


17 Ridgeway

Newport

NP20 5AF

FAO: Tracey Brooks

Head of Planning

Newport City Council

Civic Centre

Godfrey Road

Newport

NP20 4UR

BY EMAIL

Dear Ms Brooks,

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION: 26/0474

SITE: 15 RIDGEWAY, NEWPORT, NP20 5AF

**PROPOSAL: OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A SINGLE DWELLING WITH
DETACHED DOUBLE GARAGE, ASSOCIATED PARKING AND ACCESS ROAD IN THE
GARDEN OF 15 RIDGEWAY (WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCLUDING ACCESS AND
SCALE)**

I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms to the above-referenced outline planning application.

I reside at 17 Ridgeway. The proposed development site sits immediately behind and significantly below the rear of my home. By way of context, this submission follows a previous application for this site (Ref: 24/1034) for two detached dwellings. That application was refused in May 2025 following widespread objections from statutory consultees, local councillors, and neighbouring residents.

While the current application reduces the density to a single dwelling, it fails to overcome the fundamental planning constraints of the site. I object to the proposed development on the following material planning grounds:

1. **Design, Character, and Impact on the Settlement Pattern**
2. **Residential Amenity (Overlooking and Loss of Privacy)**
3. **Trees, Landscaping, Ecology, and Climate Change**
4. **Highway Safety, Vehicle Access, and Parking Strategy**

1. DESIGN, CHARACTER AND IMPACT ON THE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Local Settlement Pattern

The application site comprises the steeply sloping rear garden of No. 15 Ridgeway. Nos. 15 and 17 Ridgeway were originally constructed as a single detached property and represent one of the earliest residential developments on the northern side of Ridgeway.

The established urban grain and settlement pattern on this side of the road is strictly linear. Dwellings are characterized by substantial, deep rear gardens that slope down to meet the ancient woodland of Coed y Glasllwch (which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order and registered with Natural Resources Wales) and the open countryside beyond. To date, no tandem, backland, or rear-garden residential development has been permitted on the northern side of Ridgeway. The rear gardens form an uninterrupted, tranquil green corridor characterized by mature private gardens and native flora and fauna.

Harm to Character and Precedent

The proposal seeks to introduce a substantial detached dwelling, detached double garage and a long access roadway deep into this undisturbed garden environment. This represents inappropriate backland development that would fragment a cohesive green buffer zone.

The loss of this private green space would erode the natural transition between the built environment and the protected ancient woodland. This would result in significant harm to the character, appearance, and amenity of the wider neighborhood. Furthermore, approving this application would establish an unwelcome planning precedent, making it difficult for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to resist similar ad-hoc, piecemeal backland proposals that would systematically destroy the character of Ridgeway.

Conflict with National Planning Policy

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design and **Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12** mandate that new development must integrate harmoniously with existing surroundings and reinforce the established spatial hierarchy.

This proposal directly conflicts with those principles. It disrupts the clear, historical boundary between the public realm/built frontage of Ridgeway and the secluded, natural environment to the rear. The insertion of a large domestic structure and access road into this zone completely undermines the prevailing spatial hierarchy.

2. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Topographical Context and Loss of Privacy

Due to the steep, downward-sloping topography of the site, the proposed dwelling would be positioned on a lower tier of the garden space.

While the applicant may argue this masks the building's profile, it actually exacerbates the severe overlooking impact. As the development sits lower down the slope, the upper floors, rear windows and elevated domestic terraces of the new dwelling will align directly with the private garden areas and rear living spaces of adjacent homes. This creates an invasive, eye-level vantage point into spaces that currently enjoy complete privacy. It represents an unacceptably intrusive form of development that will severely degrade the living conditions and quiet enjoyment of nearby households.

Overbearing Visual Impact and Scalability

The submitted North-South section drawing (**Proposed Site Sections, Drg. Ref: 2375-03**) demonstrates that despite being lower down the slope, the development will remain highly prominent and visually dominant from my property and garden.

