

Planning Statement – Land to the west of Parkside Road, Cleator Moor

Proposal: Residential Development consisting of 95 dwellings and associated infrastructure



Genesis Homes

February 2025

SRE Associates - Planning and Development Consultancy

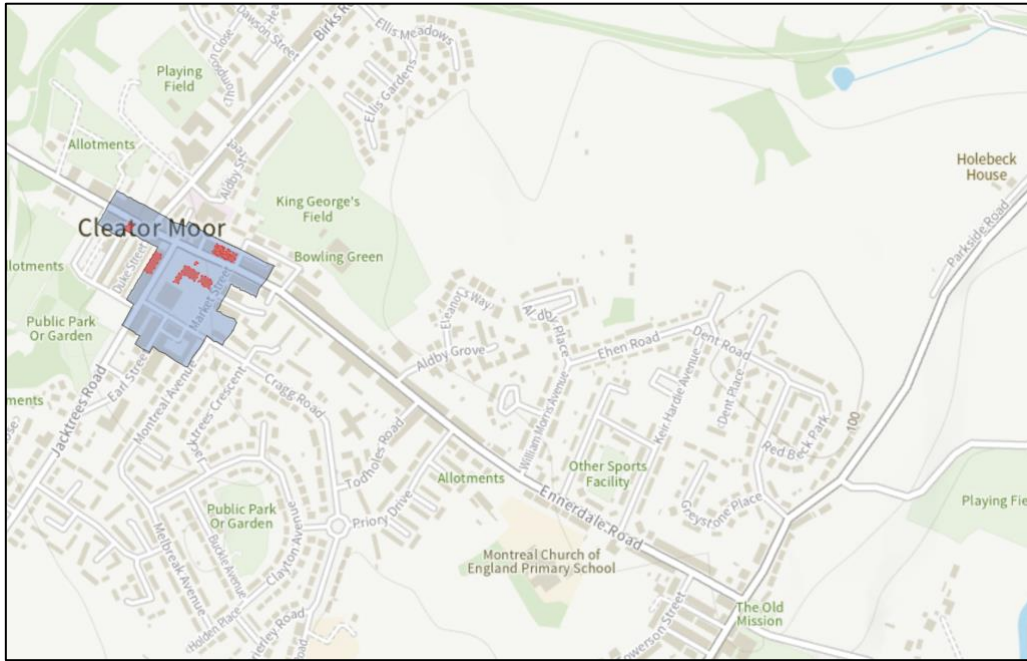


1.0 Introduction

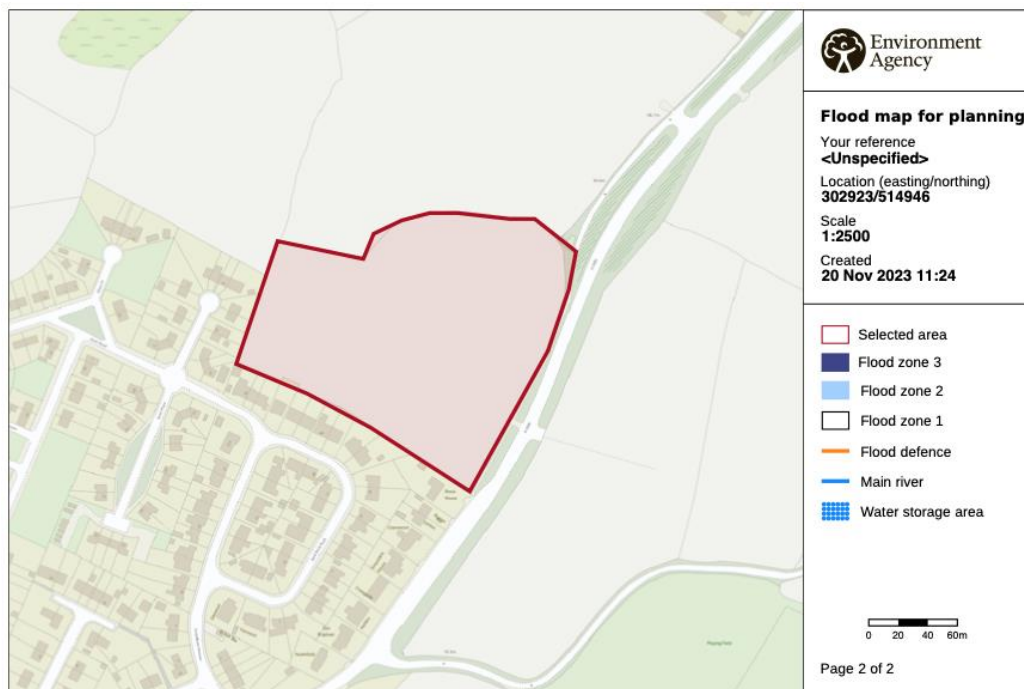
- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of a planning application for residential development on land to the west of Parkside Road, Cleator Moor.
- 1.2 The application is submitted in full, covering the principle of the development and all matters. The purpose of this statement is to set out the planning case in support of the development of the site, and it should be read in conjunction with the plans and documents submitted.
- 1.3 Section 2 of this Statement will set out the site's context, Section 3 covers the proposed development, Section 4 relates to the planning history of the site and surroundings, Section 5 will set out the planning policy context against which the application must be considered and undertakes a planning assessment of the proposed development and Section 6 will draw together the conclusions.

