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## Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 25/05/21

gan **Melissa Hall, BA (Hons), BTP, MSc, MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 9/6/21

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25/05/21

by **Melissa Hall, BA (Hons), BTP, MSc, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 9/6/21

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X6910/A/21/3270862**

**Site address: Land adjoining Park Hill Road, Park Hill, Tredegar**

**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 Andrew Jenkins against the decision of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
  - The application Ref: C/2017/0193 dated 3 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 24 November 2020.
  - The development proposed is described as 'Construction of 4 no. new detached dwellings served by new private shared driveway with parking provision for 2 no. cars on each plot, including landscaping and services as well as off-site highway improvement works'.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### Reasons

3. The appeal site is a narrow, linear plot, which is located between the rear of a car garage fronting Park Hill to the west and the private rear gardens of the dwellings on Cefn Parc to the east. Due to the topography of the area, there is a significant difference in the ground levels between the site and the neighbouring built form; there is a retaining wall of considerable height forming a significant part of the western site boundary whilst there is a vegetated bank sloping down towards the rear boundaries of the gardens of the dwellings in Cefn Parc.
  4. The site is accessed off Morgan Terrace. Although there is a row of terraced dwellings fronting Morgan Terrace adjacent to the junction with Park Hill, its character becomes more akin to a rear service lane providing access to garages and off-street parking for the dwellings fronting Park Hill, Inkerman Terrace and Cefn Parc.
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5. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character. It is comprised of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings of varying design, scale and form but which, with the exception of the terraced properties, each have front and rear gardens for the most part. Whilst I note the appellant's contention that there are terraced properties on Morgan Terrace and at 2 Cefn Parc with a built form to amenity space ratio similar to that proposed, I do not consider these small gardens are directly comparable to the appeal proposal before me given that their layout and configuration differs. Neither do they detract from the character of the area or undermine the more generous plot sizes associated with the majority of the dwellings in closer proximity to the appeal site.
6. I do not dispute the appellant's contention that the site area for 4 dwellings is 0.17 ha, thereby achieving a density of 24 dwellings per hectare which is recognised as low-medium density. However, the siting of the proposed dwellings is constrained by the shape of the site and the need to provide a shared private driveway along its length. The result of which is that the dwellings on Plots 1 and 2 would adjoin the boundaries of the rear gardens of the closest Cefn Parc dwellings, with a minimum separation distance between each other, a limited amount of amenity space distributed around them and only a driveway width's separation from the western site boundary consisting, in part, of the retaining wall of considerable height. Meanwhile, the dwellings on Plots 3 and 4 would occupy almost the full width of the site at its southern end (where the site widens), resulting in the separation between the two almost indistinguishable when viewed from their principal front elevations. Whilst the dwelling on Plot 3 may have a more generous amount of private amenity space to the rear, it would not be read from within the wider site. Rather, when looking towards Plots 3 and 4 from the shared private drive, it would be mostly the hardstandings for the parking of vehicles that would be visible with the monolithic form of the dwellings in the background.
7. Overall, they would present as an anomaly given that the detached dwellings in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site occupy a much smaller proportion of their plots, resulting in greater visual relief and spacing around them. In comparison, the proposed dwellings would appear to be excessively large relative to the size of their plots and, with little spacing between them, would read as cramped. Whilst I do not dispute that a level of amenity space would be provided to serve each dwelling, its dispersal around each of the dwellings as small 'pockets' of garden would undermine its useability and effectiveness in providing visual relief to the built form.
8. To this end, the development would appear cramped leading to overdevelopment on this parcel of land. Whilst I accept that the site is not visible from the main road of Park Hill, it is nonetheless viewed from the public realm along Morgan Terrace which provides the context for the site's development.
9. Thus, the proposal would result in visual detriment thereby causing unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the adopted Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan 2012 which require new development to have no adverse visual impact and to be appropriate to the local context.

### **Other Matters**

10. I accept that the site is located within the settlement boundary and would deliver much needed housing in the area. Be that as it may, I do not consider that this matter outweighs the harm to the character and appearance of the area in the balance of acceptability.

## **Conclusion**

11. For the reasons I have given, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.
12. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider that this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards the Welsh Ministers' well-being objective of building healthier communities and better environments.

*Melissa Hall*

INSPECTOR