Alarming, Paragraph 7 of the applicant's Planning Statement requests "flexibility" with scale parameters, proposing an upper height limit of up to 10.5 metres from the ground floor finished floor level (FFL) to ridge. By measuring this height from the lower tier of the garden, the applicant is attempting to introduce a massive, disproportionate structure under the guise of it being "sunken" or hidden. In reality, a 10.5-metre building on this slope introduces the potential to raise the ridge height by an additional 1.4 metres beyond what is indicated

on the drawing. This will create an overwhelmingly dominant, overbearing wall of development which will severely disrupt the rear outlook from neighbouring properties and compromise natural daylighting to lower areas of neighbouring gardens.

Deficiencies in the Application

The applicant has failed to submit East-West section drawings. Without these, it is impossible for the LPA or neighbours to accurately assess how the severe cross-slope ground level changes and the lower positioning of the dwelling will visually impact adjacent gardens.

Furthermore, despite the sensitive landscape edge, no **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)** has been provided. In the absence of this critical data, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development complies with **LDP Policy GP2** and the application should be refused on this basis.

3. TREES, LANDSCAPING, ECOLOGY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ecological Value and Wildlife Impact

The application site acts as a critical ecological buffer zone to the Coed y Glasllwch ancient woodland. A diverse range of protected and notable species actively use this site for foraging and nesting. Mammals including deer, foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, dormice, and various species of bats are regularly observed within the site boundaries. The introduction of a large residential footprint, hardstanding area and domestic lighting will fragment this habitat, disrupt wildlife corridors and cause severe harm to local biodiversity.

Prior Tree Felling and Environmental Degradation

The applicant's treatment of the site's natural assets raises serious concerns regarding planning cynicism. Approximately eight weeks prior to submitting the previous, refused planning application, the applicant pre-emptively felled 38 mature, healthy trees within the rear garden of 15 Ridgeway. The majority of these were fine, 70-year-old specimens.

This wholesale clearance appears to have been a deliberate attempt to alter the baseline environmental assessment and bypass restrictive tree protection policies within the LDP. These trees formed a seamless natural extension of the Coed y Glasllwch ancient woodland.

They made a major contribution to local carbon sequestration, biodiversity and the visual amenity of the area.

Rebuttal of the Tree Technical Note

With regard to the applicant's submitted '**Tree Technical Note**' by Treecare Consulting, I strongly challenge the author's assessment that the felled trees *"were dead, dying, diseased, dangerous and posed a threat to adjacent properties."*

In arboriculture, a tree is scientifically considered structurally stable if the thickness of the remaining sound outer wood shell is at least one-third (30–35%) of the total trunk radius. The outer layers (sapwood and bark) transport water and nutrients and provide most of the tree's structural support. A central hollow in a Lawson cypress stump does not automatically indicate that a tree was unsafe. Where holes in the remaining stumps are evident, they are minor and entirely surrounded by a thick, solid ring of healthy wood. The trees were, therefore, structurally stable and perfectly safe.

Statutory Violations and Lack of Replacement Planting

Under **Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12** and the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016**, the applicant was legally obligated to undertake a comprehensive biodiversity appraisal and tree assessment *prior* to clearing the site. This baseline data should have been formally submitted to ensure the project delivered a measurable net benefit for biodiversity while avoiding harm to vital natural assets.

Because the trees have already been cleared, **Section 6.4.42 of PPW 12** explicitly applies:

"Replacement planting shall be at a ratio equivalent to the quality, environmental and ecological importance of the tree(s) lost and this must be preferably onsite, or immediately adjacent to the site and at a minimum ratio of at least 3 trees of a similar type and compensatory size planted for every 1 lost."

The current application makes no provision for this mandatory replacement planting (which would equate to 114 compensatory trees), nor does it demonstrate any net benefit for biodiversity. The proposal is therefore in direct breach of national and local policies.

