



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 March 2025

by **G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1160/D/24/3356507

31 North Prospect Road, Plymouth, PL2 3HY

- 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 Mr Martin Eggar against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01027/FUL.
 - The development proposed is garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the application form.
3. On the 12 December 2024 a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force. However, the policies that are relevant to this appeal have not changed, albeit some of the paragraph numbering is different. For these reasons I have not sought the parties comments on the revised NPPF.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi detached property located on the western side of North Prospect Road (NPR). The front garden to the host property is largely enclosed by a wall that is some 2.3 metres in height. A gap in this wall, next to the southern boundary, includes a driveway that leads to a single storey flat roofed garage sited in front of the main entrance to the host. The other properties on the western side of NPR comprises similar pairs of semis with front gardens that are either used for off-street parking or laid to lawn with landscaping and boundary hedging. A wide tarmac verge and pavement, with mature street trees, separates the frontage of these properties from the edge of NPR.
6. The eastern side of NPR also comprises two storey properties but in a terraced layout. These properties sit at a higher level to the Road and as a consequence their front gardens are sloped and largely laid to lawn with some landscaping.

7. The appeal proposal involves the construction of single storey flat roofed garage at the front of the host property. The garage is already in place and thus planning permission is sought retrospectively for its retention.
8. As I observed on my site visit, the garage comprises a large structure that occupies a sizeable part of the front garden to the host property. It is also sited up against the front boundary of the site and extends to within a short distance of the main front entrance to the host. The design of the garage is poor, with a boxy appearance that is out of scale with the host property and obstructs views of its principal street elevation. The result is a building that runs against the grain of the pattern of development on this side of NPR. It disrupts the existing building line and impacts on the openness of the frontages that are a characteristic of the properties on this side of NPR. My attention has not been drawn to any other similar garages or out buildings along this stretch of NPR.
9. Whilst I accept that the existing high boundary wall, which I understand is lawful, does provide some screening to the garage, it does not fully mitigate for the harm that arises or the significant presence that the garage has in certain public views from NPR. The latter particularly applies when approaching the appeal site from the south east, where the garage is highly visible and prominent. That harm is accentuated by the sloping nature of the site and Road.
10. Policy DEV20 of the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2019) (JLP) requires new development to, amongst other requirements, secure a good standard of design and to protect and improve the quality of the built environment by having regard to the local pattern of development in terms of scale siting and visual impact. For the reasons set out above, the proposal fails to meet these requirements.
11. In relation to the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document (2020) (SPD) paragraph 13.75 states that garages should be designed, in terms of scale and proportion, to relate well to their hosts. Paragraph 13.76 continues by stating that in urban areas garages in front of existing dwellings should generally be resisted as this is a prominent part of the site where they can detract from the streetscene. As I have found, the garage is visually prominent in certain views, is of a poor quality and detracts from the open frontages that characterise this side of NPR. The proposal is also poorly sited in relation to the frontage of the host dwelling and out of keeping with the host's original design, form and layout.
12. Accordingly, I find that the proposal results in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area contrary to policy DEV20 of the JLP, paragraphs 13.75 and 13.76 of the SPD, paragraphs 135 and 139 of the NPPF and the corresponding advice in the National Design Guide (2021).

Conclusions

13. For the reasons given above and having taken all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR