

Affordable Housing Statement: Jefferson Park, Whitehaven

Summary of proposal

The proposed development will provide 14 new affordable rented dwellings, which is a net increase of 14 dwellings.

Scheme description

The development site is in the ownership of Home Group who are the principle Housing Association working within Copeland. Home Group bought the site, which had planning approval for 48 dwellings, from the receiver of the previous developer. At the time it was only viable to complete the properties that had already been started and a total of 24 homes (10 houses and 14 flats) were completed in 2012. Home Group always intended to return with a new application for the remainder of the site but due to the expensive nature of the ground conditions it has only recently been possible to do so.

The original Application had the remainder of the site to be developed as flats however the demand for flats in the area is limited, we are therefore proposing to complete the development with 14 x 2 bed 70sqm houses.

Affordable housing provision

This is 100% affordable provision supplied by a registered social landlord and in part funded through Homes England grant we would therefore not expect any S106 affordable homes requirement to be placed on the planning approval.

Whilst Home Group has a significant stock in Whitehaven the majority of these are 3 bed houses.

The demand for 2-bedroom homes has increased due to welfare reform, making affordability more manageable for families who fully occupy rented homes.

Welfare reform rules were none existent when most of the existing estates were built and the issue of affordability was not a consideration in the same way. We need to provide new housing that fits current demographics and believe that by providing 2 bed properties on Jefferson Park it enables smaller families and those looking for a first tenancy to manage a home in a stable community and look to the future with a stable housing provision. This development of all 2 bed homes will help to go towards balancing the housing offer in this part of Whitehaven.

Evidence: from Choice Based Lettings since January 2019

Jefferson Park

2 houses have been advertised, one 2 bed and one 3 bed, both properties were advertised and matched on the 1st advert with plenty of people on the shortlist.

8 flats have been advertised and while we always have people bidding on the shortlists each week, these were sometimes more difficult to let particularly those above ground floor. Some had to be re-advertised due to the applicants having

medical needs or being able to afford the rent and service charge possibly in some cases due to bedroom tax, but we were able to let them all.

Mirehouse (East and West):

13 houses, 9 Bungalows and 1 flat advertised. Mirehouse is a popular, high demand estate and there are always bids placed on any advert. Most of the properties were matched on 1st advert.