



**Caerphilly County Borough  
Local Development Plan Examination**

**Hearing Session 4: Housing Sites**

**Submissions on behalf of  
Mr M Lewis  
in respect of land off  
Waun Goch, Oakdale**

**4354/ARM/LEM  
Harmers Limited  
March 2010**

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# **1 Is the Council's decision not to allocate the site for housing based on a robust and rational site selection process?**

**1.1** There are three main site specific issues which need to be considered in relation to this site, these are as follows:

- (i) its suitability for housing;
- (ii) the suitability of the site to be included within the settlement boundary;
- (iii) the nature conservation value of the site.

The fourth issue, which may be described as "General Housing Issues", will be dealt with in a separate submission for Hearing Session 2: Housing Provision

Issues (i), (ii) and (iii) will be addressed below by way of responding to the Council's objections to this site and are based on the premise that the LDP is not sound because there is an inadequate overall level of provision for new housing over the plan period.

**1.2** The Council comments that the site would not result in a logical rounding off of the settlement and consider that the site would be an unacceptable intrusion into the countryside. However, the inclusion of the alternative site for housing would extend the settlement up to logical limits, comprising an acceptable infill/rounding off of existing development. The satellite image attached to these submissions shows the logical nature of the site proposals. The site adjoins existing housing along its northern boundary and the access road and car park serving the golf club to the west. In addition, part of the southern boundary adjoins the golf club house. The remainder of the southern boundary adjoins the golf course itself.

**1.3** The allocation of the site would add to the range and choice of housing sites in a settlement in the Northern Connections Corridor, considered suitable by the Council to accommodate additional housing and would, as such, be compatible with the Council's strategy to encourage development in this strategic area. It is noted that one of the two sites allocated in the LDP in Oakdale, HG1.27 is already under construction and will be completed early in the remainder of the plan period. This site would complement the existing housing allocations, contributing to meeting ongoing needs throughout the LDP period in a sustainable location, close to urban facilities, public transport and the major employment allocations. The allocation of the site would conform with the LDP strategy for the Northern Connections Corridor, which seeks to capitalise on the economic opportunities offered by the Oakdale/Penyfan Plateau. It would add to the range and choice of housing sites in a settlement in the Northern Connections Corridor, considered suitable by the Council to accommodate additional housing and would, as such, be compatible with the Council's strategy to encourage development in this strategic area.

**1.4** The Council also comments that the site is considered unsuitable for development and refers to the Candidate Site Assessment where the site was considered to be unsuitable due to the biodiversity value of the land. The site is identified as SINC C11 (77) in the Council Approved Unitary Development Plan. However the Candidate Site Assessment recognised that the SINC was subject to review and was subject to survey on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2007. Following the review the representation site has been excluded from the SINC designation. (See attached plans). The Council's objection to the site on the grounds of biodiversity can therefore no longer be justified due to this change in circumstances. The Council

also raised concerns that 'adjacent trees might be destroyed' and 'because there are rare plants in the area'. There are no trees on the proposed development area and, apart from creating an access, the trees in the surrounding hedgerows will be retained as part of the development. The concern about rare plants in the area is no longer relevant due to the site no longer being designated as a SINC.

**1.5** On the basis that there is a requirement to allocate additional land for housing, in order to make the LDP sound, a robust and rational site selection process would indicate that this site should be allocated for housing.

**2 Why is the allocation of the site concerned required in order to make the plan sound?**

**2.1** The overall level of provision for the Plan period is unacceptable and the Deposit Plan allocates insufficient land in the Northern Connections Corridor where there is an overdependence on brownfield sites. The allocation of the site at Waun Goch, Oakdale would contribute to the shortfall in the housing allocations and provide a better range and choice of sites.

**3 Has a Sustainability Appraisal been carried out and what was the outcome?**

**3.1** A sustainability appraisal of this site has been carried out and was submitted at the Alternative Site stage. This shows that the site has a similar Sustainability Assessment as site HG 1.26 which is allocated in the LDP and the inclusion of the site would not require any re-assessment of the SEA/SA.

**4 Consequential Amendments**

**4.1** The allocation of the site for housing will require a consequential amendment to the settlement boundary. A satellite image of this site is attached to this submission which shows that the site relates to existing built form.

**5 Concluding comments**

**5.1** The site, which comprises approximately 0.5 hectare, could accommodate approximately 15 dwellings. It is suitable to accommodate residential development and could be allocated alone, or in conjunction with land to the west, to the south of Llwyn-On, which is in the same ownership and is subject of separate submissions.