2.0 The Site

- 2.1 The application related to an area of land extending to 5.05 hectares which lies to the west of Parkside Road. The development adjoins further agricultural land to the west and north, to the east it fronts Parkside Road, and to the south it adjoins the residential curtilages of dwellings on Dent Road, Dent Place, Ehen Place and Red Beck Park.
- 2.2 The site is currently agricultural land. The topography of the land is fairly flat but raises up towards the west of the site, and it is contained by hedgerows and post and wire fence to the sides of the field, and some domestic boundary fences to the south.
- 2.3 The application site is now situated within the established Local Plan settlement boundary for Cleator Moor and is therefore close to the local amenities in the town consisting of the Primary Schools, playparks, social club, pubs, shops and a supermarket. It is located 2.2 miles from the A595 which provides bus route access to Whitehaven, which is the Main Service Centre in the Borough as detailed in the Copeland Local Plan.
- 2.4 The A595 to the west provides easy access to both Sellafield and Whitehaven and continues north towards Carlisle, and Egremont and Sellafield to the south. The A595 links to the A66, 13 miles north of the site which connects to Penrith and Junction 40 of the M6 to the east. Parkside road to the frontage is the A5086, which is the secondary road route through the former Borough of Copeland and also a bus route leading to Cockermouth.
- 2.5 In summary therefore, the site is situated within a long-established residential area that is within reach of the best range of facilities that the Borough can offer.
- 2.6 There are no Conservation Areas or Tree Preservation Order's on or directly adjacent to the site.
- 2.7 There are no Listed Building's on or near to the site. The nearest Listed Building and Conservation Area is in the Square in Cleator Moor, as detailed on the Copeland GIS map below:



- 2.8 The site is located in an area that the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning has noted as Flood Zone 1, and as such have a low probability of flooding.

