



Appeal Decision

by Nicola Gulley MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Decision date: 02/04/2026

Appeal reference: CAS-04740-L7X0H2

Site address: Nyth Y Ddraig, Pandy Lane, Llanbradach, Caerphilly, CF83 3DZ

- 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 Mathew McCarthy against the decision of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The application Ref 25/0333/RET, dated 25 June 2025, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2025.

- The development proposed is the retention of the side decking, front porch, side extension, underground side extension, outbuilding, new access, retaining walls and associated external works.
 - A site visit was made on 18 March 2026.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposed development on: the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the surrounding area; highway safety; the landscape; and ecology.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located in the open countryside to the east of the settlement of Llanbradach and within the North Caerphilly Special Landscape Area (SLA). The site comprises a detached two storey dwelling which is set in a generous garden. Topographically the site drops steeply down from Pandy Lane towards the open fields and A469 below. The area surrounding the site is predominantly rural and characterised by isolated agricultural buildings and traditional dwellings with driveway parking, which are set back from the highway and screened from view.
4. At the time of my visit, I observed that the proposed side decking area had been constructed, and that building works were in progress in respect of the front porch, side extension, underground side extension, outbuilding, new access and parking.

5. The development proposes the construction of: a large, raised deck area that would extend from the western elevation of the appeal dwelling to the side boundary of the property; a front porch; a side extension to be sited on the western elevation; a timber outbuilding in the north western section of the side garden; a substantial underground extension adjacent to the eastern side elevation of the dwelling; and a parking area, located close to Pandy Lane.
6. The appellant contends that the proposed front porch and side extension are relatively small additions that respect the form and design of the appeal dwelling, whilst the proposed underground side extension, although much larger, is an addition that would by its very nature be discreet within its immediate context and would have a negligible impact upon the wider landscape. In addition, it is suggested the elevated decking area is of a design intended to reduce its visual impact and would be located in an area that makes best use of the outlook of the site without adversely impacting on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property.
7. The Council raises no specific objection to the proposed front porch and western side extension, but contends that the proposed decking area, underground side extension and timber outbuilding are individually and collectively unacceptable for the area and that the proposal represents an overdevelopment of the appeal site. Moreover, it is maintained that the adverse visual impact of the development would have a detrimental effect on the special qualities of the North Caerphilly SLA.
8. Whilst I note the appellants comments I consider that the scale of the proposed underground side extension, which would increase the footprint of the appeal dwelling by approximately two thirds, would result in a disproportionate and incongruous form of development that would fail to have regard to the simple rural form and design of the existing dwelling.
9. With regard to the decking, the modern design of the elevated structure, would, when considered in conjunction with its scale and siting, occupying much of the large side garden area and overlooking open countryside directly to the west of the site, would result in a prominent and discordant development that would have a harmful impact on the visual qualities of the appeal dwelling and the surrounding SLA.
10. In terms of the proposed front porch, side extension to the western elevation and outbuilding, I consider that these elements of the proposal are, individually, of a form and design that are commensurate with that of the appeal dwelling and surrounding area. However, I am mindful that the cumulative impact of these structures, when considered with the proposed decking area and underground extension, would result in the overdevelopment of the site.
11. Furthermore, I am of the view that the siting and scale of the proposed car parking area, directly adjacent to Pandy Lane and with a surface area of approximately 138 square metres, would result in a visually prominent and uncharacteristic form of development that would have a detrimental impact on the rural character and appearance of the area and the wider SLA.
12. In light of the above, I consider that the proposed development would be contrary to the objectives of Policies SP6, CW2, CW4 and CW20 of the LDP in so much as it would fail to have regard for its context, be of a high standard of design that reinforces local distinctiveness or conserve or, where appropriate, enhance the distinctive characteristics of the designated SLA.

