

FROM: Cumberland Council, Housing Team

DATE: 9 September 2026

Planning Reference	4/26/2271/0F1
Proposal	Residential Development, Consisting Of The Erection Of 61 Dwellings And Associated External Works
Location	Barfs Road, Distington
Developer	Home Group

The Cumberland Local Plan is currently in development. Until it is adopted the Copeland Local Plan will apply. If the Cumberland Local Plan is adopted before work starts on this development, then further discussion may be necessary.

1. Overall Provision

The Affordable Housing Statement (AHS) submitted with the application shows that the developer plans to build 61 units:

No. of Bedrooms	No. of Units	% of total provision
2 bed bungalow	9	37.7
2 bed house	14	
3 bed house	30	49.2
4+ bed house	8	13.1

This application is in the parish of Distington which falls in the West Cumbria housing sub-area. The General Housing Needs Study 2024 (GHNS) identifies the following range of dwelling size appropriate for that housing sub-area¹:

No. of Bedrooms	
1	20 - 25%
2	25 - 30%
3	40 - 45%
4	5 - 10%
Level access	15-20%

The AHS confirms that sustainable energy efficiency measures such as air source heat pump will be installed on each property.

¹ Table ES2 in the GHNS

2. Affordable Housing

This application will provide 61 units (100% affordable provision) of affordable housing, which the AHS shows will be available to eligible households for Social Rent.

The tenure split of affordable housing recommended in the GHNS is:

Tenure	
Social Rent	50%
Affordable Rent	25%
Affordable Home Ownership	25%

Policy H8 of the Copeland Local Plan requires at least 10% overall affordable housing provision on this development, and requires the following tenure split of affordable housing:

Tenure	
First Homes	25%
Affordable Home Ownership	15%
Affordable or Social Rented	60%

However, following previous discussions between the Senior Manager – Housing and Home Group, **the Council will accept the provision of 100% Social Rent properties.**

The GNHS evidences a need for the following affordable provision in Distington parish:

Bedrooms	Dwelling Type (%)			
	Houses	Flats	Bungalow	Total
1	27.8	2.8	13.9	44.4
2	5.6	5.6	13.9	25.0
3	2.8	0.0	13.9	16.7
4+	0.0	0.0	13.9	13.9
Total	36.1	8.3	55.6	100.0

The Cumbria Choice housing register shows that on 9 September 2026, 72 households with an active Cumbria Choice application have given Distington as their area of preference for a housing association property.

Cumbria Choice Housing Register²						
Preferred Type of Property	Total %	% of Households by preferred no. of bedrooms				
		1 Bed	2 Beds	3 Beds	4 Beds	5+ Beds
Bungalow	22.22	1.39	19.44	-	1.39	-
First floor flat or above	9.72	6.94	2.78	-	-	-
Ground floor flat	4.17	2.78	1.39	-	-	-
House	58.33	139	33.33	23.61	-	-
Maisonette	1.39	-	1.39	-	-	-
Information not provided	4.17					

The Housing team accepts the proposed housing provision.

All affordable properties covered by the S106 agreement should be occupied as a principal home, e.g. they will not be used as a second home, holiday let, or buy-to-let investment.

3. Allocation of Rented Housing

The affordable housing will be secured through a S106 Agreement, which will specify the affordable housing requirements, including:

- **Occupancy**

Allocation of Rented Housing should be in line with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy criteria, and will have regard to meeting local need.

- **Local Connection**

The Council's allocations policy will be used to ensure that the Social Rented units will be for people with a connection to the District, who are in Housing Need (as determined by the Cumbria Choice Allocations Policy) and meet the criteria below.

- Must live in the District and have done so continuously for the past year, or for 3 years in the last 5, and that residence was of their choice.
- Have immediate family (mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter) who are currently living in the District and have done so for at least the last 3 years

² This data will not be 100% accurate, but at the time of running the report, every effort has been made to provide as up to date and accurate information as possible.

- Are employed in permanent employment in the District. Employment is defined as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of one year, or self-employment where an applicant can demonstrate that the self-employed work they perform is in the District and is on average 16 hours a week or more. The employment must be based on their actual place of work in the area and not based on a head office or regional office situated in the area but from which the applicant does not work. Where working hours fluctuate i.e. casual or zero hours contract, an average will be taken over the last three months, or
- Have close family (normally mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter) that have lived in the District for a minimum of the past 3 years. We will consider whether there are exceptional circumstances where other family members may be considered as close. For example, the circumstances where an extended family member brought up a person in the absence of their own parents.
- Where there is an exceptional need to move to the District as determined for very special circumstances.
- **Local Connection Cascade**

Priority will be given to local households through the use of a Local Connection cascade:

- i. those who can evidence that they meet at least one of the Local Connection criteria with regard to the Locality (parish of Distington)
- ii. after four weeks the cascade will include those who can evidence that they meet at least one of the Local Connection criteria with regard to the Adjoining Locality (the parishes of Lowca, Moresby, Weddicar, Arlecdon & Frizington, Workington, Winscales and Dean)
- iii. after four weeks the cascade will include those who can evidence that they meet at least one of the Local Connection criteria with regard to the Wider Locality (the parishes of, Bootle, Beckermest, Cleator Moor, Drigg and Carleton, Egremont, Eskdale, Ennerdale and Kinniside, Gosforth, Haile and Wilton, Irton with Santon, Lowside Quarter, Lamplugh, Millom, Millom Without, , Muncaster, Wasdale, Whicham, Whitehaven, Ponsonby, Parton, Seascale, Ulpha, Waberthwaite and Corney)
- iv. after four weeks the cascade will include those who can evidence that they meet at least one of the Local Connection criteria with regard to the District.

The Housing team will be happy to discuss the Local Connection Criteria and Cascade with the applicant.

Affordability

The Social Rent units should be let at rents that are in-line with current Registered Provider guidelines.

4. Supported Housing

Parish Need

10 units of retirement / sheltered housing for older people by 2029

36 units of fully wheelchair adapted housing (M4(2)) by 2029 and 2 units of accessible housing (M4(3)) by 2029.

District Need

54 units of supported housing accommodation for people with a learning disability and / or people with autism by 2029.

35 units of accommodation for people with mental health conditions by 2029.

36 units of general needs move-on accommodation per annum for care experienced young people leaving supported housing.

70 units of supported housing for care experienced young people by 2029.

The Council requests that Home Group considers working with the Council to allocate some of the Rented Units to those who need Supported Housing.

Home Group should contact the housing team for more information. The Housing team will be happy to discuss how the scheme can support tenants with support needs.

The Occupancy, Local Connection criteria and Local Connection Cascade outlined for the general needs affordable properties will also apply to these properties.

5. Property Standards

Any affordable provision must meet the expected space standards set out in section 9.2 of the Council's Affordable and Specialist Housing SPD, and meet current national guidance.

Where affordable housing is being delivered for rent there is an expectation that these homes would need to be of an acceptable house sized standard for a registered housing provider.

Should a Cumberland Local Plan be adopted before work on this development begins, the Standards in the new Local Plan will apply.

6. Design Standards

The AHS confirms that all properties will comply with M4(1) i.e. they will have a level approach from the footpath and parking bay and will have a level access front door threshold.

The housing team request that a % of the properties are also M4(2) compliant and that a % of the affordable properties meet the requirements of the Centre for Ageing Better recommendations, and provide the following:

- **A toilet on entrance level**
- **Level thresholds**
- **Sufficiently wide doors**
- **A flush threshold**

Senior Manager - Housing