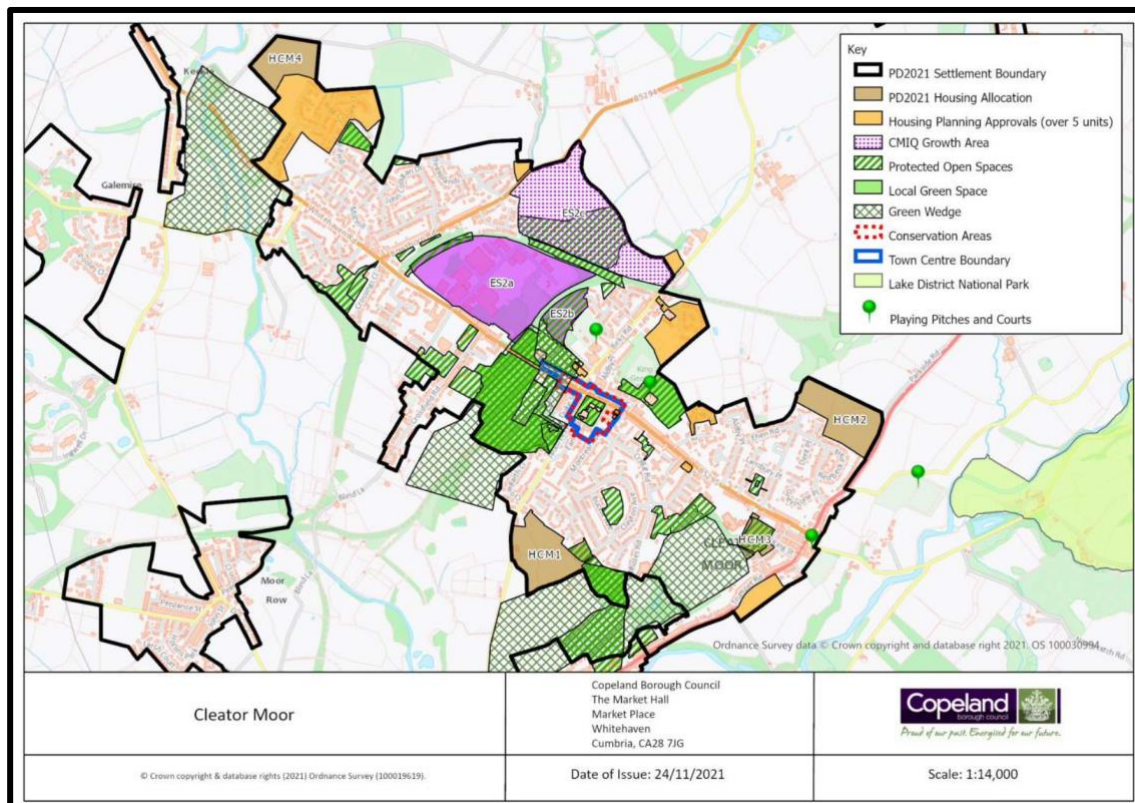


3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application is a full planning application therefore covering the principle of development and all details regarding access, scale, layout, landscaping and appearance of the residential development proposed on the site and all associated infrastructure.
- 3.2 For access, the proposed dwellings would utilise a new point of access from Parkside Road. The visibility splay required for the access are detailed on a submitted plan, showing 2.4m x 43m splays.
- 3.3 The proposed scale of the development is 95 dwellings on the site, which is detailed on the submitted site layout plans, which demonstrates appropriate separation between all dwellings proposed, and the existing dwellings on Dent Road, Dent Place, Ehen Place and Red Beck Park.
- 3.4 The layout of the proposed development would see the main access located central onto the Parkside Road frontage of the site. Four estate roads lead off from the central access, which turns to the north centrally and leads up to the western boundary.
- 3.5 The proposed dwellings are a mix of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed houses, including 4 bungalows, and a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties. Some of the properties have render elevations and some have red brick elevations with a view to providing continuity with the surrounding dwellings. The existing dwellings in the surrounding area of Cleator Moor include a range of detached, attached, single storey and two storey properties.
- 3.6 The properties will all have in curtilage parking spaces, and there are a number of additional visitor spaces spread around the site. This is detailed on the submitted parking plan, with 238 in curtilage spaces and 19 visitor spaces spread throughout the site.
- 3.7 To the site frontage, the existing hedgerow will be retained as much as possible, with the frontage dwellings set back into the site, with additional tree planting located in the area to reduce the impact of the development.
- 3.8 A large area of public open space is proposed centrally within the site, proportionate to the development size, with areas of green space to the west of the layout included to soften the impact of the development from wider viewpoints. To the northern boundary, the Suds Pond for the development will be sited. The frontage onto Parkside Road has been designed to ensure that properties on the layout face onto the road, to continue the strong frontage of houses to the south of the site leading into Cleator Moor.
- 3.9 The site is located approximately 0.5km to the northwest of the boundary of the Lake District National Park. This has been considered in the application and in particular the site layout and is considered in further detail in the landscape information.
- 3.10 The application site is considered well related to the existing residential developments to the south, the road network and it is considered that the development of the site in the proposed form is possible without having any adverse impact on residential amenity to the surrounding properties.

