

PLANNING STATEMENT

Incorporating a Design & Access Statement

Application for Approval of Reserved Matters for 51 Dwellings including Access and Associated Infrastructure pursuant to Outline Planning Permission 4/18/2472/001 at Keekle Meadows, Cleator Moor, Cumbria

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This statement is submitted in support of an application for the approval of reserved matters for residential development at Keekle Meadows, Cleator Moor. This application for approval of reserved matters is submitted pursuant to the grant of outline planning permission (4/18/2472/001) approved on the 23 January 2019.

1.2 This proposal effectively comprises the fourth and final phase of development at Keekle Meadows. The site layout straddles the boundary between Phase 3 and Phase 4. This is both logical and necessary for the following reasons:

- (a) it ensures a cogent layout which allows development to naturally flow from Phase 3 into Phase 4.
- (b) it optimises the location of the surface water retention basin. Further details of the surface water retention basin are provided in Section 3 below.

1.3 Whilst this approach is logical in terms of site layout it gives rise to a number of accompanying full applications in relation to those parts of the development which straddle the boundary between Phases 3 and 4 and consequently the respective outline planning permissions. Phase 3 benefits from outline planning permission 4/16/2409/001. Reserved matters approval 4/20/2074/0R1 was subsequently granted pursuant to outline 4/16/2409/001. The following applications accompany this application for the approval of reserved matters :

- (i) full application for the formation of the surface water retention basin and landscape area.
- (ii) full application for three dwellings on Plots 87, 88 and 91 with structure landscape zone.
- (iii) an application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act to amend condition 2 of Reserved Matters Approval 4/20/2074/071 to account for the changes in layout but relative to Phase 3.

1.4 Throughout this statement reference is made to various features (including the retention basin) which technically will be dealt with by the above supporting applications. This is to allow the logical consideration of this final phase of development as a whole.

2.0 The Outline Approval

2.1 Outline planning permission 4/18/2472/001 was granted on the 23 January 2019 For Residential Development of up to 65 Dwellings with full details of Access and Associated Infrastructure (“the Outline Approval”). The site was determined to be a sustainable location to meet existing housing needs and was compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Local Planning Policy.

2.2 The benefits of this scheme were considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh any adverse landscape and visual impacts that would result from extending the development into open countryside on the edge of the town. Conditions were attached to the Outline Approval to direct and inform any future submission of reserved matters.

2.3 This application of reserved matters reflects the established principal and basis of the development and complies with the planning conditions attached to the Outline Approval.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The proposal involves extending the existing development infrastructure to the north and west. This phase of development will be accessed directly from the existing Keekle Meadows estate road. The site will use the existing estate road which connects to the B5295 Cleator Moor to Whitehaven Road. The access road has been constructed to a standard capable of extending any additional traffic flow.

3.2 Condition 5 of the Outline Approval requires the junction of the access road to the B5295 to be modified in accordance with a scheme agreed between the developer and the local Highway Authority. This condition was amended by planning permission 4/21/2335/0B1. The modification works will be completed and made fully operational before the 125th dwelling on the estate is occupied.

3.3 This phase of development includes a surface water retention basin. This surface water retention basin will serve both this phase and parts of phase 3. The retention basin will effectively be a substantial landscaped area at the entrance to this phase. The outer part of the basin area will be landscaped with trees and shrubs immediately adjacent to the estate road and proposed development. The retention basin itself will be an area of land lowered by approximately 1m and then laid to grass. The basin will be predominantly “dry” and appear as an area of grassland. In periods of heavy rain the basin will accept surface water which will then be released into the existing surface water drain at a regulated rate.

3.4 The use of a landscape retention basin creates an opportunity to create an open area of landscaping rather than using an underground engineered concrete or similar structure to store surface water. It is considered to be the most sustainable option. The location of the retention pond is solely dictated by the fact that it is at the lowest and optimum ground level. The location of the retention basin is in the only location which it may technically be sited to serve

the development. Notwithstanding, the retention basin does create a landscape separation between Phase 4 and the earlier phase of development. This large green area will in effect appear central on the site and once Phase 4 has been developed out.

