

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Demolition of dilapidated former mill buildings and construction of new warehouse unit with ancillary offices

Address: Former Cleator Mills Site, Cleator

Reference: 4/22/2364/0F1

Date: 22/11/23

Description: Site formerly occupied by buildings of the partially cleared Cleator Mills complex

Conclusion:

Since the previous details I've seen, a number of design changes have been effected:

- Alteration to the proportions of the office volume of the building, and the fenestration detailing, have improved the overall appearance. Additionally, a parapet eaves details improves the proportions and cleanness of the design.
- The pedestrian doors to the front elevation of the main warehouse have been recoloured and integrated better into the design.
- Visualisations have been updated to show external signage, both a "The Flax Works" sign for the development brand and signage for the tenant.
 - Has a customised sign been considered for the tenant? The brightness of the red rectangular background is perhaps at odds with the rest of the Flax Works branding. Perhaps an alternative making use of the red colour only for the lettering outline and the outline of the triangular motif, set against a black background and triangle fill, or a scheme making use of the grey colour of the "The Flax Works" lettering, would tie it in better?
- The building has been moved backwards slightly, and tlanting at the perimeter adjacent to the access road has been thickened, providing more edge definition and softening, without appearing uninviting. This seems like a scheme where a focus on the planting strategy could really lift and unite the atmosphere of the overall development.

Relevant Policies and Guidance (Existing local plan):

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 197 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 206)

Copeland Borough Council’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough’s cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasises the council’s commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- ENV4B outlines support for heritage-led regeneration, ensuring assets are put to appropriate, viable and sustainable uses.
- ENV4C aims to strengthen the distinctive character of Copeland’s settlements through high quality urban design and architecture that respect character and setting.
- DM10 emphasises the need for high quality design and quality places. Part B requires design to respond to local character at multiple scales, paying attention to plot size and arrangement, massing and scale, interstitial spaces, and materials. Part C requires the incorporation of existing features such as landscape and vernacular style.
- DM27A outlines support in principle for developments that “protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the borough’s historic sites and their settings”.

Relevant Policies and Guidance (Emerging local plan):

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