

Distington

DISTINGTON BIG LOCAL: LEGION LAND PROJECT PLANNING STATEMENT

March 2021



CLIENT: **Distington Big Local.**
Distington Community Centre,
Church Road,
Distington,
Cumbria
CA14 5TE

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: 01946 834297 (info@distingtonbiglocal.org)

PROJECT MANAGER: Ingrid Morris (ingrid.biglocal@gmail.com)

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CONTACT: **Bill Halsall** Senior Partner - Architect
Alan Ravenhill Associate - Architect
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DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

SITE AREA: 1.7 acres – 0.73 Hectares
British legion Land.
Land to the rear of Church Road. Main Street
and Chapel Street, Distington, Cumbria.

DETAILS



PROPOSED HOUSING MIX & DESIGN STANDARDS

BUNGALOWS

3x2 bed 3 person M4 (3)

Wheelchair user dwellings (with Dementia Adaptations)

Internal floor area of each unit 82m²

6x2 bed 3 person M4 (3)

Wheelchair user dwellings

Internal floor area of each unit 76m²

2x2 bed 3 person M4 (2)

Adaptable bungalow

Internal floor area of each unit 62m²

TOTAL 11

APARTMENT BLOCK UNIT MIX

9x2 bed 3 person M4 (2)

Accessible and adaptable dwellings

Internal floor area of each unit 65-67m²

26x1 bed 2 person M4 (2)

Accessible and adaptable dwellings

Internal floor area of each unit 55m²

TOTAL 35

OVERALL TOTAL 46 NO UNITS

The Distington Legion Land project is being developed to the best current standards of design for an ageing population.

These include:

- HAPPI principles
- National Described Space Standards
- Design for Dementia' Principles
- Building Regulations Part M4.

DETAILS

LOCATION

Distington is a large village in West Cumbria 3 miles (4.8 km) south of Workington and 4 miles (6.4 km) north-northeast of Whitehaven. Distington is also the name of a Civil Parish covering Distington village and also the nearby settlements at Gilgarran and Pica. Historically a part of Cumberland the area now comes under the jurisdiction of Copeland Borough Council. Distingtons population in 2018 stood at - 3908.

PREVIOUS LAND USE

The site is a cleared site located centrally within the village of Distington.

The site currently has one pedestrian and vehicle access point, located off Church Road, which will be retained as the main vehicle and pedestrian access-way into the new development.

The British Legion Club was originally located at the Northern end of the site, but this building was demolished a number of years previous. Historical records and investigations show that part of the site was recently used for a small market garden/Allotments, but other than this limited use, historical plans indicate that the site has not been built upon. Refer to Design & Access Statement Appendices for further mapping information.

The edge of the site is bounded by residential housing/rear gardens on three sides and the 'fairy path' on the other, which leads from Chapel street through to Distington Primary School on Church Road. A topographical survey of the site has been completed and shows a slope across the site of approx. 2 meters in a North East to South West direction.

The site currently comprises an area of tarmac which original offered parking provision for the British Legion and rough open land. Refer to Design & Access Statement Appendices for site photographs. A full Desktop Study and Phase I Site Investigation have been completed and submitted as supplementary information as part of the planning application.

The Site investigation recently completed, confirms that the ground offers good bearing capacity 'firm to stiff' but tests show poor filtration/soak-away potential. As a result a sustainable drainage system SUDs is not proposed. On site attenuation has formed part of an integrated drainage strategy submitted with the planning application.

THE SITE

PRE PLANNING DISCUSSIONS

Initial pre planning discussions have been ongoing with the planning development manager Nick Hayhurst and his team. Copies of his comments are enclosed in Appendix 1. The planner has stated.

'The site comprises brownfield land and lies within the settlement boundary of Distington which is listed as a Local Centre within the adopted Copeland Local Plan. On this basis the principle of development is considered to be acceptable. The nature of the use is welcome and this would help meet the local housing needs.'

