

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Erection of 95 dwellings with associated infrastructure

Address: Land at Parkside Road, Cleator Moor

Reference: 4/25/2110/0F1

Date: 22/04/25

Description: This site is an attractive area of field and raised hedgerows on the edge of Cleator Moor

Conclusion: No objection (see suggestions below)

Assessment:

- In the heritage impact assessment for this site as part of its inclusion in the local plan housing allocations, it was given an overall heritage impact score of 4/12, indicating a low level of impact but that alternative locations for housing development may nonetheless be preferable.
- This is due to expected low impact on the setting of the highly significant Lake District World Heritage Site.
- The following assessment was made during the allocation process:
 - The site is part of the agricultural setting of the Lake District, making a small positive contribution.
 - Development here would result in a reduction in the extent of the greenery surrounding the Lake District, and increased contrast between the character inside the Lake District and outside it.
 - In order to minimise impact, an attractive edge to the development should be secured, with greenery, softness and planting.
 - Hard surfaces and unbroken lines should be minimised.
- The existing urban edge is of poor quality, and the development will be of higher quality. Therefore, although it advances the position of the urban edge, it will improve its appearance when viewed from the landscape to the east.
- Coverage of trees appears to be fairly good. My preference for parking is that it would be positioned to the sides of houses and of fairly limited area, with areas to the front reserved for gardens to provide a more welcoming appearance, and additional shared parking spaces allocated here and there in small groups as needed. Parking tends to work better when positioned on the north sides of houses as this makes the cars less visible, prevents them being damaged by excess UV and heat, and frees up the sunnier sides of the house for the main garden.
- The design of the scheme appears car-focused, with layouts, drive positions and orientations of buildings subordinate to the road layout, rather than the road layout serving the optimum arrangement of buildings for daylighting, views, sense of place and landscape.
- It should be demonstrated that the houses have been designed to avoid overheating in summer. This is an increasing problem in the UK's housing stock, and a common blind spot in our future-proofing.

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

Paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 210 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 212 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 215).

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 219)

The Copeland area’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- BE2 states that development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or important archaeological sites) and their settings. The more important the asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.
- DS4 outlines the Council’s expectation that all new development will meet high-quality design standards that contribute positively to the health and well-being of residents.
- DS5 refers to the importance of achieving good standards of design in both hard and soft landscaping.

Sammy Woodford

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