

**Our Ref: 2020-48d**

## **DESIGN CODE**

**SITE: CROFT END FARM, NURSERY ROAD, BECKERMET, CA21 2XG**

### **PROPOSAL:**

*“OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL BARN AND ASSOCIATED FARMYARD TO PROVIDE THE PHASED DELIVERY OF UP TO 5 NO. SELF, CUSTOM OR DEVELOPER BUILT RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES WITH ACCESS DEFINED & ALL OTHER MATTERS RESERVED.”*

### **Introduction**

This Design Code has been submitted in support of the Outline Planning Application in order to insert design parameters that secure a development which is acceptable for the site and its surrounding area. The Outline and Reserved Matters planning application approach is intended to offer the Applicant the ability to agree the principle of the development, with the detailed designs being forthcoming at the Reserved Matters stages of the full planning application process.

This Design Code has been prepared in accordance with the design parameters identified in the National Model Design Code (June 2021) guidance. This guidance clarifies that design codes should be used by local authorities and communities to provide a framework for creating high-quality places and is intended to be applied flexibly according to local circumstances, with the guidance recognising that not all characteristics and design parameters may be relevant. Whilst the guidance is not intended to be applied to individual planning application it includes helpful guidance that has been reviewed and set out below in order inform the detailed designs that will be forthcoming at the Reserved Matters stages of the full planning application process.

Accordingly, this Design Code includes all relevant recommended design considerations outlined in the National guidance and supplements the planning controls provided in the Supporting Planning, Design and Heritage Statement (Ref: 2020-48b) submitted with the Outline Planning Application.

### **Site Context**

The application site is located on the southern side of Nursery Road which is the main road through the eastern side of Beckermets village. Beckermets is an identified Local Centre within Copeland Council's development hierarchy. The whole of the proposed application site, which includes both the buildings and the associated farmyard area, lie within Beckermets's Development Boundary, as demonstrated by the Local Plan Proposals Map extract in Figure 1 below.

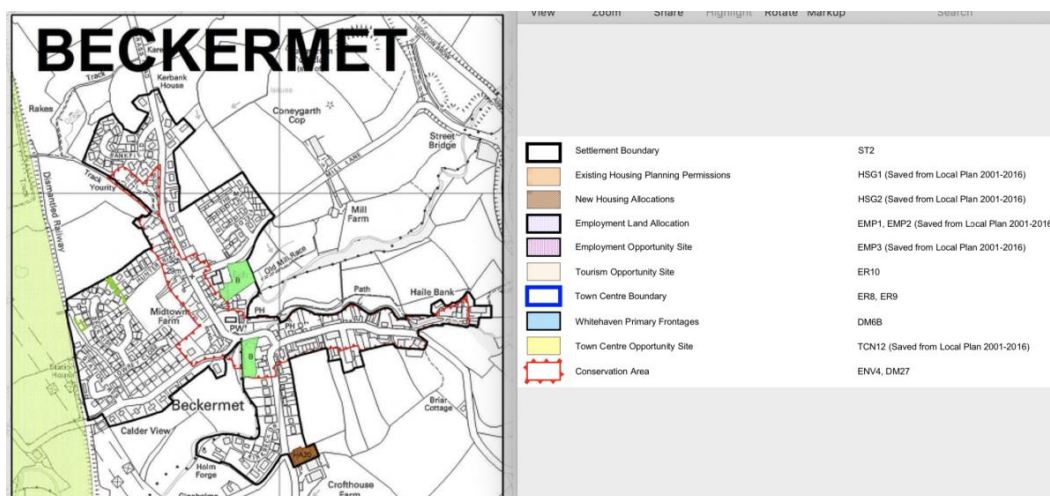


Figure 1 – Local Plan Proposals Map Extract (December 2013)

Plan 1 of Beckermets Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2017 – see Figure 2 below) identifies that the front portion of the application site lies within the Conservation Area.

The National Model Design Code identifies that a Design Code should consider:

- Built Form - Density, built form and urban design
- Identity - character of buildings
- Homes and Buildings - Type and tenure of homes.
- Uses - Mix of uses and active frontage

### Built Form, Identity, Type & Uses

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies that the pattern of farms and houses reflect Beckermets historical development that, until the early C20, was one of a village dominated by agriculture with working farms and labourers' cottages.

