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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2025

by **Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 November 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/D/24/3352746**

**12 Palmerston Close, Blackpool FY4 4ZG**

- 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 Wayne Gardiner against the decision of Blackpool Council.
  - The application Ref is 24/0248.
  - The development proposed is installation of new window to front elevation and use of garage as altered as ancillary living space.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary matters and background

2. No 12 is part of a residential estate for which planning permission (ref 15/0420) was granted in 2016, including 118 dwellings with associated garages and landscaping. Planning conditions imposed included No 11: landscaping scheme, in the interests of visual amenity and to act as a soakaway during heavy rainfall; and No 12: garages to be retained suitable for use for the parking of a motor car, in the interests of the appearance of the locality and highway safety.
3. The development subject of this appeal has been carried out and it was completed in October 2021. I observed that the submitted plans reflect the development. Therefore, I have determined the appeal on the basis that planning permission is sought to retain the development as illustrated.
4. The planning application form includes a lengthy description of the development, including background information. In the interests of clarity, I have adopted the description of the development from the Council's decision notice.

### Main Issues

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

### Reasons

6. No 12 is a 2-storey detached dwelling set back from the road in a plot that tapers from front to rear. As built, the property had 2 frontage parking spaces and a garage parking space. It is in a residential area characterised by irregularly sited and spaced detached and semi-detached dwellings with open front gardens, off street parking and, in the case of detached dwellings, integral garages. The repeating designs, external materials and open landscaped frontages result in a coherent and harmonious townscape.

7. The garage door has been replaced with a wall featuring a domestic window and the garage has been converted into internal living space. The design and external materials are in keeping with the host property and the area.
8. The creation of additional frontage parking entailed the removal of part of the landscaping to the front and side of No 12 and its replacement with hardstanding. The property does have a somewhat wide road frontage due to the curve of Palmerston Close and there are lawned areas to either side of the frontage parking. Nevertheless, the increased extent of hardstanding parking for 4 vehicles visually dominates the front of the property and contributes to the dominance of frontage parking along the row of dwellings of which No 12 forms part.
9. Unlike green infrastructure and landscape planting which soften the built environment, the greater extent of hardstanding parking does not complement the appeal property or make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The green space on the opposite side of the road does not mitigate the adverse visual impact of the increased parking provision to the front of No 12. Similarly, the planting of a single tree in the retained landscaping, with little guarantee that it would reach maturity or be retained for the lifetime of the development, would do little to soften or screen the hardstanding parking.
10. I understand that elsewhere in the area, cars are parked along the roadway. However, parking elsewhere, which the appellant acknowledges has a detrimental impact on the streetscene, does not provide a justification for a scheme which also has an adverse visual effect.
11. I am aware of other planning applications<sup>1</sup> for alterations and use of garages as ancillary living accommodation and numerous unauthorised garage conversions locally are the subject of planning enforcement investigations. Each development must be considered on its own merits. Nevertheless, similar development has been repeated nearby and there is a reasonable prospect that such would be repeated in the future. Therefore, the Council's concerns that approval of the appeal scheme would set a precedent appear well founded. The incremental effect of this type of development would be a significant cumulative increase in frontage parking and significant loss of soft landscaping. This would result in a hard built environment with little landscaping to soften or integrate built development or to mitigate the adverse effects of heavy rainfall and climate change.
12. Therefore, I conclude that the development harms the character and appearance of the area and it would set a precedent for similar development, resulting in cumulative adverse impacts on visual amenity and flood risk among other matters. Accordingly, the development conflicts with Policies CS6 and CS7 of Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027) Adopted January 2016 and Policies DM17, DM20, DM21, DM31, DM35 and DM41 of Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Adopted February 2023. These require well designed development, with attractive spaces that complement built form, not dominated by frontage parking, and with well integrated car parking and green infrastructure to screen and soften hard surfaces and reduce areas of impermeable surfaces. It also conflicts with the aims of the Council's Extending Your Home Supplementary Planning Document Adopted November 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> Including refs 22/0432, 23/0765, 24/0099

## **Other Matters**

13. The evidence indicates that the garage was converted into a bedroom in 2021 for the appellant's father-in-law, following a change in his personal circumstances and his health. However, the plans illustrate that the converted garage is a snug, and the property was already and would continue to be a 4 bedroom dwelling if the appeal was allowed. I accept the extended ground floor living space will be a benefit to the appellant, but it has not been demonstrated that it is strictly necessary to enable his father-in-law to live at the property. On this basis, the personal circumstances carry little weight in favour of the scheme.
14. While the neighbours do not object to the development, I am required to consider the development over its lifetime. The absence of objection by existing neighbouring residential occupiers carries little weight in favour of the development.
15. The appellant's car is too large to park in the garage and he was not using it for parking. However, there is little evidence that the garage could not be used for the parking of any vehicle. Replacement parking provision is necessary to continue to meet parking standards for a property of this size, without which there would be overspill parking on Palmerston Close. Irrespective that it is not a through route, it is a narrow road with no footway where street parking would increase the scope for conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and potentially compromise access by service and emergency vehicles. As the garage conversion would not be acceptable without the replacement parking, I have not issued a split decision.

## **Conclusion**

16. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the development conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations that outweigh that conflict.
17. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

*Sarah Manchester*

INSPECTOR