



mosaic
town planning

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Local Retail Centre and Affordable Housing Development

Land to West of Cropper Road, Whitehills, FY4 5LB
Eden Land & Development with Breck Homes Ltd.

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Chapter 1 — Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies two simultaneous planning applications for the redevelopment of land currently occupied by 'The Garden Place' garden centre to provide a local retail centre and affordable housing.

In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, a Design and Access Statement should:

- (a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development, and;
- (b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account.

This Statement is structured according to the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide (MHCLG 2019):

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.



The ten characteristics of well-designed places, from the National Design Guide.

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Chapter 2 — Context

The Context is defined by the National Design Guide as the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.

The site at present has an urban fringe character. The majority is currently occupied by a garden centre consisting of glazed buildings of permanent construction, along with polytunnels, displays of temporary buildings for sale and a car park. The premises include a café/restaurant, a pet supplies store, storage, and stables. Much of the site is covered by asphalt and concrete, with a central area of rough grassland and fields within the southern section used for horse grazing.



The site is located within the Fylde-Blackpool Strategic Location for Development which includes the Blackpool Airport Corridor and Whitehills Business Park. The Fylde Local Plan advises that it has strong connections with Blackpool in terms of character and geographic location, and envisages that residents and businesses within this area will continue to rely on Blackpool's infrastructure, services and facilities.

The Strategic Location includes recent development, notably a new housing estate to the east of the site, and areas allocated for future development. In addition to the subject sites, this includes the adjoining land to the north, west and south.

The new estate already constructed is known as Marton Meadows and consists of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes. It is predominantly 2-storey, including at the site boundary although there are some 2.5 storey dwellings within. The properties are of red brick with grey slate roofs. Whilst there is additional detailing to front elevations, this is lacking in the rear elevations facing Cropper Road opposite the proposed affordable housing development. These properties are elevated and set back behind a drainage ditch and brick wall.



Chapter 3 — Identity

The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them.

The locality retains an urban fringe character. As noted above this applies to the site itself, whilst the wider area has been characterised uses such as market gardens, caravan parks and kennels in addition to sporadic residential properties. Recent development within the Strategic Location has been to the east of the site, featuring the residential development opposite and the expansion of Whitehills Business Park beyond.

This is therefore an area of transition, and the original character of the site will inevitably be subject to fundamental change as part of the planned urban extension. However, the past will continue to have an influence, with field boundaries defined by drainage ditches affecting the development structure.

The identity of the development should sit comfortably with the new housing development at Marton Meadows, whilst not compromising the development potential of the adjacent development sites.

The Council has resolved to grant outline permission for development immediately to

the south and west. Although details of the proposed layout did not form part of their application, the developer has produced an illustrative Masterplan. This is accompanied by a 'Design Code' which envisages a suburban layout using standard housetypes with range of descriptive densities which are not quantified. Whilst the Council will have regard to this for the adjacent site at Reserved Matters stage, it has no formal weight in the planning process for the applications which this Statement accompanies.

The identity of the local retail centre is intended to reflect its function as a local facility to serve residents within what will be a predominantly residential area, as opposed to it being a retail destination in its own right.

The residential site is proposed to have medium-density affordable housing, making efficient use of the most accessible part of allocated housing land to the proposed local centre. It is in a central location within the Strategic Location and fronting Cropper Road, rather than a peripheral location where low density development might be envisaged.

Red brick with grey pitched roofs is proposed for the development, complementing the Marton Meadows estate. The quality of the development will be enhanced by using two palettes of brick, which are intended to be:

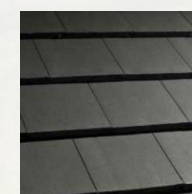
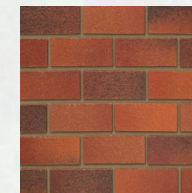
Type A

- Facing Brick - Ibstock Alderley Russet Blend
- Detail Brick - Ibstock Ravenhead Smooth Red

Type B

- Facing Brick - Ibstock Calderstone Claret
- Detail Brick – Ibstock Ravenhead Smooth Red

All dwellings will use Calderdale Light Grey roof tiles, black UPVC rainwater goods and white UPVC windows.



Chapter 4 — Built Form (Retail)

This refers to the three-dimensional pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings and open spaces.