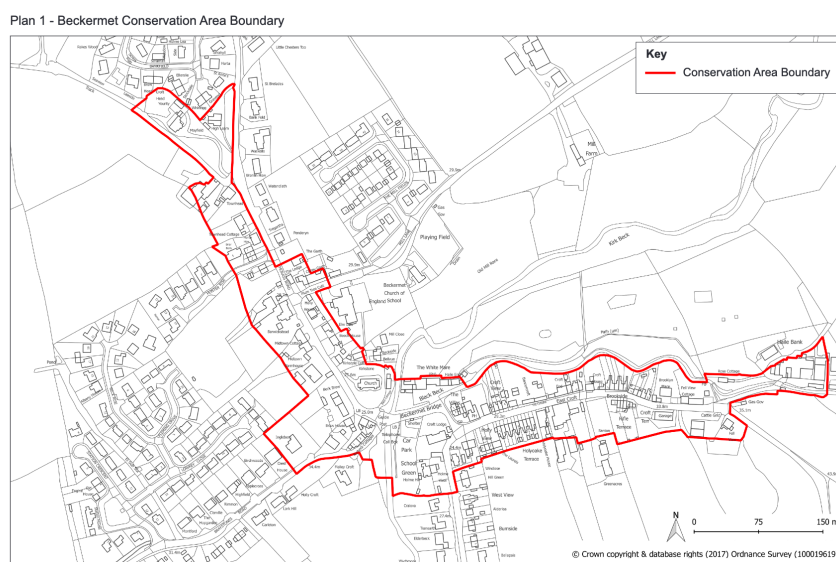


Figure 2 – Beckermets Conservation Area Boundary

Whilst most buildings within the Conservation Area are residential, there are currently a couple of working farms (including the subject site), two pubs, a garage with fuel pumps, a motorbike parts supplier and a church. The use that dominates Beckermets is the nearby Sellafield nuclear plant and many residents work there. Sellafield also generates demand for mid-week, temporary accommodation as well as through rush hour traffic.

Beckermets Conservation Area is identified as having the following key characteristics:

- Early origins, thought to date back to 7<sup>th</sup> Century
- Historic development pattern reflecting land ownership and tenure
- Remaining evidence of historic land cultivation patterns
- Confluence of two streams – Black and Kirk Becks that divided the former Parishes of Beckermets St John's and Beckermets St Bridget's
- No defined village centre, but open area around Beckermets Bridge acts as such
- Main building period – late C17 to 1919
- Most properties make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area
- In general buildings face the road, front elevation on
- Social hierarchy evidenced by back of pavement building line in lower status properties to more prestigious, later properties set well back in gardens
- Widespread use of local sandstone, particularly St Bees, as a building material
- Houses are mostly two storeys with chimneys
- Unbroken graduated roofs in local slate. Dormers on some later buildings
- Rendered houses, some brightly painted
- Wide range of buildings and architectural styles from vernacular agricultural farms and attached barns to later higher status detached properties.
- Cohesion and sense of place deriving largely from consistent palette of building materials – sandstone, render and local slate
- Sandstone boundary walls, many cobbled
- Extensive tree coverage
- Historic tracks from East Croft and Brookside leading down to Black Beck for watering cattle

The subject site is located on the southern side of Nursery Road, towards the eastern end of the wider Conservation Area designation.

The existing traditional sandstone barn and its associated sandstone wall are considered to be non-designated heritage assets. The change of use will save the barn from falling into disrepair. The village-centre location and configuration of the Barns are such that they are not suitable for modern farming practises and the removal of the unsightly lean-to barn to the front of the sandstone barn and reduction of the sandstone will better reveal the identity and appearance of non-designated heritage asset and lead to a more active frontage onto Nursery Road.

The Conservation Area Appraisal clarifies that one of the issues with disused farm buildings are that they are in poor structural condition, especially roofs, and partial collapse and loss of these structures is likely to occur without intervention. This would certainly be the case with the traditional sandstone barn and its surrounding environment that is the subject of this application.

Constructive Conservation is the broad term adopted by Historic England for a positive and collaborative approach to conservation that focuses on actively managing change. The aim is to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to ensure their continued use and enjoyment. The proposed conversion of the traditional sandstone barn to residential and the improvement of the site frontage that lies within the Conservation Area is, therefore, a positive heritage intervention that accords with Historic

England's guidance on 'Constructive Conservation.'