4.0 Planning history

- 4.1 There is no previous planning history directly on the application site.
- 4.2 There are no nearby applications considered relevant to the proposal.
- 4.3 Within the Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2039 Adopted in November 2024, the site was noted as HCM2, a housing allocation and within the settlement boundary:



Strategic Policy H5: Housing Allocations

The following sites are allocated for housing over the Plan period 2021-2039. The yields identified are indicative only and alternative yields will be accepted where appropriate.

Settlement	Site Ref (SHLAA reference is shown in brackets)	Address	Indicative Yield (dwellings – based on 25dph unless otherwise stated) ⁶⁴
Towns			
Whitehaven	HWH1 (WE032 & WE001)	Land at West Cumberland Hospital and Homewood Road	46
	HWH2 (WH011a)	Red Lonning and Harras Moor*	370
	HWH3 (WS013)	Land at Edgehill Park Phase 4*	109
	HWH4 (WW018/WW022)	Land south and west of St Mary's School	60
	HWH5 (WW014)	Former Marchon Site North*	532
Cleator Moor	HCM1 (CM028 & CM038)	Land at Jacktrees Road	127

⁶⁴ Relates to figures based on planning application discussions

148

Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039

	HCM2 (CM082a)	Land north of Dent Road	119
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- 4.4 As noted in the above the text, the site is listed as having an indicative yield of 119 dwellings, which is above what is proposed in this planning application. The layout has been carefully prepared to meet the separation distances, both within the proposed development and to the existing housing adjoining the site, which alongside the proposed suitable mix of housing has led to the point of a 95-unit housing development.

5.0 Planning Policy and its application to the proposed development

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Local Development Plan consists of policies within the Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2029, adopted in November 2024. The policies in the following paragraphs are considered relevant to the proposed development.
- 5.3 The Local Plan sets out a long-term spatial vision which is that it *“will be a key driver for change over the period 2021-2039 identifying opportunities to enhance Copeland’s strengths, address its weaknesses and ensure that Copeland is a place where people and business can thrive”*. It was adopted before the recently updated NPPF (December 2024) but it is considered to generally follows the principles of NPPF and in particular, sustainable development, as defined by national policy and delivering sustainable housing in accordance with that policy.

Strategic Policies

- 5.4 **Strategic Policy DS1** covers the settlement hierarchy in the Borough. Within this, Cleator Moor is listed as a Key Service Centre, along with Egremont and Millom. The text regarding this tier states: *“Copeland’s towns are self-sufficient providing a wide range of services, including convenience and comparison stores, employment opportunities, schools and healthcare. They also act as service hubs for nearby villages. The focus will be for town centre developments, employment development and medium scale housing extensions, windfall and infill development.”*
- 5.5 **Strategic Policy DS2** sets out the Policy on Settlement Boundaries. This states: *“Settlement boundaries are identified for all settlements in the hierarchy and are shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map. Development within these boundaries will be supported in principle where it accords with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*
- 5.6 The above are the strategic policies with particular relevance to a residential housing site in this location, given that it is within the settlement boundary of Cleator Moor.
- 5.7 **Policy DS4** is regarding Design and Development standards.
- “The Council will expect all new development to meet high-quality design standards which contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of residents. This means that developments must:*
- a) Make use of existing buildings on site wherever practicable and deliverable, unless they have a negative impact upon the street scene;*
 - b) Create and enhance locally distinctive places which are sympathetic to the surrounding context of the built, historic and natural environment and local landscape character;*
 - c) Use good quality building materials that reflects local character and vernacular and are sourced locally where possible;*

