

# **PLANNING/ DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

## **Outline Application for Residential Development**

### **Land at Scalegill Road, Moor Row, Whitehaven, Cumbria**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of an outline application for residential development on land to the north of Scalegill Road, Moor Row. This Statement considers the planning policy and material planning considerations relevant to the proposal.

1.2 The site extends in a northerly direction from Scalegill Road. The northern boundary of the site abuts the embankment to the Whitehaven-Rowrah cycleway. The western boundary of the site immediately adjoins existing development at Rusper Drive. Rusper Drive consists of a relatively new development of individually designed dwellings. The land to the east is a playing field with a large equipped play area and car park to the frontage and sports pitches to the rear. Beyond, to the east, is Moor Row Primary School and terraced housing. Moor Row Social Club is located to the southern boundary, partially occupying the site frontage. The remaining frontage has sufficient room for the site access and landscaping.

#### **2.0 The Proposal**

2.1 The proposal is accompanied by an Indicative Site Layout Plan. The site offers itself to a linear form of development extending northwards. The area of land between the Rusper Drive development and Moor Row Social Club will form the access and a landscaped entrance to the site. The Indicative Site Layout

Plan access shows 19 detached dwellings sited in an arrangement to comply with Policy DM12 of the Copeland Local Plan. The dwellings are positioned in a low density arrangement with significant amenity space and separation between buildings.

2.2 The site entrance will be formed by creating a junction table at Scalegill Road. This will help maintain traffic speeds and together with the landscaping will create an attractive entrance to the site. The creation of the junction table will involve the removal of an existing speed hump and should have an equal, if not greater effect, on reducing traffic speeds than the existing traffic hump.

2.3 An existing public footpath runs along the western and northern boundaries of the site effectively connecting Scalegill Road to the cycleway. This footpath will be maintained. It is also the intention to create an additional footpath link direct from the estate road to the public footpath to enhance connectivity. This will be in addition to the formal surfaced cycleway access which extends through the adjoining playing fields.

### **3.0 Planning Policy**

3.1 The relevant planning policy documents are as follows:

- (i) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021;
- (ii) Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 (CLP adopted December 2013);
- (iii) Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 “Saved Allocations”.

3.2 The majority of the application site is outside the settlement boundary for Moor Row identified within the CLP Core Strategy documents. The site access area is within the Settlement Boundary which extends to include Moor Row

Social Club and a proportion of the frontage development of Rusper Drive. Technically, the majority of the site is therefore classed as being in open countryside. Policy ST2 of the CLP classifies Moor Row as a Local Centre. It is anticipated that a Local Centre should accommodate housing within the defined physical limits of development, possible small extension sites on the edges of settlements, provide housing to meet general and local needs, affordable housing and windfall sites.

3.3 It is understood that the Council accepts that those parts of Policy ST2 that refer to the settlement boundaries are out of date and can be given limited weight in decision making. This is primarily because the emerging Local Plan has highlighted that extensions to boundaries will be required to meet identified housing needs.

3.4 The draft Local Plan 2017-2035 has reached the Preferred Options Draft stage and will eventually replace the Core Strategy. The emerging Local Plan can also be given limited weight as it is currently in a relatively early stage of the plan making process.

3.5 The NPPF July 2021 provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11(d) provides that where there are no development plan policies, or the development policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, Local Authorities should grant planning permission unless:

(i) The application of the policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or

(ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed the policies in this framework is taken as a whole.

3.6 The site does not form part of a protected area, neither is it an asset of particular importance in the manner considered by the NPPF. Accordingly, paragraph 11(d)(i) does not apply. It is therefore necessary to consider whether any of the adverse impacts of the development which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

3.7 Policy SS3 of the Core Strategy requires applications for housing development to demonstrate how the proposal helps to deliver a range of choice of good quality and affordable homes for everyone. Proposals are assessed on their individual needs and requirements of individual housing market areas as set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This includes promoting a more balanced mix of house types and tenures within that market area consistent with the evidence contained in the SHMA. The SHMA gives priority to establishing a supply of sites for high quality family housing. This housing is to be primarily focused on the principle and Key Service Centres of the borough. Notwithstanding, Local Centres are expected to contribute towards this objective and due to its character and location Moor Row is a sustainable option for providing modest housing growth.

