

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

07/0009

02.01.07

Project Genesis Limited
and Barratt Homes

Land to the north and east of
Fell View, The Grove, Consett

Erection of ninety one
dwellings, associated
highway and landscape
works

Consett South Ward

The Application

1. Planning permission is sought for residential development comprising 91 dwellings, with associated highway and landscape works on land to the north and east of Fell View, The Grove, Consett. The application site has an area of 1.8 hectares and forms part of the Project Genesis site. It is currently intended that Barratt Homes would develop the site in co-operation with the applicant Project Genesis Limited.
2. Planning permission was granted in 2006 for Bowey Homes and Project Genesis for the erection of 60 dwellings on the site.

History

3. Erection of sixty dwellings, Associated highway and landscape works approved January 2006 (reference 1/2005/0941/DM).

An application for the erection of 68 dwellings and associated works was withdrawn on 10/08/04 (reference 1.2004/0409/DM).

An Outline application for Industrial and Warehousing (Use B1, B2 and B8) on 300 acres of land was withdrawn on 28/04/94 (reference 1/1992/0687/DM).

Policy

4. The following policies of the Local Plan are relevant in determining this application:

General Development Principles (GDP1)
Large Sites Identified for Housing and Associated Development (H04)
Recreational Open Space within Housing Development Sites (HO22)
The Layout of New Housing (HO23)
Development and Highway Safety (TR2)

The Layout of new housing (SPG7)

Consultations

5. County Council Highways Development Control Officer- The proposal will result in the development of a significant number of dwellings on the north side of Taylor's Terrace with a subsequent increase in the number of pedestrian movements. For this reason I consider it essential that adoptable footway links be provided to connect with existing footways on the same, northern, side of Taylor's Terrace (as was approved as part of application 2005/0941, for a lesser number of dwellings on the same site).

There are seven blocks of 4 dwellings across the layout, most of these being three bed designs, where off-street parking provision is on average 1.25 spaces per dwelling (5 spaces for 4 dwellings). I regard this ratio as low and unrealistic, and likely to cause parking on the public highway to the detriment of highway safety. I recommend that an extra parking space be provided at each of the blocks. The overall off-street parking provision for the site would then be 150%.

6. County Council Rights of Way Officer- After checking the Definitive Map I can inform you that no registered Public Rights of Way will be affected by the proposals. Please be aware that the Definitive Map is only a record of known Public Rights of Way. Other rights can be acquired on the basis of usage or documentary evidence. I have no objections to the proposals although I do have some comments to make. The Design and Access Statement provided with the application does recognize the informal footpath situated along the western boundary of the site. However the layout of the application site will not provide the prospective occupants of the estate with an immediate means of accessing the footpath as the dwelling are separated from the footpath by a 2000mm high closed boarded fence. The only potential access is along the access road to Taylor Terrace, along the Terraces itself, then onto the footpath and past the dwellings. I feel that this would be an inconvenience to prospective occupants and limit their access to open space.
7. Environment Agency- The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application indicates that the surface water drainage is to be directed to Northumbrian Water sewers at a restricted rate. This being the case, We have no objections to the proposed development but wish to make the following comments: An acceptable method of foul drainage disposal would be connection to the foul sewer. The Sewerage Undertaker should be consulted by the Local Planning Authority and be requested to demonstrate that the sewerage and sewage disposal systems serving the development have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional flows, generated as a result of the development, without causing pollution.

8. Engineers- No objection to Flood Risk Assessment as carried out. Previously commented on approved planning application 1/2005/0941 for this site in that, as the surface water outfalls through the triple ponds (which are a managed nature reserve) then it is requested that the installation and regular maintenance of a petrol interceptor take place on the SW system prior to discharge. This should eliminate the possibility of any contamination of the ponds from oil or detergent washed into the highway drainage.

Any further comments will be presented verbally to members.

9. Environmental Health- No adverse comments.
10. Planning Policy Team- The site is located on the eastern edge of the built up area of The Grove on land that was once a reservoir, now filled and capped. The principle of development of the land has been determined by an existing permission for the erection of 60 dwellings. The proposed scheme seeks permission for the erection of 91 dwellings on land allocated for housing (with associated uses) in the adopted Local Plan for the District.

Other recent developments in the immediate vicinity to the proposed site are built at lower densities of around 30 dwellings/hectare. Though the density of the proposed scheme is higher it is within the density range as stated in national planning policy (50 dwellings per hectare). Overall the layout appears slightly 'cramped' as a result of the medium/high density and certain unit groupings. The units which comprise the central 'east/west' spine area (numbers '12 - 20' & '44 - 50') appear to be squeezed into this part of the scheme, and could be reduced in number to avoid a cramped appearance.