Deficiencies Regarding the Climate and Ecological Emergency

In November 2021, Newport City Council declared an ecological and climate emergency, subsequent to which it developed its formal **Climate Change Plan**. The Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) embeds specific objectives to support this delivery, with which this application directly conflicts:

- **LDP Objective 1 (Sustainable Use of Land):** Seeks to ensure development minimises environmental impact and makes efficient use of natural resources. This proposal destroys pristine garden land serving as a buffer to ancient woodland.
- **LDP Objective 2 (Climate Change):** Requires development to incorporate sustainable design principles to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The submission completely fails to demonstrate or reference any mitigation or adaptation measures.
- **LDP Objective 6 (Conservation of the Natural Environment):** Mandates the protection and enhancement of protected habitats and species of principal importance in Wales, regardless of greenfield or brownfield status.

By failing to introduce any climate adaptation or habitat mitigation measures, the application is fundamentally contrary to the sustainability objectives of the LDP.

4. HIGHWAY SAFETY, VEHICLE ACCESS and PARKING STRATEGY

Severe Impact on Adjacent Habitability

The physical positioning of the proposed access road would severely degrade the residential amenity and privacy of Nos. 13, 13A, 15, 17, 17A, and 17B Ridgeway. The roadway passes from Ridgeway directly between Nos. 13A and 15 into the rear garden.

This access corridor is located a mere **1.5 metres** from a kitchen/diner and home office window at No. 13A, and just **2.25 metres** from a bedroom window at No. 13A. Furthermore, the road alignment runs within **6 to 7 metres** of primary habitable rooms (including a bedroom, living room, and dining room) at No. 15.

At present, ambient background noise levels in our rear gardens are incredibly low, filled only with the natural sounds of wildlife. Introducing a 60-metre-long vehicular access road directly abutting these property boundaries will introduce persistent noise, vibration, exhaust emissions and headlights. This represents an unacceptable, unmitigable nuisance.

Furthermore, if this roadway is built to adoptable standards, it will require formal column lighting. Introducing artificial street lighting into a historically dark, private rear-garden environment will cause severe light pollution, destroying the amenity of all adjoining residents.

Conflict with Council Highways Requirements

I note that Newport City Council's **Highways Officer has formally objected** to this planning application, identifying critical design failures that conflict with **LDP Policies GP2 (General Amenity), GP4 (Highways and Accessibility), and GP6 (Quality of Design)**:

- **Substandard Access:** The proposed access road fails to meet minimum highways requirements regarding its geometric form, operational width, and visibility splays.
- **Replacement Parking:** The parking arrangement for 15 Ridgeway would not be acceptable so close to the access road entrance from the public highway.

Substandard Waste Storage and Collection Layout

The severe topography and length of the access road create an unacceptable arrangement for refuse collection, violating the council's **Waste Storage and Collection Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (January 2020)**.

Manual for Streets 2 (referenced in the Council's New Dwellings SPG) explicitly states that residents should not be required to carry waste more than **30 metres** to a designated collection point. Under the current proposals, the bin storage is sited 20 metres from the dwelling, with an additional 40 metres required to reach the kerbside collection area.

An overall haulage distance of **60 metres** more than doubles the maximum allowable distance permitted under highway standards. This issue is critically exacerbated by the steep gradient of the site. Forcing future occupiers to drag heavy wheeled bins uphill over excessive distances represents a severe detriment to residential amenity, contrary to **LDP Policy GP2**.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary, this outline planning application is entirely inappropriate, ill-considered, and structurally flawed. It fails to resolve the fundamental constraints that led to the refusal of the previous application (Ref: 24/1034) and introduces extensive policy conflicts regarding highway safety, residential amenity, ecological protection and climate change compliance.

Approving this application would establish a damaging planning precedent across Newport, prioritising speculative backland development and private gain over environmental sustainability, highway safety, and community welfare.

I respectfully urge the Planning Officer and the Planning Committee to protect this sensitive green corridor and **refuse** outline planning permission.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.