3.5 The location of the surface water basin is also dictated by its proximity to the adopted surface water drain which serves the adjoining development. United Utilities require this drain to be protected and accessible. This precludes the drain being located within private plot boundaries or gardens. This in effect means that it must be located under a public highway. This in turn has dictated that the estate road must run effectively in a straight line along the southwest boundary of the site. This allows the development to sit back from the boundary of the site and allow substantial landscaping of the entire southwest boundary. A band of trees, hedging and shrubs will extend the entire length of the southwest boundary of the site.

3.6 The housing layout reflects development elsewhere on the Keekle Meadows estate. The mix of detached and semi-detached houses will be grouped in small cul-de-sacs and groupings round the estate road. The application includes a Schedule of the house types and designs all of which are units which have been proven to meet local demand and have been enormously successful elsewhere on the Keekle Meadows development. There is a mix of ten different house types including detached, semi-detached and bungalows. The proposal provides a mix of house types to meet a variety of local housing needs.

3.7 The development is low density with each dwelling located in a large plot. This creates a significant element of undeveloped and open space within the development. Landscaping has been included in the most visually prominent areas of space. The building design largely reflect the designs and external finishes found elsewhere on the Keekle Meadows development. Minor amendments have been incorporated to allow a level of variety and interest.

4.0 Landscape and Visual Impact

4.1 Together with earlier phases of the Keekle Meadows development the proposal involves the extension of development into open countryside. The area is not subject to any special landscape designation and in granting the outline the Council concluded that the benefits of development significantly and demonstrably outweighed any adverse landscape and visual impacts.

4.2 The visual impact of the development is to a large extent mitigated by its location. The layout of the Keekle Meadows development provides for a relatively modest and narrow amount of development immediately adjoining the B5295 Whitehaven to Cleator Moor road. The existing development extends in a north and easterly direction adjacent to older development at Mill Hill with the newer phases extending north and northwest. There is a significant area of open agricultural land between the B5295 and the proposed Phase 4. This significantly reduces the immediate visual impact of the development on the lower sections of the B5295 between the site entrance and the bridge over the River Keekle.

4.3 To mitigate any effect in this area the development maintains the line of the existing traditional field boundary. An area of landscape planting is proposed for the entire length of this boundary. The location of the estate road and the surface water retention pond will distance the majority of the two story development and will significantly reduce its visual impact.

4.4 The site adjoins an unmade track to the north. This track is used by pedestrians for recreational purposes. This will create some visual impact on users of the footpath. Again, this is mitigated to an extent by the siting of the dwelling units. This is a significant distance from the boundary with tree planting enhancement along the northern boundary.

4.5 The existing development at Keekle Meadows is visually prominent from the higher sections of the B5295 particularly when travelling from the settlement of Whitehaven in an

easterly direction towards Cleator Moor. To an extent this effect reflects the local landscape and character of the area. The settlement of Cleator Moor has always been visually prominent from this location by virtue of the fact that it is sited on a lower plain from this section of the B5295 and provides a wider visual landscape effect taking in the settlement of Cleator Moor together with a much broader landscape including the fells of the Lake District beyond. These views then diminish when travelling east to the lower sections of the B5295.

4.6 The extension of Cleator Moor into open countryside in a western and northerly direction would inevitably create a level of visual impact. This impact is largely dictated by the local landscape and topography. Any impact which can be considered adverse is mitigated by the benefits of the development as a whole. Due to the topography of the site it is not possible to effectively screen the development from the higher land to the west.

4.7 The visual impact is mitigated by the low density of the development which includes significant open areas. This includes the surface water retention basin and a substantial band of structure landscape planting which extends between two areas of development.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The proposal represents a high quality housing scheme to continue to meet local housing needs in this location. The principal of development has been established by the grant of outline planning permission. The availability of housing infrastructure and services will allow the natural continuation of existing development. This will allow the development to be delivered efficiently, sustainably and with the minimum of disruption.

5.2 The proposal reflects the principles of the outline application. The layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reflects existing development in the locality. The Keekle Meadows development has consistently won awards for the quality of development and this proposal reflects these successful principles.