The scheme includes 129.5 parking spaces for residents and visitors, which is marginally under Durham County Council Policy Guidance for car parking provision for residential schemes. Guidance in PPG3 also recommends a maximum provision of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, which would mean an additional 7 spaces could be incorporated in this scheme. Durham County Council Policy Guidance also recommends provision for one secure cycle parking space per dwelling; none are included in the proposed scheme.

There is little spare land in the scheme, while there is no functional open space included on the site. There is some landscaping included, though the proposed tree-planting appears quite sparse throughout; criteria (F) of Policy GDP1 in the adopted Local Plan recommends:

When considering proposals for new development, the Council will...expect, where appropriate, the following measures to have been incorporated within each scheme:

(F) The provision of adequate landscaping within the design and layout of the site and where appropriate creation of wildlife habitats reflecting the semi-natural vegetation of the surrounding area and using semi-

native species wherever possible.

The eastern and northern perimeter of the site, in particular, would benefit from planting to help integrate the scheme into the landscape when viewed from afar. Planting hedges, small bushes and carefully located coppices to these aspects will help to 'soften' the visual impact of the scheme whilst maximising the amount of sunlight that can penetrate into the site.

The proposed scheme does not include any affordable housing provision. The 2006 Housing Needs Assessment for the District estimates that there will be a shortfall of 130 affordable units per annum over the next five years in the District. The immediate implications for affordable housing are that an affordable housing target of between 35 - 50% of new units would be justified on all suitable sites, and that thresholds below the current minimum of 25 dwellings per hectare (as prescribed by Government advice contained in Circular 6/98 and PPG3 (2000)) should be seriously considered. Energy efficiency measures that could be reasonably incorporated into the development should be sought.

11. Neighbours have been consulted a site notice posted and the application has been advertised in the local press. Three letters of objection have been received in regard to the proposal. Concerns in summary are: -
- Rear wall of house lies approx. 16m in distance, down a gradient of approximately 5m from the edge of the pathway, which is proposed to form the boundary of the development.
 - Rear of property will be permanently overlooked-lack of privacy.
 - Amount of natural and sunlight reaching property will be reduced and development will overshadow their property.
 - Noise levels will increase due to new householders and path which runs adjacent to their house will become much busier.
 - Existing problems of drainage- water runs off from site into gardens/street, believe will worsen with development
 - Believe there to be signs of subsidence on the land.
 - Concerns regarding contamination, and how this may affect property and watercourses.
 - Impact on wildlife and natural habitats.
 - Concerned about proposed access being on a congested road which is also a bus route-increase in vehicles will result in more congestion and deterioration of road surface.
 - Concern at the number of trees and shrubs that will have to be removed to allow formation of the access.
 - Erection of fencing along path will create a tunnel effect which will lead to anti-social behaviour.
 - Concerned regarding pressure on schools and facilities provision for children.
 - Concerned increase in density will mean inferior housing.

- Not enough parking spaces leading to parking on the road.
- Narrow tightly curved road will result in hazardous access for emergency vehicles and vehicular access onto Tailors Terraces problematic.
- Security of site during construction.

Officer Assessment

12. This application seeks full planning consent for the erection of ninety one dwellings, associated highway and landscape works on land to the north and east of Fell View, The Grove, Consett. The application site has an area of 1.8 hectares and forms part of the 'Genesis' project relating to the former steelworks land. A new vehicular and pedestrian access would be taken from Taylor's Terrace.
13. The site is allocated for housing with associated uses under policy H04 of the adopted Local Plan. Policy HO4 states that development proposals for the site will only be approved if, in addition to housing, those uses shown on the site schedules in Appendix F(ii) are included in the scheme. In this instance the intended associated use was for the relocation of the Consett Grove Junior and Infant School playing field from within the adjoining Berry Edge (Hall Cottages) housing site. The school field has however already been relocated, albeit to an alternative site to the north west. As such the relocation of the field is clearly no longer a requirement and the development of this site solely for housing would therefore accord with Local Plan Policy.
14. The site is brownfield as it formed part of the steelworks site and has been allocated for a number of years. It is true that the site may have blended into the landscape but the definition in PPS3 would only make the site greenfield if there was

'a clear reason that could outweigh the re-use of the site- such as its contribution to nature conservation-or it has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring development.'

