

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL  
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PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING NEW STREET FURNITURE, SIGNAGE LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING, IMPROVEMENTS AND RESURFACING OF THE FOOTPATHS, THE CREATION OF A NEW PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY AND THE CREATION OF A VANTAGE POINT ON THE HEADLAND MOUNT PLEASANT, WEST STRAND, WHITEHAVEN, CUMBRIA.  
MS J BETTERIDGE

Parish                      Whitehaven

This application seeks planning permission for a range of public realm improvements to the green space and gardens located on the headland adjacent to The Beacon on Mount Pleasant. The scheme forms part of the Whitehaven Regeneration Programme which seeks to regenerate the town centre. This site visit took place on 5 August 2009.

The proposed works involve the general improvement of the area with the aim of promoting greater public access, promoting views of the harbour from the higher ground and improving links between the harbour and the coast.

Entrances into the space off Rosemary Lane are to be redefined by the creation of small sandstone walls which will contain steel lettering depicting the name of the area. Finger posts are also to be installed to create well sign posted pedestrian routes. The existing steps which lie adjacent to the Beacon are to be retained and refurbished to provide access to the upper section from the harbour side. The existing hanging gardens which flank the steps are to be enhanced and replanted and an upper terrace is to be formed at the top of the steps to allow public seating area.

The existing footpaths which run across the site from Rosemary Lane are to be retained and resurfaced using tarmac. Additional seating is to be installed adjacent to the paths to encourage pedestrians to stop and look across towards the harbour. A larger hard surfaced space is to be created above the steps to provide a formal vantage point. This will include seating, some interpretative material on the history of the harbour and a telescope. A new section of path is to be created from the vantage point to link up with the coastal path.

The palette of materials that is to be used is consistent with those that have been successfully used on the National Trust Coast Project and also the Whitehaven Harbour refurbishment. They have been designed to be robust and easy to maintain. The walls are to be constructed of reclaimed sandstone and the steps are to be repaired with natural materials. Vertical hardwood timber revetments are to be used between the planting areas to depict a nautical theme. Low level lighting is to be introduced to emphasise the entrance features

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into the site, the steps from the harbour side and also Duke Pit Fan House. Replacement lighting columns are to be installed along the footpaths which will extend up to a maximum height of 3.5 metres. All the street furniture is to be of a simple design and will be constructed of stainless steel and timber. The entrance signage will comprise individual steel lettering that is to be mounted onto the sandstone walls.

CONSULTATION

In response to the statutory consultation procedures the following responses have been received:-

Highways Control Officer - no objections from a highway point of view subject to a condition being imposed which prevents surface water discharging onto the highway.

English Heritage - support the principle of enhancing this prominent area although Scheduled Monument consent will be required for any works to Duke Pit Fan House. An assessment should also be made of the potential to impact on any non-scheduled archaeology relating to the history of Whitehaven as a port and mining centre, particularly in relation to the construction of the proposed vantage point.

County Archaeologist - given the limited scope of the ground works do not wish to make any comments on this proposal.

Environment Agency - no objections.

Flood and Coastal Defence Engineer - providing United Utilities approve the discharge of surface water run off into the main sewer I would have no objections to the development in principle.

United Utilities - No objections.

Landscape Officer - no objections to the soft landscaping proposed subject to a proper maintenance scheme.

Comments are still awaited from both the County Council Archaeologist and the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer. Any response will be reported at the meeting.

PLANNING POLICIES

The North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 encourages the enhancement of Whitehaven through a regeneration strategy. This regeneration should be supported by environmental improvements.

Policy DEV 1 of the adopted Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 seeks to ensure that all development contributes to the sustainable regeneration of the area. Policy DEV 6 seeks sustainable and high

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standards of design.

The site falls within the Whitehaven Town Centre Conservation Area. Policy ENV 26 requires all new development within the Conservation Area to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the Area, including views into and out of the Area.

Fan House is a scheduled ancient monument. Policy ENV 36 requires any new development to minimise the affect on any sites of local archaeological importance.

Policy ENV 38 encourages new works of public art as part of any new developments.

Policy SVC 13 seeks to protect public amenity space and Policy SVC 14 encourages outdoor recreation.

The Council recently adopted a series of Town Centre Heritage and Design documents. The Character Appraisal of Whitehaven town centre recognises the importance of Mount Pleasant as an important open green space that forms a backdrop to the harbour. It was recommended that the refurbishment of this space be encouraged to enhance the public realm. It also highlights the need to increase accessibility for the public.

#### CONCLUSIONS

This site forms an important open space within the Conservation Area that provides a green backdrop to the historic harbour. The existing space is tired and does not encourage public usage. The proposed works are of an appropriate design and will greatly improve the quality of the public realm in this part of the Conservation Area. This will reflect the high standards previously set by the refurbishment of the harbour frontage and will provide an important linkage between the harbour and the coastal park.

#### Recommendation

That the application be referred to Full Council under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 and recommended for approval subject to the following conditions:-

2. Permission shall relate to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates. Development shall be carried out in accordance with them:-

Site boundary plan, drawing number M4531\_PA\_001\_A received on 17 June 2009

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Design proposals, drawing number M4531\_PA003, received on 17 June 2009

Material specification, drawing number M4531\_PA\_005, received on 17 June 2009

Material specification-seating, drawing number M4531\_PA\_006, received on 17 June 2009

Material specification-signage, drawing number M4531\_PA\_007, received on 17 June 2009

Terraced gardens-soft landscaping, drawing number M4531\_PA\_008, received on 17 June 2009

Ornamental planting, drawing number M4531\_PA\_009, received on 17 June 2009

Option two design proposals, drawing number M4531\_PA\_013, received on 17 June 2009

Lighting report prepared by Happold Lighting, reference M4531\_PA\_014, received on 17 June 2009

Existing tree survey, drawing number M4531\_PA\_015, received on 17 June 2009

Design and Access Statement prepared by Gillespies, reference 4531-MP-Design and Access Statement, received on 17 June 2009

Flood Risk Statement prepared by Gillespies, received on 17 June 2009

3. No development shall commence until samples of all surfacing materials to be used in the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be constructed in accordance with the approved details.
4. No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the protection of the existing mature trees that are to be retained as part of the proposal during construction works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme of protection shall be implemented before any ground works commence on site and shall remain in place for the duration of the construction period.

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5. No development shall commence until a Landscaping Management Plan indicating a method statement and a maintenance schedule for all the soft landscaping areas within the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Landscaping Management Plan shall be adhered to at all times thereafter.
6. Before development commences full details of the surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall become operational before the development is brought into use and shall be so maintained thereafter.
7. Details of all measures to be taken by the applicant/developer to prevent surface water discharging onto or off the highway shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to development being commenced. Any approved works shall be implemented prior to the development being completed and shall be maintained operational thereafter.

The reasons for the above conditions are:-

In compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

To safeguard the character and appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenity of the area

To ensure that the existing trees which are important to the amenity of the area are afforded adequate protection during construction works

To ensure that the approved landscaping scheme is implemented and maintained to an appropriate standard

To ensure the provision of a satisfactory surface water drainage scheme which conforms to the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 25 : Development and Flood Risk

In the interests of highway safety and environmental management

Reason for decision:-

The submitted proposals are of an appropriate design and will significantly improve the appearance of this open space which is located within the Conservation Area in accordance with Policies ENV 26, ENV 36 and ENV 38 of the adopted Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016