



## PLANNING COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2015

**SUBJECT: SITE VISIT - CODE NO. 15/0914/FULL – CRAIG BACH, PENRHIW LANE, MACHEN, CAERPHILLY**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

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PRESENT:

Councillor D.G. Carter – Chair  
Councillor W.H. David - Vice Chair

Councillors M. Adams, Mrs E.A. Aldworth, Ms J. Gale, L. Gardiner, D. Havard, Ms L. Jones and J. Simmonds.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, R.W. Gough, A.G. Higgs, K. Lloyd, Mrs E. Stenner, J. Taylor and Mrs J. Summers.
2. The Planning Committee deferred consideration of this application on 4th November 2015 for a site visit. Members and Officers met on site on Monday, 23rd November 2015.
3. Details of the application to erect three 3-bedroom houses at Craig Bach, Penrhiw Lane, Machen, Caerphilly were noted.
4. Those present viewed the site and the proposed access entrance and examined the plans submitted with the application to fully appreciate the proposals.
5. Members were asked to note that the application is for three dwellings of a split level design with each providing 3 bedrooms. To make use of the site gradient the dwellings are three stories at the back and two at the front with the front door at ground level and incorporating a retaining wall. The dwellings would face south-eastwards towards the valley bottom. Officers explained that access to the site would be via the front garden which will be opened up as a private drive to improve visibility and access safety.
6. Members raised concerns regarding vehicle visibility when emerging from the proposed private drive into the main highway. Officers confirmed there was a condition to construct a means of access with vision splays of 2.4metres x 23 metres and that this could be achieved. Reference was made to a telegraph pole located at the entrance to the proposed drive, its impact on visibility and the feasibility of relocation. Officers explained that it would not be appropriate to impose a condition that the pole be relocated and they confirmed that visibility would still be achievable if the pole was retained.
7. In response to queries from Members, it was confirmed that there were no other houses at a similar level in the area to that of the proposed application, that the site is located on the edge of a settlement limit and that the existing houses are angled to look over the forest area rather than adjacent properties. Officers explained that the site was formerly the entrance to a mine

shaft which had been infilled, and that a Coal Mining Risk Assessment has been carried out which found the site to be acceptable in planning terms.

8. A query was raised as whether the area of land within the application is a greenfield site. It was explained that the land had been reclaimed as secondary use within the settlement limit and is not brownfield land as previously claimed.
9. Reference was made to the composition of the current front garden/drive in that it had been described as 30% laid concrete – it was confirmed that this referred to hardcore materials and Members asked for this to be taken into consideration during determination of the application.
10. Officers confirmed that following advertisement to neighbouring properties and a site notice being posted, 3 letters of objection had been received. Details of the objections are contained within the Officer's original report.
11. The initial planning report concluded that having given due regard to relevant planning policy and the comments from consultees and objectors, the application is considered to be acceptable and Officers recommended that permission be granted.
12. A copy of the report submitted to the Planning Committee on 4th November 2015 is attached. Members are now invited to determine the application.

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Consultees:	C. Powell	Area Principal Planner
	G. Lewis	Planning Team Leader
	L. Cooper	Engineer (Highway Development Control)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report submitted to Planning Committee on 4th November 2015