

Appeal Statement

Outline Planning Permission (With All Matters Reserved) for
Redevelopment of Builders Yard to Residential - Amended Scheme for
Previous Application 4/20/2461/001

Weston, Beckermest

LPA Reference 4/21/2458/001

S U M M I T
T o w n P l a n n i n g

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Appeal Statement has been prepared to support an appeal against the decision of Copeland Borough Council to refuse planning permission for the use of a builder's yard to support the delivery of up to 2 residential properties at Weston, Beckermeth.
- 1.2 Following a description of the site and surrounding area, the report will set out an overview of relevant planning policy and an outline of the case.
- 1.3 It will be demonstrated that the reuse of this brownfield land will reduce overall car journeys, has access to public transport and cycle links and would represent sustainable development.

2. Background

- 2.1 An application for the redevelopment of a builder's yard to provide up to 2 residential units was made following the refusal of a similar application for a larger site which included part of the garden of the immediately adjacent existing dwelling. This element was removed and the application reflects only the former builders yard area.
- 2.2 The application was supported by the Parish Council and therefore determined by Planning Committee on 15 December 2021. The vote was 3 for the recommendation of refusal, no votes against and 4 abstentions.
- 2.3 The reason for refusal given is:
- The application site is located within the Hamlet of Oaklands, which is identified as open countryside. The proposed development seeks to develop the existing brownfield site for residential purposes, however a need for a development of this nature to be located outside of the Borough's recognised settlements has not been demonstrate. Access to community facilities in the vicinity of the site area is limited. Access to key services from the site is also limited and there are no footways directly linking the application site to the available services. Given the spread of services and facilities, and the lack of sustainable transport links the development is likely to rely on the need to travel by private car. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies ST1, ST2, SS3 of the Copeland Local Plan, and Paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 79 and Part 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

3. Site Description

- 3.1 The site itself is a builders yard and office forming the administrative base of Atkinsons. Approximately 2 people work from the site daily with several daily deliveries and also vans going from base to site as the business continues to wind down. The building sits surrounded by mature trees and these would generally be retained to the boundaries with some limited removal in the garden of the existing residential property known as Weston. The site is clearly defined by these trees.
- 3.2 The dwellings will be provided on the site of the builder's' yard with the store and office being demolished and the external hard surfaced area being removed.

4. Case for the Appellant

- 4.1 The Appellant contends that the site is brownfield with a lawful use as a builders yard. When the business was fully operational, there were over 12 people working from the site with further journeys for deliveries etc. The redevelopment of the site to provide 2 dwellings would significantly reduce vehicle movements associated with the site which would be beneficial to sustainability objectives.
- 4.2 There are a range of services within 2 miles of the development site:
Primary School - available at Thornhill, approximately 0.78 miles away
Public House - available at Beckermeth, approximately 0.67 miles away
Nursery Provision - available at Beckermeth, approximately 0.58 miles away
Village Hall - available at Haile, approximately 1.02 miles away
Church - available at Haile, approximately 1.1 miles away
Retail - available at Egremont, approximately 1.87 miles away
Bus stop within 300m, accessed by pavement
Cyclepath (offline in relation to road) opposite the site
Employment site within 700m
Sellafield within 1.9 miles
The appellant contends that there are a range of services within walking and cycling distances. Again, any vehicle movements in relation to this would be less than the current movements generated by 8 employees plus deliveries (which were several per day) and vehicle movements from base to various sites.
- 4.3 The site is brownfield, the redevelopment of this site would bring benefits to the area and the existing dwellings adjacent to the site.
- 4.4 Whilst the site is not in a recognised settlement as noted in the Copeland Local Plan, planning decisions should be influenced by other material considerations. The appellant contends that the use of brownfield land, the good access to public transport and cycle infrastructure and the reduction of vehicle movements in relation to the lawful use of the site should weigh in favour of the redevelopment of the site. The proposed is wholly in the limits of the brownfield site and there is therefore no encroachment into the open countryside.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Whilst not a straightforward site, the Appellant considers that the strong local support for the scheme demonstrates that the site is appropriate for a considered redevelopment to residential purposes and in so doing would not cause any demonstrable harm but rather would improve the overall sustainability of the site by lowering vehicle movements. In addition, it would have a beneficial impact on the residential amenity of existing neighbours, would not encroached into the open countryside, would represent the beneficial use of a brownfield site and would have a beneficial impact on the general visual appearance of the site.
- 5.2 The Inspector is respectfully requested to allow this appeal.