The proposed change of use of the application site to residential in the manner proposed will provide a net positive contribution the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by providing the most suitable re-use of the traditional barn and associated farmyard areas that are not fit for purpose for modern farming practices.

### **Scale and Layout of Development**

The proposed 5 no. residential dwellings will provide low density housing with generous private amenity areas that are of a scale and form that fit in with the neighbouring residences on both the eastern and western sides of the application site.

The following design controls have been recommended to ensure appropriate parameters of control to shape the detailed designs at the Reserved Matters stages of the full planning application process.

### **Traditional Stone Barn**

- 1) The proposed conversion of the traditional stand stone barn at the front of the site shall exceed Minimum Space Standards and ensure a minimum amount of new openings to meet with Building Regulations' light and ventilation standards to accord with Policy DM13 of the Core Strategy and conserve the traditional character of the building.
- 2) The traditional stand stone barn shall be converted into a maximum of two dwellings and designed to front onto Nursery Road.
- 3) No building structures shall be retained and/or introduced Infront of the traditional sandstone barn frontage aside from the retained bin storage area.

### **New Build Dwellings**

- 4) The scale of the new build residences that lie outside of the Conservation Area and due south of the traditional sandstone barn shall not exceed 2.5 storeys in height and the ridge heights shall remain subservient (i.e. lower) in height to the traditional sandstone barn at the front of the site.
- 5) The roof pitches of the new residences shall match in with the character of the local area
- 6) The proposed new build residences shall be orientated north to south in order to minimise overlook into the neighbouring residences to the east and west.
- 7) There shall be a minimum of two off-street car parking spaces per residence plus visitor car parking.

### **Materials**

All roof coverings shall be slate to match neighbouring residences. All new windows and doors introduced to the traditional sandstone barn shall use traditional materials (i.e. wood) suitable for use in Conservation Areas.

The new build residences shall utilise building materials that are identified within Beckermets Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2017) including slate roofs, stone and/or rendered external walls and traditional materials so that they are in-keeping with the materials utilised by the immediate neighbouring residences in order to add to the sense of place.

The sandstone wall removed from the sandstone wall fronting Nursery Road shall be recycled and re-used within the development if/where practicable.

## **Access**

The primary access to the site shall be via the access point identified on WDP Chartered Architect's 'Proposed site entrance and visibility splays' Plan (Drawing No. KL2895).

All existing structures along the site's frontage shall be reduced to a maximum height of 1.05 metres in order to achieve the visibility splay illustrated on the visibility splay Plan (Drawing No. KL2895). No structures or planting will be introduced within the hatched area illustrated on the plan within the Applicant's ownership.

## **Landscaping and Ecology**

Full details of soft and hard landscaping shall be submitted as part of the Reserved Matters Application(s).

The existing Ash Tree, shrubs and semi-mature trees on the boundary of the site shall remain unaffected, with no building structures being introduced within the Root Protection Area of the Ash Tree with the overall design in that area will be garden/ soft landscaping.

There shall be an ecology watching brief of site clearance of areas of rubble, stone and wood to ensure no harm to any animals using this material for resting and/or hibernation. It is recommended these are cleared outside the hibernation period (Nov – Feb).

The developer will need to ensure that the non-native invasive species Japanese Rose, if confirmed, is not spread off- site. Any removal work of the plant or associated soil would be dealt with appropriately (disposal on site and location recorded as part of the construction plans) and in-line with legislation.

In order to avoid the potential of harm to bats and nesting birds that may be found during conversion of the barn and to provide biodiversity benefit to the local and wider environment, the following standard practice would be employed:

- Standard Construction methods would be employed to ensure no impact on the environment from dust and noise during construction.
- Ground clearance and demolition of buildings would be done wherever possible outside the main bird breeding season (Mar-Aug), however, some species, such as swallow, can have second or third broods into September if weather conditions are favourable and so

The detailed designs forthcoming at the Reserved Matters stages of the full planning application process will need to be provided in line with the standards and planning controls outlined within this Design Code.

*Encl:*

*'Proposed site entrance and visibility splays' Plan (Drawing No. KL2895).*