

# **Land to the west of Valley View Road, Whitehaven**

Full planning application for the “Importation and Deposit of Earth Material to Reprofile Existing Ground Levels/Contours; Installation of Surface Water Drainage Infrastructure including Installation of Two Permanent Land Drains and Creation of New Surface Water Attenuation Basin with Connecting Swale & Outfall and Installation of Foul Water Drainage Infrastructure

Planning Statement

May 2022

# 1) Introduction

- 1.1 The following Planning Statement supports a full planning application for;
- Full planning application for the “Importation and Deposit of Earth Material to Reprofile Existing Ground Levels/Contours; Installation of Surface Water Drainage Infrastructure including Installation of Two Permanent Land Drains and Creation of New Surface Water Attenuation Basin with Connecting Swale & Outfall and Installation of Foul Water Drainage Infrastructure.”
- 1.2 In January 2022, Story Homes carried out a public consultation event at Gameriggs Community Centre in respect to its future housing plans for the site. This engineering planning application is for enabling works to support a planned future development of the next phase of the Edgehill Park site – to be known as Edgehill Park phase 4.
- 1.3 The works include the movement of c16,000m<sup>3</sup> of existing earth material (that is currently piled on the ongoing Edgehill Park phase 3 construction site) to be reprofiled in the application site and to create a future developable platform.
- 1.4 The proposals also include new land and site drainage works to support the controlled site drainage discharge and to help protect surrounding users, including the existing properties bordering the site at Valley View Road.
- 1.5 The application includes the following documents:
- Full planning application form and fee of £2028
  - Planning Statement, May 2022
  - Location Plan, drawing no. 20095.90.9.LP
  - Topographical Survey, drawing no. 230720-EHP-SH-TOPO-001
  - Site Sections (1 of 2), drawing no. 7843/SK09 Rev A
  - Site Sections (2 of 2), drawing no. 7843/SK08 Rev A
  - Proposed New Land Drainage, drawing no. 7843 / SK10
  - Proposed Outfalls, drawing no. 7853 / SK11
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Jan 2022
  - eDNA letter, Urban Green, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022
  - Geo-environmental Appraisal, Report No. 4046-G-R024, Dec 2021
- 1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, this planning application is not for housing on the land. While it is Story Homes intention to continue its Edgehill Park development into the application site, that shall be subject to a separate full application for up to 120 dwellings. Following the earlier community consultation event, plans are currently being drawn up and shall be submitted under a separate application in the near future. Story Homes is seeking to separate the works in order to achieve an advanced start on the engineering works and create space for its ongoing build.

## 2) Site Description

- 2.1 The Site is agricultural grazing land located on the southern periphery of Whitehaven and sits between the ongoing Edgehill Park development to the west and the Greenbank housing estate to the east. The existing public footpath no. 431031 dissects the site around its middle section, connecting the existing the Edgehill Park development and Greenbank.
- 2.2 The landform is sloping from the north-west to east / south-east. The land slopes circa 30m from its highest to lowest point. Story Homes existing SUDs pond is located adjacent to the south-east of the site. A private dwelling known as High House sits in an island of land near the western boundary of the site.
- 2.3 The site is known for build purposes as Edgehill Park phase 4.

## 3) Proposed Works

### Earthworks

- 3.1 Story Homes has accumulated circa 16,000m<sup>3</sup> of clean surplus earth arisings from its ongoing and adjacent Edgehill Park development to the west. It has become necessary to dispose of the material to make space for the housing currently under construction.
- 3.2 The surplus arisings are proposed to be spread across the main future development platform in the application site. Levels shall be lowered and raised by a few metres in places.

### Drainage Works

- 3.3 Story Homes is seeking to carry out the construction of a new SUDS pond and connecting swale and outfall. The pond is appropriately sized to accommodate a future development.
- 3.4 A foul water sewer is proposed in Gameriggs Road to ready the site for a future gravity connection to the existing foul infrastructure adjacent to St Bees Road.
- 3.5 The proposals include two new permanent land drains to help protect the site and adjacent properties on Valley View Road from overland surface water flow that occurs during high rainfall. Story Homes is aware of existing problems as reported from residents at the public consultation event held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The land drain will drain by gravity to the existing ravine to the south of the site. At the north boundary, a new land drain and 300mm high clay bund is proposed to channel water around the western edge of the site, also into the ravine to the south.

## 4) Planning Balance

- 4.1 The proposed works shall mean that a home is found for a large quantity of surplus earth material at the ongoing Edgehill Park development. It shall free up space for the safe ongoing build.
- 4.2 The opportunity to relocate surplus earth from the ongoing and adjacent Edgehill Park development and engineer it into a new build platform on the application site is considered a sustainable disposal strategy. In comparison to the alternative of taking the material off-site to tip, the proposal shall save on a significant number of heavy vehicle movements and the resultant carbon emissions and impact on public roads.
- 4.3 The earthworks shall result in a small change in the visual profile of the land which shall be virtually indistinguishable from nearby public receptor points. The proposal will therefore not impact upon the Borough's landscape, in accordance with Copeland Local Plan Policy ENV5 – Protecting and Enhancing the Borough's Landscapes.
- 4.4 The reprofiling works will help maximise the main development platform in the north-western portion of the site, leaving aside the undevelopable steep slopes. This shall help sustain a future efficient use of land to be considered in a future planning application.
- 4.5 The proposed new land drains shall control existing surface water run-off from land to the north (not in Story Homes control). The land drains shall help protect neighbouring interests of acknowledged importance including the properties at Valley View Road by diverting water away. The drains will enable a robust future construction management strategy for the intended phase 4 housing development (subject to separate planning approval).
- 4.6 From an ecological perspective, the site is predominantly poor semi-improved grazing grassland. eDNA surveys have been carried out and there are no Great Crested Newts within the targeted wetland areas. Overall, there is considered to be no adverse impact upon ecological interests. The new SUDS pond shall provide opportunity for suitable biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Local Plan policy EN3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- 4.7 The private dwelling of High House and the public footpath shall be unaffected and retain access in their current form.
- 4.8 Approval of this application shall help ready the site for a future Story Homes (plug and play) housing development. It shall mean that Story Homes can commit to continued significant investment in the area, securing jobs and economic development in the longer term. Since the site is identified as a proposed housing

allocation in the draft Copeland Local Plan, there is a very high degree of expectation that the enabling works shall come to fruition.