The scale and form of the local centre are largely derived from its intended function of serving the day-to-day needs of surrounding residents and have taken account of market research undertaken by the developer. The proposal is focussed on a convenience foodstore, of a similar nature to one which the applicant has been involved with in Catterall within the adjacent Wyre local authority area.

The 2 smaller units would lend themselves to a variety of occupiers of the type which would serve local residents, such as a café or hairdresser.

The site layout is designed to separate the parking and servicing area from the proposed housing development. However, the compact size of the car park in front of the units means that the store frontages will still contribute interest to the street scene of Cropper Road. There will not be a large expanse of tarmac and there is provision for landscaping at the frontage.



The Convenience Retailing in Catterall

Chapter 4 — Built Form (Residential)

This refers to the three-dimensional pattern or arrangement of development blocks, streets, buildings and open spaces.

The residential development makes efficient use of the residual land from provision of the local centre and is also influenced by the requirement for a Flood Storage Area along the western boundary. An additional consideration has been to ensure elevational interest to Cropper Road.

Strong frontages are achieved with a linear layout following the internal estate roads, incorporating dual aspect properties in key locations. The intention to focus on smaller, affordable properties is reflected in the incorporation of 3 and 4 unit terraces which also make efficient use of land. Although the need for 1 and 2-bed apartments is also addressed, these are within 2-storey buildings of a similar scale and appearance to the houses, as is appropriate in a suburban location.

Local Plan policy H2 recommends a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare and requires that developments make efficient use of land, whilst avoiding detrimental

impact on the amenity, character, appearance, distinctiveness and environmental quality of the surrounding area. The proposed density of 40 dwellings per hectare exceeds the minimum but cannot be regarded as 'high'. It reflects the focus on satisfying affordable need through smaller units, including the provision of apartments within 2-storey buildings.

The built form of the development will be compatible with the Marton Meadows estate in the use of materials, scale and the mix of house types, and not present any constraint to the appropriate development of remaining allocated area covered by the illustrative Masterplan. The landscaped open flood storage area within the affordable housing application will be adjacent to further surface water attenuation storage and public open space within the Masterplan area.



The proposed site layout

Chapter 5 — Movement

Patterns of movement include walking and cycling, access to facilities, employment and servicing, parking and the convenience of public transport.

The applications fall within a larger allocated site for which an illustrative Masterplan has been produced by developers of adjacent sites included within it. The Council has taken this into account in approving developments by BAK and Wainhomes in principle, although the Wainhomes application is in Outline form and does not fix the internal layout.

The Masterplan does not envisage any vehicular access passing through the subject sites to serve the remainder of the development. It does show a footpath link, although the location suggested is impractical due to the need for a flood storage area within the affordable housing application site.

However, the applications provide for 2 routes to the land to the west, both of which could be used as a footpath and/or cycleway. As well as contributing to overall connectivity, these will bring the local centre within easier reach of proposed new housing.

The planning applications are accompanied by a Transport Statement which provide details of the accessibility of the sites by

walking, cycle and public transport. The proposals should be considered in the context of a planned urban extension, in which the location of the local retail centre will provide for pedestrian journeys by local residents and the wider strategic location will contain additional opportunities for local employment.

Public transport provision is to be enhanced by means of the new link road through the allocated housing area to the north, as shown on the illustrative Masterplan.

Within the affordable housing area, the Site Layout identifies the extent of the access road which will be to adoptable standard with footways on each side, together with private drives serving smaller groups of properties.

These less intensively-used areas, configured to lower traffic speeds, will feature shared surfaces. The local retail centre will be served by a private access, designed to accommodate commercial vehicles associated with the use.



*Extract from wider masterplan
(© DGL Associates Ltd, B.A.K
Contracts, Wain Homes)*

Chapter 6 — Nature

Natural features should be integrated into a well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees and other trees, grass, planting and water

The site at present does not contain high quality natural features. There are extensive areas covered by structures and hardstandings, together with an area of residual grassland grazed by horses. The tree survey has confirmed that high quality trees are not present.

The development proposals include a Flood Storage Area parallel to the western boundary, which will be attractively landscaped and designed to enhance biodiversity. This will adjoin a similar area intended for surface water attenuation storage and public open space incorporating a Multi-Use Games Area within the adjacent allocated housing area, as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan.

