

2016



[Land at Flass Lane, Barrow-in-Furness Design & Development Brief]

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Introduction

This Development Brief is being issued to encourage expressions of interest for the development of the Council's site to the east of Flass Lane housing. The suggested format is for a mix of linked detached or semi-detached private market dwellings.

The site has a distinct character as part of a larger green space with the adjacent allotments that provides a distinctive part of the local street-scene and it is expected that this frontage character will be retained as a key part of any development.

The purpose of this Development Brief is to assist developers in their approach to the site and to inform, guide and deliver a comprehensive and sustainable housing development that responds to the sites character and context. It is intended to provide a starting point for negotiating a high quality development that will help to lift the quality of design not just on this site but across the Borough.

This Brief supports the policies and objectives of the emerging Barrow Borough Local Plan. This site (reference SHL070a- Land to South of Abbey Meadow) is identified as a proposed housing allocation within the Publication Draft Local Plan July 2016 with an indicative yield of 26 dwellings. In the event of competing bids being received a Design Selection Panel may be convened to consider schemes against the criteria set out in this brief.

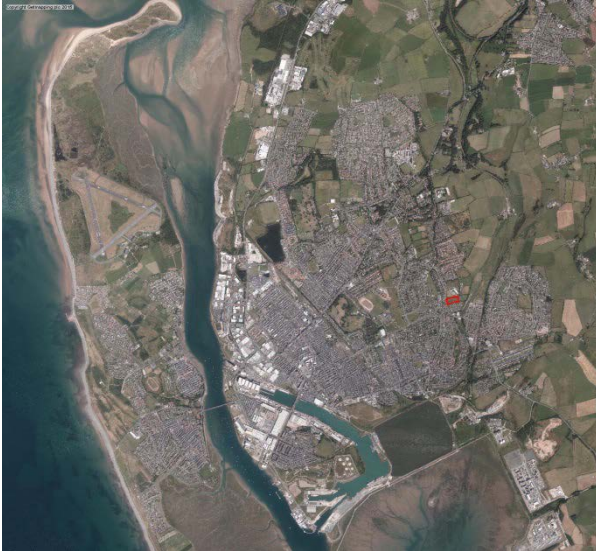
The site comprises a single parcel of land in Council ownership and is shown in the Site Location Plan on page 3.

The Council considers that raising the design quality of development within the Borough is a vital part in improving its attractiveness and competitiveness.

Good design comes from a clear understanding of site character and context. The Council in developing its Green Infrastructure Policies and Strategy is looking to achieve a more coherent approach to site design that balances the need for development with the need to protect the environment for the future.



Good design remains 'indivisible' from good planning (NPPF, p.56, 2012) and is the most visible indicator of investment and regeneration. The delivery of an 'approved' design and finish quality on the ground is considered by the Council to be an essential infrastructure objective.



Site Location Plans



The Site



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Developer Brief

This Brief is to produce a scheme for full planning permission conceived for the whole site in a way that meets the principles and criteria set out in this document and leads to improved choice in the local housing market.

The following preferred approach to general character is suggested:

- An informal development of approximately 26 no. one, one and a half and two storey dwellings arranged to address the surrounding land uses and environment. A standardised suburban layout is unlikely to be supported.
- Access from Flass Lane to be via a new junction with a revised access for No.4 Smallholding. The access road into the site forming a perimeter creating a set back away from the Flass Lane frontage behind a retained section of the existing mature hedgerow. A new section of public footway to the rear of the hedgerow should also be provided should the existing be needed to accommodate the junction improvement.
- All parking is to be within dwelling curtilages and located behind defensible building lines or screened by fenced and heavily planted front garden boundaries that connect into the site's surrounding Green Infrastructure Framework.

- Other boundaries should be defined by timber post and rail fencing supported by Hawthorn hedgerow to reflect the pattern of hedgerows surrounding the site.
- Where fencing is used to define the site perimeter it will need to be screened by hawthorn hedgerows on the external elevations.

Housing Mix

The relatively low density of development needed to achieve the desired character suggests that the site comes forward for market housing.

Planning Status

This Brief is one of several being produced to guide and coordinate the delivery of sites in Council ownership promoted as part of the emerging Barrow Borough Local Plan, in which this site is identified as a proposed housing allocation. The objective of the Brief is to secure high quality development and to deliver an example of good practice that will help to raise the standard of development across the Borough.

There is no planning application history relevant to the development of the site now being proposed with the site currently being used for sheep grazing. It is considered that a section to the north of the site should be retained in this use to provide an appropriate setting as well as a 'buffer' to Smallholding No.4.

Access will need to be taken from the approximate position of the existing access to Smallholding No. 4 which will require the formation of a new junction including a 'right turn' lane into the site. The junction design including the necessary visibility splays will need to consider the retention of an appropriate section of the existing Hawthorn frontage subject to Highway Authority approval. Consideration may need to be given to moving the existing footway into the site to accommodate any additional road width required.

