



Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 27/04/21

gan Paul Selby, BEng (Hons) MSc
MRTPI

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 6/5/21

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27/04/21

by Paul Selby, BEng (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 6th May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X6910/D/21/3271279

Site address: 1 Medhurst Court, Farm Road, Nantyglo, NP23 4QE

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- 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 Ben Evans against the decision of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: C/2020/0277 dated 16 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is proposed detached domestic garage and first floor flexible space set within grounds of existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is the northernmost of a development of three dwellings set back from Farm Road and sharing a single access. The design of the three properties is somewhat atypical of others nearby, including those visible from Farm Road beyond a band of trees to the east. There is, however, some similarity in siting and boundary treatments between the appeal property and the dwelling of Ty Meddyg, which lies immediately to the north.
 4. The land between the appeal dwelling and Farm Road is terraced. The first level features a front driveway perpendicular to the dwelling, whilst the second accommodates the dwelling and its front garden. Both levels are marked by retaining walls topped with railings.
 5. The proposed garage would be positioned on the first terrace, its front elevation broadly aligned with the side elevation of the dwelling. Its considerable height would be amplified by its siting on land higher than Farm Road. Despite the use of a pitched roof, its perceived bulk would be exacerbated by the blank flank wall facing the highway. These attributes would considerably urbanise and enclose the appearance of
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the plot forward of the dwelling, which other than retaining walls and railings exhibits a predominantly open character. Although existing or additional landscaping in the existing buffer strip would, once mature, soften the appearance of the garage, it would not adequately screen the structure. The use of materials to match those in the dwelling would have little effect in reducing the proposal's unwanted visual impacts.

6. I saw that Ty Meddyg features structures forward of its front elevation, but these are mainly modest in scale, semi-permeable and/or set well back from the highway. Moreover, they are viewed in the context of mature tree cover which reduces their prominence. Consequently, I do not consider that garages or outbuildings positioned in front of dwellings are a particular feature of the local streetscape. As the garage would be readily visible from several viewpoints on Farm Road, its siting and bulk would appear incongruous and would harm the character and appearance of the area.
7. My attention has been drawn to examples of other properties in Blaenau Gwent which feature garages in front of dwellings. These examples appear to relate to single storey garages positioned at a similar level to the highway; factors which would materially differentiate them from the appeal scheme. I am also not aware of the circumstances of how these came about, or their full site context. In any case, however, appeals are determined on their individual merits. I afford limited weight to these other examples.
8. I note the appellant's willingness to reduce the height of the garage, but I must determine the appeal based on the plans which were before the Council when it made its decision. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the proposal would not accord with the objectives of policies DM1 (2) and DM2 of the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan to avoid unacceptable adverse visual impact on townscape and to secure good design which reinforces the local character and distinctiveness of an area. Similarly, it would also conflict with the advice of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled 'Householders: Note 2 'Garages and Outbuildings''.

Other Matters and Conclusion

9. I recognise that the appellant seeks additional and secure storage and living space for his family. The Council does not allege harm in relation to other matters, for example highway safety, and I have no reason to come to a different view. However, whilst I have had regard to the other matters raised, they do not outweigh the identified harm. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.
10. In reaching my decision, I have taken account of the requirements of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and consider that this decision contributes towards the well-being objective of building healthier communities and better environments.

Paul Selby

INSPECTOR