- d) Incorporate high quality, inclusive and useful open spaces;*
- e) Create layouts that provide safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes that encourage walking and cycling based on Active Design principles and provide connections to existing walking and cycling routes where possible;*
- f) Not give rise to severe impacts on highway safety and/or a severe impact on the capacity of the highway network and allow for the safe access and manoeuvring of refuse and recycling vehicles. Should a development create such an impact then mitigation measures will be sought;*
- g) Take the needs of people with mental and physical disabilities into consideration, including through adopting dementia friendly principles;*
- h) Create opportunities that encourage social interaction;*
- i) Be built to an appropriate density that enables effective use of land, whilst maintaining high levels of amenity;*
- j) Be of flexible and adaptable design where appropriate;*
- k) Incorporate measures to design out crime and reduce the fear of crime, taking into consideration secured by design principles;*
- l) Be laid out in a way that maximises solar gain to internal spaces to promote energy efficiency and sustainable solutions;*
- m) Use appropriate levels and types of external lighting that does not create light pollution and helps maintain dark skies in line with up-to-date good lighting guidance;*
- n) Mitigate noise pollution through good layout, design and appropriate screening;*
- o) Address land contamination and land stability issues with appropriate remediation measures;*
- p) Include water efficiency measures such as rainwater recycling measures, green roofs and water butts where possible and appropriate; and*
- q) Ensure there is appropriate provision to allow residents to recycle household waste."*

5.8 With regards to the above, it is considered that the proposed development accords with this policy. The proposed finishes to the dwellings are designed to reflect the properties in the town and wider area of the county. In this respect the house designs are also considered appropriate. Open space is central to the design and the overall layout, and prominent within that. This helps to provide a safe and accessible development.

There are no highway issues or safety problems that arise from the proposed development and the site will have a suitable access onto an 'A' road with the required visibility. The development is of a suitable density, which provides best use of the land, when addressing open space provision and separation to new dwellings within the site, and existing housing outside of the site boundary.

5.9 **Policy DS5** is regarding hard and soft landscaping. This states:

“Where appropriate a high-quality landscaping scheme should be submitted with all proposals for development. This should include:

- A management plan which identifies all existing trees, hedgerows, ponds and other wildlife features and demonstrates how they will be integrated within the development. Landscaping should be well assimilated into the wider surrounding landscape.*
- Details of the position, species and number of new trees, hedgerows and landscape features. Species used should be appropriate for the location and should be native where possible with consideration given to future growth rates and proximity to buildings.*
- Details of any trees, hedgerows and landscape features that will be lost or replaced*
- Details of any hard landscaping proposed including materials, levels etc.*
- Details of future maintenance of the landscaping and replacement/replanting should the landscaping fail.*

Ancient hedgerows or woodlands should only be removed in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Consideration should be given to the role landscaping can play in reducing surface water discharge, for example through the planting of trees, the use of permeable surfacing for driveways etc.

Opportunities should be taken to connect new areas of soft landscaping to existing areas of green infrastructure networks where possible.”

5.10 The planning application is submitted with a landscaping plan, which detailed specifics regarding the proposed hedgerows, boundaries and planting within the areas of open space. It is considered that the landscaping proposals are appropriate for the site development, and in particular, retain the existing hedgerows where possible, and utilise planting to soften the edges of the development and views into the site from wider viewpoints.

5.11 **Policy DS6** sets out the Councils position in relation to flood risk. This states:

The Council will ensure that flood risk is reduced and mitigated in Copeland through:

- a) Directing development to allocated sites outside areas of flood risk where possible, unless it can be demonstrated that it would provide wider sustainable benefits outweighing the flood risk and that the development would be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- b) Only permitting wind fall development in areas of flood risk where applicants have carried out the flood risk sequential and exception tests to the satisfaction of the Council and appropriate mitigation is provided;
- c) Supporting measures to address the constraints of existing drainage infrastructure capacity;