The site is not considered to have any particular merit in terms of contribution to nature conservation given the existing ground conditions from the steelworks, and the site has not been put to any significant amenity use. The principle of development of the land for housing purposes given that it is considered brownfield and is an allocated site within the Local Plan, is therefore considered acceptable.

15. The County Highways Officer does not object to the proposal and considers the proposed access off Taylor's Terrace to meet the required guidelines of the Highways Authority subject to an adoptable footway link to be provided to connect with existing footways on the same, northern, side of Taylor's Terrace. A footpath to the side of the access road is shown on the plans, although the required link to the existing footpaths of Taylor's Terrace has been conditioned accordingly. A total of 127

driveway car parking spaces would be provided as well the provision of 24 garages. The layout of the car parking has now been revised to provide the majority of the blocks of 4 dwellings across the layout, most of these being three bed designs, with off-street parking provision at 6 spaces for 4 dwellings.

16. It is considered that the number of car parking spaces is acceptable, with some dwellings also having a garage or two parking spaces. Parking spaces have also been arranged well so that more parking lies adjacent larger rows of dwellings to minimise parking on the highway.
17. A number of immature fledgling trees would have to be removed in order to facilitate the vehicular access to the site from Taylor's Terrace. It is likely that these trees were planted as part of the remediation to the former Steelworks, and only a small proportion of a much larger area of planting would be removed. It is not considered that the loss of the trees would have a significant impact upon the visual amenities of the locality, given that individually they are of no significant value or worthy of retention, they are not in conservation area or covered by preservation order. Furthermore, the tree planting covers a wide area and most of the trees visible from Taylor Terrace would be retained as well as existing tree planting to the south of the site adjacent the Manor Close estate.
18. The proposed landscaping shown within the scheme is not ideal. The eastern and northern perimeter of the site, in particular, would benefit from planting to help integrate the scheme into the landscape when viewed from afar. Planting hedges, small bushes and carefully located coppices to these aspects will help to 'soften' the visual impact of the development. A condition requiring a landscaping scheme to be submitted and agreed is therefore attached.
19. At approximately 50 dwellings per hectare, (as apposed to 30 dwelling per hectare previously approved) the density of the development is considered acceptable and would be in accordance with guidance in PPS 3, as well as policy H023 of the Local Plan. The proposal is for now for 21 two bed, 64 3 bed and 6 4 bed dwellings. The proposal is for a further 31 dwellings than previously approved which essentially allows for more smaller 2 and 3 bed houses rather than large 4 bed houses which the applicant states will serve young professionals, first time buyers as well as people wishing to step up the property ladder. The proposal involves two storey detached, semi-detached and terraced houses with two 2 and 3 storey split level houses to produce a variety in rooflines and to create an interesting built form as well as to suit the sites gradient.
20. It is considered that the proposal would not appear out of keeping with the scale and massing of existing buildings in the surrounding area, given that those dwellings surrounding the site are two and three storey terraced and semi-detached, which would not be over dominant in the wider street scene. The general type of housing represents a reasonable mix of houses types of 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms some incorporating garages.

21. In terms of residential amenity the blank gable elevation of the nearest property on Fell View would be located approximately 40m from the rear of the nearest proposed new dwelling. The gable elevation of the proposed dwellings would at the nearest point be 24m from the edge of the Manor Close housing development to the south. The rear elevations of the proposed dwellings would at the nearest point be 34m from the Manor Close development edge. Whilst Manor Close is positioned at a lower level to the proposal site, the resulting distances are considered more than adequate in order to maintain privacy and other amenities of residents. Furthermore, the gradient between Manor Close and the application site is well planted with trees and bushes which would further mitigate against any potential for impact. The amount of direct sunlight reaching the rear of properties to the eastern edge of Manor Close may be reduced very slightly up until midday, but this would not be considered to be at any significant level, and certainly not as to significantly impact upon the amenity of neighbours to an extent that would justify refusal of the application given the mitigating distance to the proposal site.
22. The objectors' concerns in regard to drainage is noted. The site has however been the subject of a flood risk assessment to which no objections have been raised by the Environment Agency or the General Services Section of the Council. The only comment was that as the surface water would outfall through three ponds (which are a managed nature reserve) and as such it is requested that the installation and regular maintenance of a petrol interceptor take place on the system prior to discharge. This should eliminate the possibility of any contamination of the ponds from oil or detergent washed into the highway drainage and can be dealt with by way of condition.
23. No comments have yet been received by Northumbrian Water. No previous objection was made to the erection of 60 dwellings on this site. However is considered appropriate to require that means of surface water and a sewerage disposal solution are submitted and agreed before any development commences.
24. During consideration of the previous application on this site members were concerned regarding the potential for the development to cause adverse impact on the ponds to the north of the site. A planning condition was thus attached requiring the developer to retain responsibility for rectifying any adverse impact on the ponds in the interests of conservation. This planning condition is thus replicated accordingly.
25. In consideration of the ground conditions, localised filling was carried out to build twin reservoirs virtually over the complete area of the site. These reservoirs remained until the Council carried out land reclamation. During the reclamation of the steelworks, materials were deposited in the drained reservoirs and the site was capped with clay and the site remains in this condition to the present day. The applicants agent has confirmed