The submitted plans also include landscaped buffers, to separate the local retail centre from adjacent housing and to the Cropper Road frontage, which will benefit visual amenity and biodiversity. In addition, the development presents an opportunity to enhance the habitats available to wildlife. The provisioning of bat and bird nest boxes will provide improved long-term roosting and nesting opportunities.



Extract from site plan showing proposed flood storage area

Chapter 7 — Public Spaces

Public spaces are streets, squares and other spaces that are open to all and which are the setting for most movement. The design of a public space encompasses its siting and integration into the wider network of routes.

The proposed affordable housing development is a modestly sized residential development project which forms part of a wider development allocation. However, it is fundamentally self-contained so that streets within it are essentially functional and only to serve the needs of residents. The wider general public are intended to have usage of the linear routes along the northern and southern boundaries which are transitory rather than aesthetic in function but will ultimately link into a wider network of routes within the housing allocation.

The internal road will be a safe and secure environment, overlooked by habitable room windows and configured so as to limit traffic speeds. It is limited in extent, so that smaller groups of dwellings are served by shared surfaces more appropriate to the creation of a private domestic character.

The local retail centre is a compact, self-contained and functional area in which public space would not be appropriate.



Nearby play space

Chapter 8 — Uses

Sustainable places include a mix of uses that support everyday activities including to live, work and play.

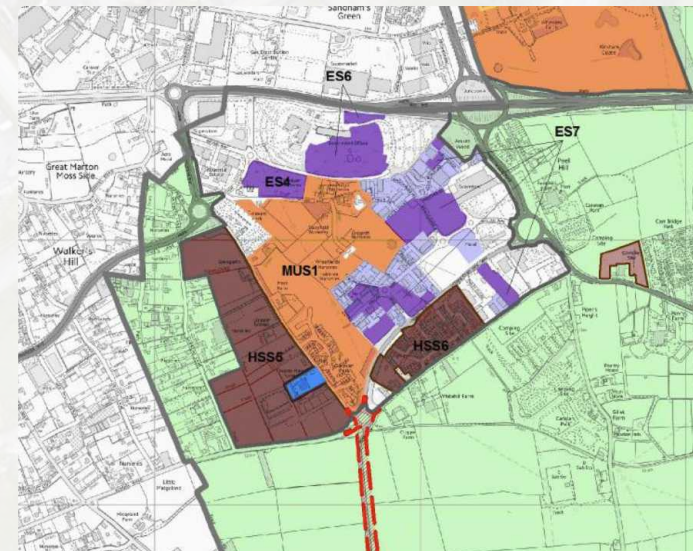
The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 shows the site as being within a Strategic Location identified as the Fylde-Blackpool Periphery, within which residents and businesses will continue to rely on Blackpool's infrastructure, services and facilities.

The specific site forms part of a housing allocation (HSS5 – Cropper Road West, Whitehills) and this includes a site for a local retail centre, which is indicative and close to that proposed in these current applications. The Strategic Location is identified as being of sub-regional importance for employment land provision, and housing schemes reflect this sub-regional importance. Paragraph 2.38 of the Local Plan confirms that the Strategic Location should provide for an adequate supply of market and affordable housing.




This approach is consistent with paragraph 73 of the National Planning Policy Framework and its recognition that the

supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.

Having regard to the adopted Development Plan, the combination of uses proposed is in accordance with the site allocation. The Council continues to rely upon the site as part of its future housing land supply. The applicant has undertaken market research to establish the level of retail provision which would be attractive to operators, and the local retail centre will provide a valuable service for existing and future residents. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle linkages will contribute to the integration of the affordable housing and retail provision into the local area and assist with access to nearby employment and open space.



Extract from the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 Policies Map
(© Fylde Council)

Chapter 10: Provision of Homes in Fylde	
	Strategic Housing Sites (HS)
	Non-Strategic Housing Sites (HS)
	Sites for Gypsies and Travellers Pitches (HS)

Chapter 9 — Homes and Buildings

Well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable, having regard to internal and external environments. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users and are adaptable to the changing needs of occupants over time.

The National Design Guide notes that well designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. The development is socially inclusive in that it provides a combination of affordable rent and shared ownership housing adjacent to market-led housing schemes and has a particular focus on smaller units.

