

**From:** No Reply Web  
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**Subject:** Comment from Online Planning System

Reference: 4/21/2432/0F1

Submitted on Wednesday, 10 September 2025 - 12:42pm Submitted values are:

Application: 4/21/2432/0F1

Name: Friends of the Lake District

Address: Murley Moss Business Park, Kendal, LA9 7SS

Email:

Comments:

Thank you for consulting Friends of the Lake District on the above application following the receipt of additional documents. It is assumed that any documents which have been superseded will be marked as such on the website to avoid doubts over which now form part of the planning application.

#### Principle of Development

We are pleased that development boundary has been amended to remove the proposed residential development on land to the west of the Wagon Way. The site boundary now matches that allocated for housing within the Local Plan and is therefore acceptable in principle.

We do however have some concerns regarding the details of the proposal as set out in the new documents.

#### Landscape Impacts

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment identifies a number of negative landscape effects including moderate-substantial effects on Kells Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA 8). The report states that this LCA is a coastline of exceptionally fine scenic quality of high value.

In terms of visual effects, paragraphs 8.3 and 8.7 note that the development will also have negative impacts on users of the England Coast Path and the Heritage Coast Extension area.

“Land to the west of Wagon Way is located in area identified for an extension of the St Bees Heritage Coast. The proposed boundary for the Heritage Coast follows the existing Wagon Way footpath as it is a definite boundary in the absence of any other equivalent feature on the ground to follow to the west closer to the cliffs. Appreciation of the extension area landscape would primarily be by users of the England Coast Path. There is a break in slope which runs north-south through two arable fields to the east of this path, including the field containing the site. The proposed development would be located to the east of this break on a relatively flat plateau and views of the proposed development would be limited to roof tops of homes on its western edge. Effects on the Heritage Coast extension area are judged to be slight and negative.” (8.3)

“Moderate and negative visual effects would be experienced by users of the on a short section of the England Coastal Path as it passes to the south of the Phase 1 area of the site and in distant views north from the path where it is on elevated ground in the St Bees Heritage Coast. From other coast paths the visual effects would be moderate and negative, and moderate and positive where the waste ground on the former Marchon site is replaced by a housing development. Where

views of the proposed development are available from coastal paths, the proposed development is mostly viewed in the context of the settlement edge of Whitehaven.” (8.7)

Para 8.9 concludes “the landscape has some ability to absorb the proposed development, subject to careful building and landscape design (our emphasis).”

Paragraph 8.3 appears to contradict the “Landscape Plan without POS Section AA” drawing that suggests that the eye level of users of the Wagon Way would be above the 1m high hedge stone kept shown. If this drawing is correct, views of the proposed development from the Wagon Way and Heritage Coast extension area would not be limited to rooftops but vehicles on private driveways parallel to the path would also be visible. This would suggest that the effects on the Heritage Coast extension area and users of the England Coast Path may have been underestimated in the LVIA and greater than “slight and negative” effects should have been identified as parked vehicles will introduce additional clutter and glare parallel to the route.

One potential way to reduce these effects would be to relocate the private driveways and parking spaces to the rear of the houses which run parallel to the Wagon Way. We appreciate that this may involve the loss of one or two houses on this part of the site but they could be relocated elsewhere.

## Lighting

All proposed external lighting should be in accordance with the Cumbria Good Lighting Technical Advice Note. This is particularly important given the proximity of important nature designations and the Heritage Coast. We would advise that lighting is kept to a minimum and colour temperature used is 2300 kelvins or less.

## Affordable housing

The Copeland Local Plan identifies that there is an affordable housing need in Whitehaven; Policy H18 therefore requires that at least 10% of housing on new developments over 10 units is affordable unless certain circumstances apply. The applicant is proposing to deliver no affordable housing as part of the scheme for viability reasons.

Policy H18, states that:

A lower proportion of affordable housing or an alternative tenure split will only be accepted in particular circumstances. In such cases developers must demonstrate, to the Council’s satisfaction, why the current site specific circumstances mean that meeting the requirements of this policy would render the development unviable. This should be in the form of a clear, bespoke viability assessment.

Sites of 10 or more residential units that provide less than the policy compliant 10% affordable housing contribution are required to submit a detailed viability assessment and large, multi-phased developments will be subject to early and late review mechanisms to ensure that affordable housing contributions are increased if viability improves over time. If the late stage viability review indicates that the development is capable of delivering more affordable housing than at the time planning permission was granted, payment in lieu of on-site provision may be accepted.

We accept that this is a previously developed site with considerable remediation costs. Viability constraints on this site are highlighted in the Local Plan Viability Assessment, although this was on the basis of a greater number of homes and at a time when the Cumbria Mine was proposed on the adjacent site. The Planning Statement suggests that a site-specific Viability Assessment has been undertaken however this document does not appear to be publicly available. It is therefore unclear whether the applicant has sought assistance from Homes England to help deliver

affordable housing, e.g. through accessing their Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land Fund or similar (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/brownfield-infrastructure-and-land-fund>). The applicant should be asked to engage fully with Homes England to try and deliver affordable housing on the site to meet identified needs if they haven't done so already.

We would also recommend that the planning authority requires a review of viability to be undertaken when a reserved matters (or full) application is submitted for phase 2 of the development (as permitted by Policy H18).

Summary of response: Neutral