The new development proposed for the Legion Land is a unique opportunity for a significant project of community led homes. DBL Ltd's vision is to turn this wasteland in the centre of our village into a high-quality housing development. We want to build innovative, state of the art, dementia friendly and future proof housing for the over 55's. The development will enable residents to stay in their village rather than having to move out of area for appropriate housing. It will enable people who have, or had a local connection to Distington, to return to the village. It will also put Distington on the map for innovative housing, not just for local residents but also those from a wider area.

LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY

This new development of housing satisfies guidance and direction detailed within Copeland local development framework 2013 – 28 (adopted 2013) in the following ways;

Raising Aspirations;

'Raise people's aspirations Health and well-being Life chances and aspiration Sustain and develop Copeland as a quality place Housing and neighbourhood Access to facilities and services Build on Copeland's prosperity Local economy Poverty and exclusion Work in partnership across Copeland Local/community planning Improving joint working'

Creating Quality place;

'Facilitating the right housing offer to support growth and sustainability; settlement-based development to keep existing businesses and residents and attract new; distinctive local landscapes with biodiversity conserved and enhanced; making towns and villages where people want to live; Building prosperity – settlement-focussed development; diversifying the economy by playing to Copeland's strengths; maintaining and building on local businesses and jobs; centres of excellence for developing technology and job opportunities; stronger connectivity.'

THE SITE

Within the Copeland development framework, the recommendation is for new quality homes to meet growth and aspirations within the local and wider area which this project will achieve. As the report states

'A key 'driver' is change in household and population. The economic growth of course has implications for housing needs and the supporting infrastructure of community services, transport and so on. But a future Copeland with about the same number of jobs as today will nonetheless need more homes and services, because of other changes in society, such as falling average household size, and rising expectations.'

The Copeland Core Strategy also recommends new housing that caters for the changing demographics within the local and wider area. As the report confirms, *"the need is for more older person housing to facilitate fluidity allowing for down sizing and a release of larger properties for larger families"*. The report states;

'Analyses from Cumbria Vision and the County Council suggest that the 'jobs driver' of growth in households and population is only part of the story: about half the requirement is accounted for by the population change and decreasing household size which is expected to occur almost irrespective of the economic/employment scenario chosen. Much of the growing need will come from demographic change: that is, change in population characteristics. In particular, people are living longer, and they are living on their own more and for longer. Cumbria County Council's population scenarios suggest that Copeland's population could grow by some 5,000 (about 7%) over the The Core Strategy Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028: Adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Page 12 next 25 years - but within that, the oldest two age groups (over-60s) would be growing by over 80%, whilst the numbers in the middle age-groups (30-59) could be falling by some 18%.

Combined with people's lifestyle changes, this indicates that - as with the rest of the country - the average size of households could be falling: in Copeland's case from about 2.2 people per household to 2.08 over the next decade, and possibly even lower beyond that. So, it is likely that much of the additional housing requirement will occur however the economy performs.

THE SITE

At a national level, the new development complies with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012, a continuation of previous national planning policy it does however stress using the planning system to promote growth and sustainable development. As Copeland has stated within its core strategy document

'Copeland needs development to modernise and diversify the economy and provide a better range of housing and a better quality of life for our people, whilst respecting and nurturing our exceptional environment.'

Furthermore, this new care village specifically meets the Objectives for Sustainable Settlements as discussed and recommended within the core strategy document.

These objectives relate to the quality of life for local people, ensuring that settlements meet the needs of all: in terms of access to housing, community services and facilities, leisure, sport and employment.

Strategic Objective 7 *Enable a 'balanced housing market' ensuring that all housing is of good quality, affordable, responds to differing needs from deprived industrial communities to the more prosperous rural areas, and is provided in places where people want to live.*

Policy ST1 – Strategic Development Principles

iii) Ensure development creates a residential offer which meets the needs and aspirations of the Borough's housing markets.

In summary, this proposal of 46 New homes, will directly respond to the key guidance outlined both at a national level and within The Core Strategy Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 in providing New high quality homes to meet the changing demographics of the area now and in the future, stimulating growth and regeneration within Distington and the wider area of Copeland.