Green Infrastructure

Green Wedges are enshrined in Saved Policy D4 of the Barrow-in-Furness Local Plan Review 1996-2006 as a means of protecting important open green spaces within and around the urban area to maintain separation

between settlements and adjacent development areas as well as visual and physical access for amenity and recreation.

The Council's emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy will help ensure that Green Infrastructure is incorporated into a framework that both facilitates and balances the need for development with the needs of the environment and the existing communities living in the area. A key feature of the Green Infrastructure Strategy is its recognition of the importance of high quality landscaping in providing an attractive and well-proportioned setting for high quality development.

Areas of Green Wedge are located to the south and east of the site and this has been supplemented by a combination of 'Green Spaces', Green Corridors and 'Green Links' designed to frame the site context and provide the basic structure for scheme design.

The Site

The site comprises a gentle convex slope falling east to west. The site is covered with improved grassland bounded to the south by the mature hedgerow separating the site from the adjacent allotments with an existing post and wire fence defining the boundary with the access to No.4 Smallholding.

Site Conditions & Access

The site falls between the Environment Agency's 'Less and Intermediate' categories in terms of susceptibility to ground water flooding. The south west corner of the site collects a small amount of water whilst there are at present no pressures from surface water runoff.

A United Utilities Combined Main Pipe and sewer is located in Rating Lane.

The site is readily accessible to local services and facilities with the following list indicating approximate distances:

- Furness General Hospital 2500 metres
- Primary School 500 to 1000 metres
- Junior School 1000 to 1500 metres
- Secondary School 1500 metres
- Nurseries 400 metres
- Supermarkets 500 metres
- Doctor’s Surgery 1500 to 2000 metres
- Sixth Form College 1500 metres
- Roose Station 750 metres

The site is also accessible by public transport with Bus Stops within 100 to 200 metres of the site and a train station within 1km.

The following viewpoint images highlight the existing character of the site and immediate surrounding area:

Photographic Viewpoint Images





How to use the Design Sections of the Brief

The following sections set out the Council's thinking on the quality, character and appearance of development it expects to see. The guidance is intended to be used as a 'Tool Kit' to be used creatively by the design team and to help structure a Design & Access Statement.

It is important to note that the Brief is not prescriptive; it highlights a general approach and the principles and objectives that schemes need to achieve, not how it must be done in detail. Design cues are provided in the form images of development character and detail to provide an indication as to the quality expected in this location.

A list of contacts set out in Appendix A is provided should clarification or interpretation on any point be required.

Design Approach

The Council expects to see evidence of proposals having been driven by context and led by design creating both a sense of place and a sense of space that combines a marketable identity with a functional and liveable arrangement.

Design and Access Statements will need to illustrate how all scheme elements have been interwoven as a composition, illustrated by sections through the site and street-scene visualisations showing how the scheme would actually appear, and not simply in plan form.

Designers will need to demonstrate the following:

Design Approach

1. How the design concept has been developed from the theme set out in Brief;
2. How the design concept has resulted in a 'development within a landscape' as opposed to 'a landscaped development';
3. How the design theme and concept has been carried through the design scales from the site level to the detail;
4. How sustainable development technologies are incorporated intrinsically into the design and not 'bolted on' as an afterthought

Design Principles

A submitted scheme will need to show how the following principles and criteria have been taken into account:

Principles

- (a) A scheme that creates a sense of place that complements the character of the site and its surroundings;
- (b) A human-scale of built form and landscaping that creates a visual sequence through the site using enclosure and changes in direction to create interest and control vehicle speeds without the need for speed tables;
- (c) A legible form of development where movement choices and ownership are defined by the built form and where ownership is established in a clear hierarchy of public to private spaces;
- (d) A single approach to shared surface design where vehicles have to 'negotiate' for space within a pedestrian-friendly environment;
- (e) A simple robust architectural and plot boundary design that results in an identifiable, marketable and visually appropriate forms of development;
- (f) Building design that is of its time with functional and flexible internal and external spaces; designed, specified and constructed to be durable over the lifespan of the development;
- (g) Drainage arrangements designed as integrated features of the scheme attenuating water within the site with all other servicing facilities located discreetly as part of the design.

Parameters

1. Dwelling heights no higher than 2 storeys will need to be interspersed with larger one and half story units reflecting the suggested 'barn conversion' typology. A row of smaller terraced 'cottages' would also be appropriate in creating a degree of variety within the street-scene;
2. Developers will need to demonstrate how they have addressed the Development Framework on page 12 of this document and the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Criteria

Schemes will need to show:

Context

1. How the site context and setting are reflected in layout and building design and how views in and out of the development have been managed;
2. How pedestrian access is to be promoted and not marginalised in terms of either appearance, accessibility or community safety;
3. How the impact on the site's existing landscape and ecology in terms of habitat and wildlife movement in particular will be minimised, especially during construction.