that Project Genesis are currently carrying out an intrusive site investigation, but it is anticipated that site will need to be remediated prior to development. The Local Planning Authority can ensure that adequate contamination survey and necessary remediation is undertaken prior to development by controlling through a Grampian style condition.

26. Whilst the County Rights of Way Officer has no objection to the proposal, he considers that it would be preferable to have increased access from several properties proposed to the west of the site to an adjacent unregistered footpath located along the western boundary. Clearly this would have security implications however and your Officers consider that the issue is perhaps best left as a personal decision of future occupiers, who could in the future install individual garden gates should they wish to obtain access to the unregistered path.
27. However In the interests of crime prevention and pedestrian safety the applicant is willing to break up the proposed long stretch of high site boundary fencing to the south of the site adjacent the informal footpath for the safety of users of the path so as not to create a tunnel effect given the presence of the trees to the southern side.
28. The applicant's agents have been requested by the case officer to consider the inclusion of affordable housing in the scheme given the conclusions of the housing needs assessment the proposed increase in the number of units from the previously approved scheme. Executive has taken a decision to initiate the preparation of a draft policy, which will need to be the subject of detailed consultation with stakeholders. The Council may well look to develop a policy in line with Government Guidance that defines a threshold or size of development below which provision is not required, and a percentage figure for the level of provision. Unfortunately this policy for affordable housing is not drafted or adopted yet and it will not be capable of implementation on a mandatory basis until the summer. In declining to provide an element of affordable units, the applicants wish to point out that Project Genesis make contributions within the wider Derwentside area in general.
29. A commuted sum would be payable to the Local Authority by the developer for the sum of £27,300 in lieu of play provision within the site, in accordance with policy HO22 of the Local Plan.
30. In conclusion, the principle of development of the land for housing purposes given that it is considered brownfield and is an allocated site within the Local Plan, is considered acceptable. The general design of the dwellings is considered appropriate, and the layout complies with distances as recommended in SPG7 and complies with policy HO23. It is considered that the site could be developed with minimal impact to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and that the proposal would be to the wider benefit of the district through the general redevelopment of the former steelworks area.

Recommendation

31. Conditional Permission

- Time Limit (ST)
- Approved Plans (ST01)
- Amended Plans (GO4)
- Means of enclosure (H014)
- Landscaping (LO1)
- Materials (AO3)
- Contamination (CL04)
- Contamination (CL05)
- Surface Water Drainage (DO4)
- Foul Water Drainage (DO5)
- The developer shall retain responsibility for rectifying any adverse impact on the triple ponds located to the north of the application site, if this is proved beyond reasonable doubt to be as a result of the development hereby approved, within 5 years of the commencement of the development and in accordance with the letter as submitted by Robert Muckle Solicitors dated 20th January 2006
- Reason: In the conservation interest of the ponds
- No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until details of the installation of a petrol interceptor to take place on the SW system prior to discharge, have been agreed and implemented to the written satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- Reason: In order to eliminate the possibility of any contamination of the ponds from oil or detergent washed into the highway drainage.
- Ground Levels (GL01)
- The development permitted by this permission shall not commence by the undertaking of a material operation as defined in Section 56(4)(a) - (d) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in relation to the development, until a planning obligation pursuant to s106 of the said Act relating to the land has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and engrossed by the Local Planning Authority. The said obligation will provide for the payment of £27 300 in lieu of open place or play provision within the site.
Reason: In the interests of providing suitable open space and play provision within the District in accordance with Policy HO22 of the Local Plan).
- The development shall not begin until details of the adoptable estate road have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no dwelling shall be occupied until the estate road which provides access to it from the existing highway has been laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development having regard to policy TR2; of the Derwentside Local Plan
An adoptable footway link shall be provided from the site to connect with the existing footways on Taylor's Terrace of which details shall be

submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the commencement of development and no dwelling shall be occupied until this has been laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved details