- d) Avoiding development in areas where the existing drainage infrastructure is inadequate, unless appropriate mitigation is provided;
 - e) Supporting new flood defence measures to protect against both tidal and fluvial flooding in the Plan area, including appropriate land management as part of a catchment wide approach;
 - f) Ensuring that any development that incorporates flood mitigation strategies does not have adverse effects on water quality;
 - g) Requiring the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate; and
 - h) Working with partners to manage the risk associated with coastal erosion and flooding and ensure that all new development is located outside areas identified as being at risk either now or in future revisions of the Shoreline Management Plan.
- 5.12 The application is accompanied by a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment document, which covers that the site is within an area classified as Flood Zone 1, and that the risk of flooding from both surface water and ground water is low.
- 5.13 **Policy DS7** sets out an approach to ensure that sustainable drainage is incorporated into new build development unless it can be demonstrated that it is not possible. The proposed development includes a suds pond as part of the proposed drainage strategy as detailed on the submitted plans.
- 5.14 **Policy H1** seek to ensure to improve the housing offer in the borough. This states that the Council will seek to make Copeland a more attractive place to live by allocating a range of deliverable and attractive housing sites to meet local needs and ensuring they are built at a high standard, whilst protecting the amenity of existing residents. This development is considered appropriate given that it is located on an allocated site and is deliverable as demonstrated by this application by a housebuilder.
- 5.15 **Policy H4** details the anticipated housing distribution within the Borough. It is expected that 30%, or 789 dwellings will be constructed in the Key Service Centres of Millom, Egremont and Cleator Moor. This proposed site of 95 dwellings will make a significant contribution to that target.
- 5.16 **Policy H5** details the housing allocations in the Local Plan for the Borough. This site is included within this HCM2 (Land north of Dent Road), with a yield of 119. The Policy states that the sites are allocated for housing over the Plan period 2021-2039. The yields identified are indicative only and alternative yields will be accepted where appropriate.
- 5.17 It is considered that while the above yield has been taken into account in the site design process, taking all other constraints under consideration (open space, internal separation distances, existing dwellings and their amenity, an appropriate site frontage), it has not been possible to reach this figure. It does however represent a suitable density for the site.
- 5.18 **Policy H6** is regarding new housing development, and development standards. This states as follows:

“a) The design, layout, scale and appearance of the development is appropriate to the locality.

b) Development proposals clearly demonstrate that consideration has been given to surrounding natural, cultural and historical assets and local landscape character (including the impact upon the setting of the Lake District National Park and the Heritage Coast and its setting where appropriate);

c) An acceptable level of amenity is provided for future residents and maintained for existing neighbouring residents in terms of sunlighting and daylighting;

d) Privacy is protected through distance or good design;

e) The development will have no unacceptable overbearing impact upon neighbouring residents due to its scale, height and/or proximity;

f) The layout promotes active travel, linking new development with existing footpaths and cycleways, where possible;

g) Adequate external amenity space is provided, including for the storage of waste and recycling bins in a location which does not harm the street scene, where possible;

h) Adequate space for parking is provided, with preference given to parking spaces behind the building line to reduce street clutter, where possible; and

i) The proposal does not constitute inappropriate development of a residential garden which would harm the character of the area.”

- 5.19 As previously detailed, the proposed layout has undergone a thorough design process to ensure the layout, scale and appearance are appropriate for this specific location and the wider Copeland area. A good level of amenity is achieved within the site and to adjacent existing dwellings, ensuring privacy will be retained as much as possible.
- 5.20 **Policy H8** is regarding affordable housing. This states that on sites of 10 units or more (or of 0.5ha or more in size), or on sites of five units or more within the Whitehaven Rural sub-area, at least 10% of the homes provided should be affordable as defined in the NPPF 2021 (or any document that replaces it). As detailed in the affordable housing statement, 12 properties are detailed on the site plan as affordable units, which is above the required 10%.
- 5.21 **Policy N1** is regarding conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity. This details that the Council is committed to conserving Copeland’s biodiversity and geodiversity including protected species and habitats. Potential harmful impacts of any development upon biodiversity and geodiversity must be identified and considered at the earliest stage. In terms of this particular policy, an ecology survey has been undertaken and is submitted with the application.
- 5.22 **Policy N3** is regarding biodiversity net gain (BNG). This details that all development, with the exception of that listed in the Environment Act 2021 and any documents which may supersede it must provide at least 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels, following the application of the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy N1 above. This is

in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1. Net gain should be delivered on site where possible.

5.23 **Policy N6** is regarding Landscape Protection. This details that

Copeland's landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

- a) Supporting proposals which enhance the value of Copeland's landscapes;
- b) Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of that particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value;
- c) Ensuring development proposals demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will conserve and where possible enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park and Heritage Coast where proposals could impact on their setting and views into and from the National Park or Heritage Coast;
- d) Requiring a Landscape Appraisal, and where appropriate a Landscape and Visual

Impact Assessment, to be submitted where development has the potential to impact upon landscape character or a protected landscape. Where harm is identified the development will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm and mitigation and compensation measures must be provided.

