



## Appeal Decision

---

by N Jones BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 25/06/2024

Appeal reference: CAS-03394-V5W7L1

Site address: 4 Gwastod Farm, Cwmtillery, Abertillery, Gwent, NP13 1NS

---

- 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 Robert William Edwards against the decision of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
  - The application Ref C/2024/0012, dated 8 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2024.
  - The development proposed is the retention of storage shed with solar panels.
  - A site visit was made on 4 June 2024.
- 

### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. The development was largely in place at the time of my visit. The appeal seeks the retention of the development and I have considered the appeal on the basis that retrospective consent is sought under Section 73(2)(a) of the Act.

### Main Issue

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

### Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises part of the front garden area of the dwelling at 4 Gwastod Farm. The dwelling lies to the east of the estate road serving a small group of houses. An elevated dwelling set on stone retaining walls dominates the entrance to the estate. However, the road curves upwards from the north into a wider estate road and turning head. Dwellings within the estate on this side of the road are at a higher elevation than those on the western edge of the estate road and are also characterised by tall retaining features, however, they are set back from the roadside edge. The shed occupies an elevated position on a terraced area, above a narrower terrace which adjoins the road.
5. Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan state that development proposals will be permitted provided that, amongst other things, there would

be no unacceptable adverse visual impact on townscape or landscape, they are appropriate to the local context in terms of type, form, scale and mix and of good design which reinforces the local character and distinctiveness of the area. The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance for Householders Note 2 'Garages and Outbuildings' (SPG) provides specific guidance on the provision of outbuildings.

6. In relation to the SPG's guidance, the appeal shed has a pitched roof, and exhibits similar external materials to the appeal dwelling. In terms of its massing, it is smaller in scale than the appeal dwelling which I saw retains access, parking and amenity space. Whilst outbuildings at the appeal property and the neighbouring dwelling are located forward of the building line and form existing features of the streetscape, I saw that these are set behind a turning head, and whilst substantially elevated, they are also close to and viewed in the context of the higher dwellings behind and are therefore subservient in the wider view from the street.
7. In contrast, the appeal shed is forward of, and separated from the appeal dwelling by its access and parking area. Owing to its forward position and height, it is an incongruous feature which is prominent in the uphill view into this part of the street. Given its height and elevated position, rising substantially above retaining walls, it is not a subservient feature in closer range views. Owing to its scale, exacerbated by its proximity to the road, the shed is harmfully over dominant in relation to the existing and surrounding properties, when viewed near the turning head.
8. I have taken into account the appellant's personal requirements for the shed for his and family members' use and that its position takes advantage of solar gain. However, whilst I saw that the steeply sloping terrain is challenging, there is no cogent evidence that the facilities in the shed, and effective solar gain, could not be provided elsewhere on the appellant's property.
9. I also acknowledge the support of neighbouring occupiers as evidenced by the submitted petition. However, such support in itself is not sufficient reason to allow unacceptable development and I have therefore considered the appeal scheme on its own merits within the context of the particular circumstances of the appeal site.
10. The Council raises no concerns regarding the effects of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. From my own observations, given the separation between neighbouring dwellings and the shed, and the relative positions of openings, I have no reason to disagree. Nonetheless, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have identified in relation to the main issue.
11. I conclude that the development harms the character and appearance of the area and therefore fails to comply with LDP Policies DM1 and DM 2, and SPG advice.

## **Conclusion**

12. For the reasons given above and taking all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.
13. 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 one or more of the Welsh Minister's wellbeing objectives as required by section 8 of the Act.

*N Jones*

INSPECTOR