3.8 The housing market in Moor Row has traditionally been imbalanced with a disproportionate supply of older terraced housing. This proposal meets an identified need for the housing in the locality for higher quality family housing. The site also has potential to meet some demand for self-build housing. Due to the socio-economic characteristics of Copeland the need for affordable housing in the form of social housing or intermediate affordable housing is very limited. This is relatively unusual in the national context and should be considered appropriately in the planning balance.

3.9 The site is considered to occupy a sustainable location for new housing development. The site immediately adjoins local services including the village school area together with a convenient link to the local cycleway network. The site provides opportunities to minimise car journeys.

3.10 The site is also well located to employment and service centres in the wider area. The site is within walking or cycling distance to the Westlakes Science Park and has convenient links to the Principal settlement of Whitehaven and the Key Service Centres of Moor Row and Egremont. Furthermore, the site has a convenient link to the A595 providing access to employment at the Sellafield plant and employment locations throughout the north of the borough.

#### **4.0 Planning Balance**

4.1 The Applicant considers that the planning balance weighs in favour of granting planning permission. The site is located in a sustainable location immediately adjoining a Local Centre. The proposal will deliver a modest number of new homes which meets an identified shortfall within the local

housing market. In turn these new homes will release other homes elsewhere in the housing market contributing positively to the supply of housing within the borough.

4.2 New housing development brings economic benefits particularly during the construction period. The proposed dwellings are of a type, size and quality which are attractive to families living and working within the borough who may otherwise choose to live outside the borough and commute. This is particularly relevant to higher wage earners at the Sellafield plant. The proposed dwellings will provide a level of support and improve the vitality of the local community, local services and businesses.

## **5.0 Highways and Transport**

5.1 The application is accompanied by a Highways and Access Assessment in the form of a letter and a plan of the proposed junction arrangement. The Assessment was initially undertaken on the basis of the site being developed for up to 25 homes. It is anticipated following the Indicative Site Layout that this figure will be reduced to 19. The figures quoted in the Assessment are based on a 25 home development. Clearly a lower number of dwellings will reduce the predicted trip generation accordingly.

5.2 Scalegill Road is traffic calmed in this location with speed bumps. There is an existing speed hump at the site access which will be replaced with the raised speed table. This will maintain the spacing of the traffic calming features. Based on the Manual for Streets the required visibility splay is 2.4m set back and

splays in excess of 43m can be provided in each direction along Scalegill Road giving satisfactory visibility.

5.3 Based on a 25 home development it is expected that the site would generate 13 trips at peak hour. The access is suitable for the proposed development and the traffic generation can easily be accommodated on Scalegill Road and the local road network.

5.4 Regular bus services to Whitehaven, Egremont and Sellafield are available from bus stops on the A595 close to the Scalegill Road junction. There is a safe walking route to these bus stops. It is accepted that the bus stop for north bound services involves crossing the A595.

5.5 The site has immediate access to the cycleway network and is in safe walking distance of the village school and other local services.

## **6.0 Drainage**

6.1 The development is capable of being drained to the mains foul sewer. Surface water drainage can be drained sustainably by being attenuated on site and then with a controlled flow to a water course. The site is not within an area of flood risk.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

7.1 The proposal represents a sustainable form of development to deliver housing to meet an identified need within the locality. The proposal must be considered in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposal will make a contribution towards the supply of new housing and in particular the size and type of housing

for which the Council has identified a shortfall. The site immediately adjoins a local centre and in terms of its location, access to services and sustainable transport represents a sustainable form of development.