
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2025

by **A Oyebade MSc FCILT**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1160/W/25/3362726

1-7 Cross Hill, Plymouth PL2 1RZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
 - The appeal is made by Lynchpin Properties Ltd against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00085/PIP.
 - The development proposed is permission in principle for the demolition of buildings on site and construction of 5 dwellings, 2 off-road parking spaces and associated amenity areas.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The appeal is for permission in principle, as provided for in the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017. The national Planning Practice Guidance advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. It is a two-stage process. The first stage (permission in principle) establishes whether the development is suitable in principle in terms of its location, land use and amount. The second stage (technical details consent) is when the detailed development proposal is assessed. Full planning permission does not exist unless both the permission in principle and the technical details consent are granted.
3. This appeal relates to the first of these two stages, and the supporting plans will subsequently be treated as indicative. The consideration of this appeal will be focused on the location and amount of the residential development, given that the evidence before me has suggested that there are no issues with the use of the appeal site for residential in terms of land use. All other matters would be considered at the technical details consent stage, should permission in principle be approved.
4. Also, where permission in principle is granted, it must be expressed as a range, giving a minimum and maximum net number of dwellings which are, in principle, permitted. The appellant has sought permission in principle for 5 dwellings and not provided a lower range. Therefore, I have considered the appeal on the basis that permission in principle is sought for up to 5 dwellings.

Main issues

5. The main issue is whether the proposed development would provide a suitable site for housing, having regard to the living conditions of future occupiers of the proposed development, car parking provision and highway safety in the area.

Reasons

Whether the appeal site is a suitable location for housing

6. The appeal site currently contains a row of disused garages and storerooms on a sloping strip of land in juxtaposition with Dockyard railway station. It is flanked by predominantly low-rise blocks of flats on one side and mainly traditional 2-storey terraced residential dwellings on its other side. The arrangement of the existing buildings on it offers a few gaps that gives a sense of space.
7. The rows of garages on the appeal site opposite the adjoining Keat Street have an area with overgrown shrubs on one side and ample vehicle manoeuvring space between them, plus an attached low boundary wall. Facing the site at this point on Cross Hill, these features, complemented with the space above the single storey garages, give a reasonable glimpse of the neighbouring Camperdown Street and associated buildings. Cross Hill and Keat Street and the properties on them also become noticeable looking ahead from Camperdown Street towards the appeal site, culminating in an impression of spatial connection between the dwellings on both sides of the railway.
8. The submitted plans indicate that the proposed development could reach up to three storeys in height and comprise up to five residential units arranged across two blocks. The indicative layout suggests that the scheme would occupy much of the site, with limited provision for car parking and other amenities. The upper portion of the site opposite Keat Street, currently contributing to a sense of openness, would be taken up by the first block, accommodating three larger units (Units 3 to 5). The second block, containing Units 1 and 2, would be located on the lower part of the site and appears to dominate the remaining land. As presented, the scale and massing of the indicative development raise concerns about the adequacy of space for private gardens or other amenity areas, which would likely affect the suitability of the site for the proposed quantum of development.
9. The appellant contests the Council's external space standards, asserting that the proposed development would provide sufficient space for future occupants. However, the indicative layout suggests that the built form, including associated car parking, would extend across the entire site boundary, encompassing areas currently occupied by unmanaged vegetation. As such, it remains uncertain whether the limited residual space could accommodate an appropriately scaled soft landscaped or garden area, alongside provision for refuse and recycling storage, in a manner proportionate to the scale of the proposed development.
10. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal proposal would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of future occupiers of the proposed development. Therefore, it would contravene Policies DEV1 and DEV10 of the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (Adopted March 2019) which state that development proposals will be required to safeguard the amenity of local communities, provide adequate space to achieve good living standards and should be of a high quality in terms of its design and resilience, and have sufficient external amenity space or private gardens.

Car parking provision and highway safety in the area

11. The appeal site abuts Dockyard train station. The appellant has demonstrated other facilities within short walking distances of the appeal site consisting of bus stops, a

- primary school, Blockhouse Park and Devonport Park. I have observed a few walking route connections around the site including that along Camperdown Street Lane North, which runs through the railway underpass at the lower end of the site.
12. The appeal development would have up to 2 car parking spaces. The Council has stated that it would generate a parking demand of up to 15 spaces, culminating into a parking overspill of 13 spaces, which would reduce to 8 if a smaller number of 10 is accepted. I have noted that the car parking standards contained in the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD, Adopted July 2020), being indicative, suggests that it is a maximum parking requirement.
 13. In proposing this car parking level, the appellant has interrogated the Office for National Statistics' 2021 population census data which confirms that the car ownership for this area is approximately 0.53, which if applied to the appeal development would have meant a requirement of approximately 3 car parking spaces if the maximum of 5 dwellings were erected on this site. The Council's officer's report has indicated that while a railway station is located beside the appeal site, it offers irregular services, and the benefits of the station's proximity would not outweigh the harmful effect of overspill parking emanating from the appeal development. There is no substantive evidence made available regarding the frequency of the nearest train services. Nevertheless, having considered the scale of the proposed development, I am satisfied that the associated vehicular traffic and demand for public transport would be limited. This conclusion is supported by the site's broader sustainability credentials, which mitigate concerns over transport impact.
 14. In any event, I have not been presented with any evidence to suggest that this vicinity is experiencing extreme car parking pressure. The Council has also indicated that this location has been designated as 'Home Zone' where pedestrian movements are prioritised. In my opinion, there is the likelihood that restricted car parking provision would help in curtailing vehicular traffic to and from the appeal site and ultimately support the Home Zone objective of ensuring highway safety in this locality.
 15. Therefore, I conclude that up to 5 dwellings on this site, even if this resulted in more limited onsite parking provision would not have any noticeable adverse impact on the car parking demand and highway safety in this locality. Hence, the development would accord with Policy DEV29 of the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (Adopted March 2019), which emphasises that development will be required to contribute positively to the achievement of a high quality, effective and safe transport system in the Plan Area.
 16. Nevertheless, the compliance with this policy would not mitigate or minimise the harm that would arise from the lack of conformity with Policies DEV1 and DEV10 of the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034, as explained above.

Other Considerations and Planning Balance

17. The Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the Council officer's report identifying only a 2.53 years' supply. Paragraph 11d (ii) of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) explains that in these circumstances, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing

so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the Framework policies.

18. The appeal site is relatively close to a range of services and facilities, and the proposal would make a positive contribution to the housing supply with associated social and economic benefits during the period of construction and once the dwellings are occupied. However, the scale of the development proposed means the contribution of up to 5 additional dwellings towards meeting housing supply through a more efficient use of land in an urban area and the related benefits would be limited.
19. The Framework seeks to ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for future users. In the circumstances of this case, I have concluded that there would be harm to the living conditions of future occupiers of the proposed development, which would be long lasting. The adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework policies taken as a whole. The proposed development would not therefore benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Hence, the development would be against Policies DEV1 and DEV10 of the Plymouth and Southwest Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (Adopted March 2019), as detailed above.

Conclusion

20. Overall, none of the other considerations material to the proposed development, including the consideration of policy in paragraph 11 of the Framework, indicate that this appeal decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Consequently, for the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Oyebade

INSPECTOR