Proposals will be assessed according to whether the proposed structures and associated landscaping relates well in terms of visual impact, scale, character, amenity value and local distinctiveness and the cumulative impact of developments will be taken into account as part of this assessment.

Development proposals must be informed by the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, Settlement Landscape Character Assessment the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit and where appropriate, the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment from the earliest stage.

5.24 Landscape planting plans are included as part of the full planning submission which detail significant planting within the site, and around the exterior boundary, including the site frontage to ensure that the edge of settlement location and landscape character is appropriately addressed in the development plans.

5.25 **Policy N11** is the Local Plan Policy regarding the provision of open space in new development, which states:

'Major developments will be expected to incorporate public open spaces where the development will generate additional needs.

The following levels of open space should be provided on site where possible. Where the development would result in smaller population increases a pro rata amount of open space provided should be apportioned appropriately.

Parks and gardens - Minimum of 0.2 hectares per 1000 population

Amenity Greenspace Minimum of 1.58 hectares per 1000 population

Natural and semi-natural greenspace - Minimum of 3.09 hectares per 1000 population

Provision for children and young people - Minimum of 0.10 hectares per 1000 population

Allotments - Minimum of 0.36 hectares per 1000 population.'

- 5.26 The proposed development includes areas of open space, with the main area central within the development. This is considered compliant in terms of the above policy.
- 5.27 **Policy N14** is the policy regarding Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows. This states that existing trees and hedgerows which contribute positively to the visual amenity and environmental value of their location will be protected. Developers should incorporate additional native tree planting and hedgerows into new developments where possible and appropriate.
- 5.28 As previously mentioned, the existing hedgerows will be retained as much as possible within the site design as detailed on the site plan. In addition, the landscaping plan details additional planting as part of the development.
- 5.29 **Policy CO7** is the policy regarding Parking Standards. This states that proposals for new development will be required to provide adequate parking provision, including cycle parking and accessible parking bays, in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide (or any document that replaces it) where appropriate.
- 5.30 The planning application includes parking plan, which details a total of 257 parking spaces on the development site. 248 of the spaces will be within the curtilage of the dwellings, with an additional 19 visitor parking spaces places around the site. This is in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide for parking.

Principle – National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (as revised December 2024)

- 5.31 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that sustainable development has three objectives social, economic and environmental.
- 5.32 The social and economic are as follows:
- ”a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being. “*

It is noted in the above that a central aim of the NPPF is to ensure that the right type of land is available in the right areas, to ensure that the correct housing is available to meet the needs of present generations.

- 5.33 Paragraph 11 covers the issue of the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

*“For **decision-taking** this means:*

Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

- 5.34 Paragraph 63 states that *“Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).”*

- 5.35 Paragraph 115 is regarding sustainable transport in allocations, which is relevant to this proposal. *In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*

a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and

d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

- 5.36 This continues in Paragraph 117, stating *applications for development should.... create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards.*

- 5.37 The proposed site adjoins the built area of Cleator Moor. This is a Key Service Centre within previous versions of the Local Plan, and in the recently adopted Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2039. In addition, it is an allocation housing site in the Local Plan. Therefore, it is considered

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that it is compliant with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF and given that the Local Plan has been recently adopted, the application should be approved without delay.

- 5.38 The proposed development of 95 dwellings is considered appropriate to the size, character and role of the settlement. The submitted application will not cause any significant increase in terms of traffic within the locality from the development. With regards to walking to facilities, as stated above the proposed development site is located within walking distance of the significant facilities and services found within the Cleator Moor settlement. The proposed development is situated adjacent to existing housing, and is now within the settlement boundary, and is therefore a logical extension of the town.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed application provides the opportunity for 95 residential dwellings on a site that is considered suitable for residential use.
- 6.2 The land had previously been considered suitable for residential development twice in the Copeland Local Plan process recently.
- 6.3 The proposed development has been sensitively designed to take into account the site characteristics, surroundings, wider location and separation distances.
- 6.4 It is considered that any impact on the adjacent dwellings outside of the site has been minimised by the proposed layout.
- 6.5 It is contended therefore that the proposed development is acceptable and is in accordance with both national and local planning policy, and therefore should be approved.

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