Layout, Form & Character

1. How building form and arrangement creates a sense of place whilst retaining a generally openness within and around the site;
2. How a range of boundary treatment designs combine to frame the development and define legible entrances to curtilages whilst supporting the creation and connection of habitat in line with the Council's Green Infrastructure objectives;
3. How layout and building design through orientation will maximise passive solar gain and ventilation;
4. How access into and around the site will need to achieve an 'off-carriageway' appearance using a shared surface throughout;
5. How the layout and building arrangement balance community safety, natural surveillance and privacy, especially where distance alone to achieve privacy cannot be achieved;
6. How drainage has been integrated as a positive landscape design component using a variety of planting and storage methods to retain and dispose of water on site;
7. How the visual impact of parked vehicles is to be minimised within the street-scene.

Building Design

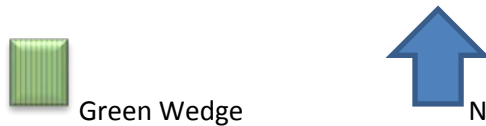
1. How a balanced solid to void ratio between windows and walls can be achieved so that buildings appear visually 'light', whilst at the same time using blank elevations to achieve enclosure and improved privacy;
2. How the approach to roof design will help to pick out the focal buildings on site;

3. How materials will be rationalised to only one or two key walling finishes using changes in relief, reveal and texture to provide the context for openings;
4. How variation is to be achieved within the roofscape using a mix of roof heights and pitches all to incorporate a distinct over-sail beyond walls;
5. How a building mounted and low-level lighting solution is to be achieved to avoid the urbanising appearance of lighting columns on the surrounding area. How dwellings and garages sited relative boundaries and highways will achieve the necessary light spread;
6. How garages will accommodate vehicles whilst incorporating an appropriate amount of ancillary storage inside.

Sustainability

1. How buildings and surfaces will incorporate sustainable principles and technologies. Building materials being selected for their appearance and inherent sustainability and durability;
2. How all surfaces are designed to drain to intercept stores, culverts and SuDS Basins all with appropriate traps with water butts with overflow returns to capture grey water from roofs;
3. How reduced car use is being encouraged with the integration of convenient and secure cycle storage in garages;
4. How waste and recycling bins are incorporated within the defensible curtilage out of street-scene view.

Development Framework



The Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (page 108) recommends the inclusion of the following GI elements within the development site:

- A Green corridor along western site boundary;
- An area of public Green Space within the site;
- A Green Link along with southern boundary providing a link between the grass verges on Flass Lane and the Green Wedge to the east and south.

The potential to link the site with the Furness Abbey Greenway should also be explored.



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Design Cues

The following images are indicative of aspects of general character and arrangement that the Council considers would be appropriate on the site.



Planning Policy Context

It is considered that the sensitivity of the site in landscape terms and its potential for impact on the character of adjacent landscape and development areas justifies the production of such a Brief.

Para 210 of the NPPF states that 'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.

It is considered that the intention to develop land on Flass Lane would be consistent with Saved Policy D4 of the Barrow-in-Furness Local Plan Review 1996-2006 providing that the objectives set out in the principle, parameters and performance criteria sections of the Brief are met. It is also consistent with the objectives of the Council's emerging Barrow Borough Local Plan and of the Green Infrastructure Strategy that supports it.

The use of a Development Brief on this site is consistent with the NPPF's encouragement for positive and proactive planning in the delivery of sustainable housing development

Planning Application Process

Pre-application discussions will be an important part in formulating scheme proposals with key stakeholders. The Council expects all issues to be resolved prior to the submission of an application to help ensure that it tracks through the process efficiently.

A Development Team approach will be offered providing direct support to the design team from Development Control, Planning Policy and Building Control with input from County Council Drainage and Highways Officers where appropriate.

Building and landscape design and material quality are of the highest importance. The Council expect to see materials scheduled within planning applications and not for condition as delivering on an approved quality will be fundamental to the successful outcome of the scheme.

Submission Requirements

The documents in the list below will be required to accompany the application for full planning permission. Other statements may be required following on from information received from formal consultations:

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement;
- Tree and planting survey and impact Assessment;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;
- Habitat and Protected Species Survey;
- Development Timetable
- Construction Traffic Management Plan;

Useful Contacts

Planning Policy	01229 876363
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(All initial enquiries)

Development Management	01229 876568
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Building Control	01229 876356
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Estates	01229 876362
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County Highways	0845 6096609
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Disclaimer

It is important to note that every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. It remains the sole responsibility of the developer to demonstrate the acceptability and accuracy of proposals submitted to the local planning authority for planning permission.