Highway safety

13. Policy CW3 of the LDP, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that development proposals have regard for the safe, effective, and efficient use of the transportation network. Additional guidance, in relation to the scale and location of visibility splays is contained in Technical Advice Note 18; Transport (2007) (TAN 18).
14. The appeal site is situated in a central position in Pandy Lane, which I observed to be a well trafficked, narrow, rural road that provides a link between Bedwas, Maesycwmmmer and the Twyn Shon Ifan junction on the A469. Existing vehicular access is afforded via a short driveway from Pandy Lane that is shared with the neighbouring property, with provision for parking made close to the dwelling.
15. The development proposes the removal of the existing landscaping along part of the appeal site boundary with Pandy Lane and the creation of a parking area, capable of accommodating 2 vehicles. During my visit, I observed that part of the existing hedgerow had been removed and works in relation to the provision of the proposed access and parking area had been undertaken.
16. The appellant contends that: Pandy Lane is lightly trafficked; the proposed access and parking area located adjacent to the lane is spacious and would provide a safe arrangement for vehicles entering and exiting the site; and that appropriate visibility splays could be achieved with the management of the existing hedgerow, which, if considered necessary, could be secured through the imposition of a planning condition. Moreover, it is suggested that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the visual qualities of the area and would be superior in highways safety and functional terms to the existing access arrangements.
17. For its part, the Council maintains that the proposal fails to demonstrate adequate visibility splays for vehicles exiting the site and that, as a consequence, it is considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact on highway safety.
18. Although I note the appellants comments, I am mindful that the development proposes a considerable alteration to the existing access arrangements through the creation of a new parking area. The visibility splay for the proposed access to the parking area runs to the south across part of the front of the neighbouring property and on land that is not within the boundary of the appeal site. I recognise that the existing access is shared with the occupiers of the neighbouring property and that they are unlikely to block the splay, however, there is no certainty that the visibility splay would remain free from obstruction. If this were to occur, drivers exiting the access and the proposed parking area would have limited views of vehicles travelling in a northerly direction along Pandy Lane and similarly, drivers would have little advance warning of vehicles egressing from the site. A situation which, which in my view, has the potential to lead to conflict and have a detrimental impact on highway safety.
19. As such, I consider that the proposed development would be contrary to the objectives of Policy CW3 and TAN 18.

Landscape

20. To ensure the potential impacts of development proposals on trees, woodlands and hedgerows are fully assessed, Policy CW6 of the LDP requires, amongst other things, the provision of arboricultural surveys to support planning applications.
21. In this case, the Council contends that: the proposed development has resulted in the loss of mature trees and hedgerows for which no suitable survey information has been provided; the submitted landscaping scheme for the proposed development is

inadequate; and that the majority of the scheme requires planting outside of the boundary of the appeal site and in an area that it has not been demonstrated that the applicant controls.

22. Although I note the Council's concerns, I am mindful that this matter can be effectively addressed through the imposition of a planning condition which requires the provision and timely implementation of, an appropriate landscaping scheme on land which it can be demonstrated is in the control of the appellant.

Ecology.

23. Policy 9 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2020 (FW) requires that development proposals ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure. This objective is supported by the provisions of Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12 (February 2020) (PPW 12) paragraph 6.2.11, which sets out the requirements for a Green Infrastructure Statement (GIS) to be submitted with all planning applications.

24. The Council maintains that in the absence of a GIS the proposed development fails to demonstrate that the loss of existing landscaping and the presence of any potential habitats or protected species would not give rise to any harm, or that the proposal would deliver a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

25. Whilst I note the Council's concerns, I consider that this matter can be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of a planning condition which requires the provision and timely implementation of an appropriate GIS for the development.

Conclusion

26. 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 supporting safe, cohesive and resilient communities.

27. I have also had regard to all the matters raised in support of the scheme. However, although I have found that matters in relation to the landscaping and GIS can be addressed by condition none of these factors are sufficient to alter my overall conclusions that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling, the surrounding area, the SLA and on highway safety.

28. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Gulley

INSPECTOR