The Fylde Coast Strategic Housing Market Assessment has identified an annual need of 249 affordable homes within the local authority area, a requirement which has never been met. The development will therefore make a significant contribution towards satisfying this.

As explained in the Planning Statement, the dwelling sizes and mix will satisfy requirements identified by the Study, whilst also providing flexibility and meeting needs established in discussions with local Registered Providers. Just over 50% of the dwellings will have 1 or 2 bedrooms, whilst

the significant proportion of modestly sized 3-bed properties will contribute to flexibility by facilitating the option of using a room as a small office as home working increases.

House frontages are designed so as to have windows from habitable rooms overlooking adjacent roads, separated by front or side garden areas to ensure residential amenity. Each of the houses and ground floor apartments have their own private garden area and the site will be accessible to informal and recreational public open space.

The ‘fabric first’ approach to energy efficiency ensures that the dwellings will be cost effective and efficient to run. Whilst noise is not a serious issue in the vicinity, the recommendations of the Noise Assessment for control of noise from the retail plant room will ensure that this remains the case.



Front Elevation - Terrace of 3
2 Bedroom 4 Person House Type 68sq.m



Rear Elevation - Terrace of 3
2 Bedroom 4 Person House Type 68sq.m



Front Elevation - Terrace of 3
2 Bedroom 4 Person House Type 68sq.m



Rear Elevation - Terrace of 3
2 Bedroom 4 Person House Type 68sq.m



Side Elevation
3 Bedroom 4 Person
Aspect House Type 80sq.m

Front Elevation
3 Bedroom 5 Person
House Type 82sq.m

Front Elevation
3 Bedroom 5 Person
House Type 82sq.m



Front Elevation
3 Bedroom 4 Person House Type 80sq.m

Chapter 10 — Resources

Well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials. Their design identifies measures to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The site currently contains a garden centre with hardsurfaced car park, which constitutes previously developed land. It is part of an identified Strategic Location for development, with new build housing opposite and allocated housing around. This makes the existing use incongruous and at present it does not constitute an efficient use of land.

The proposed development density provides a balance between making an effective contribution to affordable housing supply and compatibility with the essentially suburban environment resulting from existing and proposed adjacent development.

The development will follow a ‘fabric first’ approach in accordance with the first principle of the Energy Hierarchy, ensuring that dwellings are designed to reduce heat losses and minimise energy demand. The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems within the scheme will ensure that the development will not place additional demands on the capacity of existing systems within the area.

The juxtaposition of the housing and local retail centre will reduce the need to travel, and walking, bus services and cycling provide realistic alternatives to the use of the private car. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle connectivity will maximise this potential.



Chapter 11 — Lifespan

Well-designed places should be suitable for long-term stewardship by landowners, communities and local authorities. Management and maintenance regimes should be considered from an early stage and they should be adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies.

As a 100% affordable housing scheme, the residential development will be owned and managed by a local Registered Provider who will also be responsible for the management of the Flood Storage Area and landscaping around the site.

The retail centre will be a privately owned and managed facility throughout its lifespan.



Site plan for the proposed retail element

Conclusion

The site constitutes part of an identified housing allocation within a Strategic Location for development, within which Local Plan policy also seeks a local retail centre. It is within an area of transition, already featuring new build residential development and with more in the pipeline which will surround the site.

The garden centre use on this previously developed land will therefore become increasingly incongruous, whereas the proposed development will make efficient use of the site to make a significant contribution to affordable housing supply, featuring smaller, affordable units. It will also satisfy the Council's aspiration for local shops to increase the sustainability of the location. Provision for pedestrian and cycle connectivity will maximise the benefits of these.

The design and choice of materials for the affordable housing, including elevational detailing and the combinations of alternative red brick palettes, will complement existing and proposed surrounding modern housing estates with traditional suburban build forms. The layout will create a good standard of amenity and ensure active street scenes both within the site and to the Cropper Road frontage. Management by local Registered Provider will ensure that the development is properly managed and maintained over the long term.

The retail centre is intended to sit comfortably within this context, echoing the use of materials and being modest in scale within a predominantly residential area.

The proposals perform well against the ten characteristics of a well-designed place described in the National Design Guide and will make a positive contribution to the future of the Fylde-Blackpool Strategic Location for Development.