THE SITE

PRE PLANNING DISCUSSIONS

Initial pre planning discussions have been ongoing with the planning development manager Nick Hayhurst and his team. Copies of his comments follow

APPENDICES 1

RE: Distington big local - Proposed New development Apartments and Bungalows

[Details](#)

To: Alan Ravenhill, Cc: Chloe Unsworth, Sarah Papaleo, Robinson, Michael D

Hello Alan

Thank you for your e mail and attached plans following our recent meeting.

I have noted that your latest revisions have addressed some of the points that we have previously raised. The separation distances are more appropriate and appear to meet the standards set out in our Local Plan policy. You have also attempted to mitigate overlooking issues by restricting or moving windows on the 2 storey element. I think there is still scope to improve the position on the top flat that we discussed at our meeting. It would be good if you could work up an alternative layout for this unit for our further consideration.

The main planning issue to resolve is the scale and height of the three storey element of the scheme. I acknowledge that the number of units is key to make the scheme viable. In our previous meeting you suggested that you would look at opportunities to incorporate accommodation within the roof space of the three storey block. I am not sure if you have explored this option fully or demonstrated that it is not feasible. Notwithstanding this I note that you have attempted to show some views of the development from outside of the site boundary in order to demonstrate that the third floor will not have a significant visual impact when viewed in the context of the overall village. Whilst this is useful I would also like you to undertake further analysis of longer term views from both within Distington village itself and also from the approaches into the village to allow further assessment. I would appreciate it if you could provide views from the north of the village looking south and also from the southern entrance into the village looking north. In terms of points within the village, views from Barf Road which is slightly elevated in comparison to the development site might be the best option to enable an assessment of visual impact.

As agreed at the meeting we have sent across a copy of your plans across to Michael Robinson at Cumbria County Council so that he can advise on highways and drainage issues.

I hope the above comments are useful. Let me know if you need to discuss anything else.

Regards

Nick

Nick Hayhurst
Planning Development Manager
Copeland Borough Council

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APPENDICES 1

RE: re - Distington Proposed New Extra Care facility and Bungalows - Pre Application meeting

[Details](#)

To: Alan Ravenhill, Cc: Sarah Papaleo, Chloe Unsworth

Hello Alan

Following on from our last meeting we have now had the opportunity to visit the site to consider your draft proposals further.

The site comprises brownfield land and lies within the settlement boundary of Distington which is listed as a Local Centre within the adopted Copeland Local Plan. On this basis the principle of development is considered to be acceptable. The nature of the use is welcome and this would help meet the local housing needs.

The main issues raised by the proposal include:

- Scale of the development proposed
- Impact on character and appearance of Distington
- Impacts on residential amenity
- Highway safety

The character of Distington is essentially two storey and although the site is surrounded by existing housing and therefore relatively contained, the three storey element of the proposal is a concern. It will make the proposed development clearly visible when viewed from outside the site and would be out of scale with the general built form of the village.

In addition, the impacts of the three storey development and the proximity to existing houses is a major concern. The separation distances (marked on the attached plan) fall below the separation distances set out in Policy DM12 of the adopted Local Plan. The minimum separation distances are as followed:

- A minimum of 21 metres between directly facing elevations of dwellings containing windows of habitable rooms
- A minimum of 12 metres between directly facing elevations of dwellings containing windows of habitable rooms and a gable or windowless elevations

The three storey element and the proximity to the boundary will accentuate impacts on the amenities of the occupiers of the existing housing.

As referenced in our recent meeting, access and highway safety is also an issue. You should investigate options to control the protection of the required visibility splays. The provision of additional car parking to the rear of houses to serve these existing units is welcome and will help to reduce on street parking requirements along Church Road.

On the basis of the above I would advise you to consider a reduction in scale of the three storey units and a reconfiguration of the layout to improve the separation distances and reduce impact on residential amenity in accordance with the standards outlined in the Local Plan.

I hope the above comments clarify matters. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information. We are keen to continue discussion on this proposal.

I look forward to your response.

Regards

Nick

Nick Hayhurst
Planning Development Manager
Copeland Borough Council

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APPENDICES 1



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