is a strong building line formed by their front elevations. Attached to the side of the dwelling is a garage and an off-road parking area is situated to the front. The surrounding properties on the road have off-road parking areas to the front of varying shapes and sizes.

7. The proposed development would consist of the erection of a detached outbuilding in the parking area to the front of the dwelling. The plans indicate that the outbuilding would have a footprint measuring 3.09 metres by 1.51 metres and a ridge height of 1.69 metres. It would be erected adjacent to the boundary with 81 Southbrook Road and would provide storage for bikes.
8. The introduction of a detached outbuilding forward of the front elevation of the dwelling would be at odds with the prevailing character and appearance of the street, which is that there is a distinct absence of outbuildings within the areas at the front of the residential properties. Furthermore, its position would be a considerable distance forward of the characterful building line on that side of the street. I acknowledge that it would not be an overtly large building, but its presence in a prominent area of the site would be discordant with its built surroundings.
9. The appellant submits that they have needed to site a trailer in their parking area to provide bike storage and that this is more unsympathetic and out of character than the proposed development. However, there is limited evidence before me that demonstrates that this storage cannot be achieved through the provision of alternative storage space that would cause less harm to the character and appearance of the area. Additionally, there is a notable difference between the current temporary storage using a moveable trailer, and the parking of vehicles including motorhomes, to the proposal that would result in more permanent development.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with Policy CP17 of the Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2012) and Policy DG1 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review (2005), which collectively seek, in part, for development to complement or enhance Exeter's character and local identity, promote local distinctiveness and contribute positively to the visual richness and amenity of townscapes. Additionally, the proposal would conflict with the Framework, which seeks to ensure that development is visually attractive as a result of good architecture and layout, and sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

11. The proposed development would provide storage for the appellant's bikes. However, this is a private benefit that does not carry sufficient weight to outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan, when taken as a whole. Material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that I should make a decision other than in accordance. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Reeves

INSPECTOR