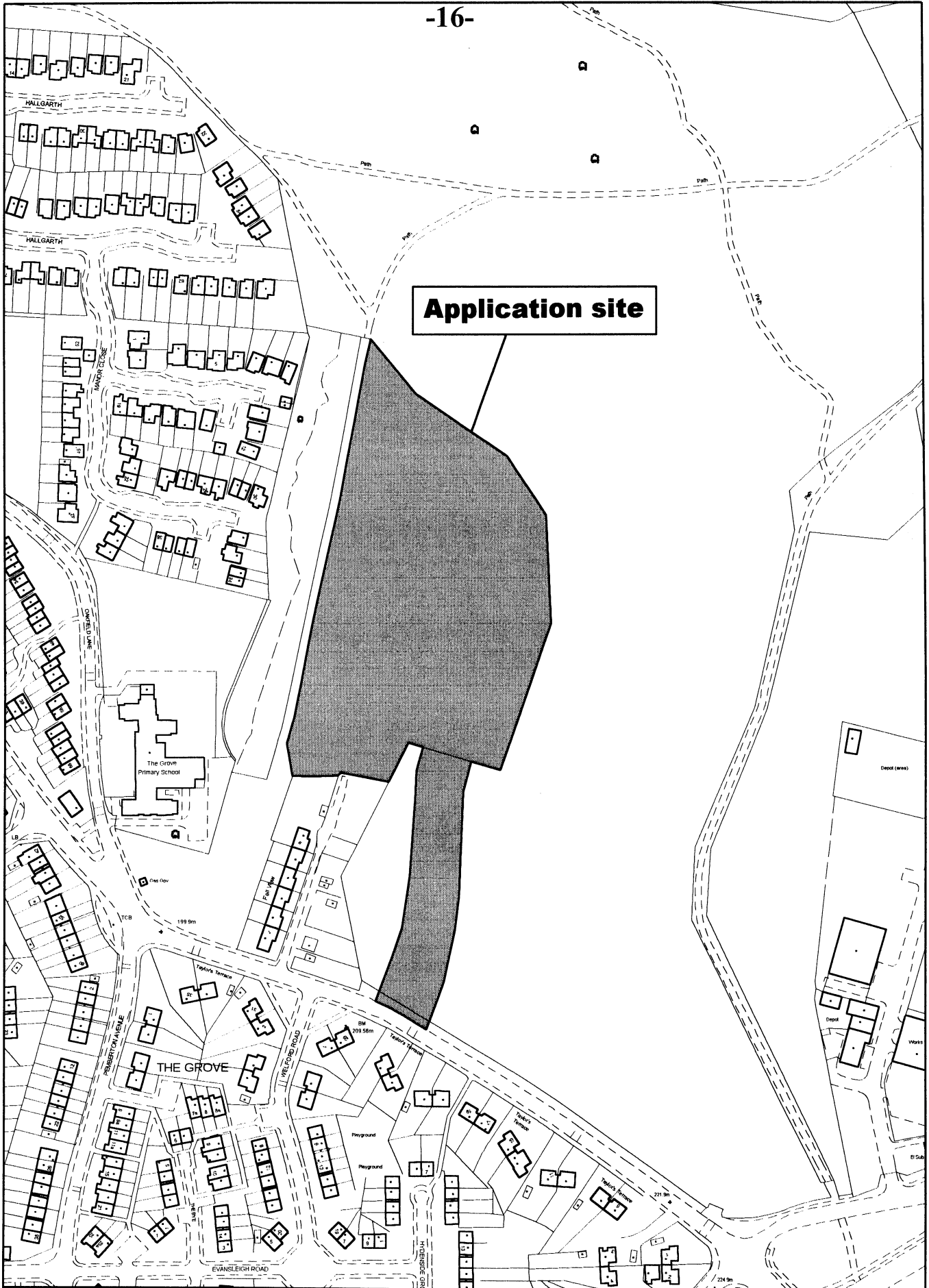
Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the development having regard to policy TR2; of the Derwentside Local Plan.

Reason for Approval

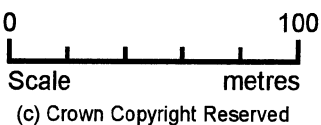
33. The proposed residential development is considered to comply with Policies GDP1, HO4, H022, HO23 and TR2 of the District Local Plan and Supplementary Guidance Note No. 7 on the layout of new housing and there are no other material considerations which outweigh the decision to approve the application.

Report Prepared by Ann Rawlinson, Senior Area Planning Officer

W:\Development Control Committee\050106\05.0941.doc



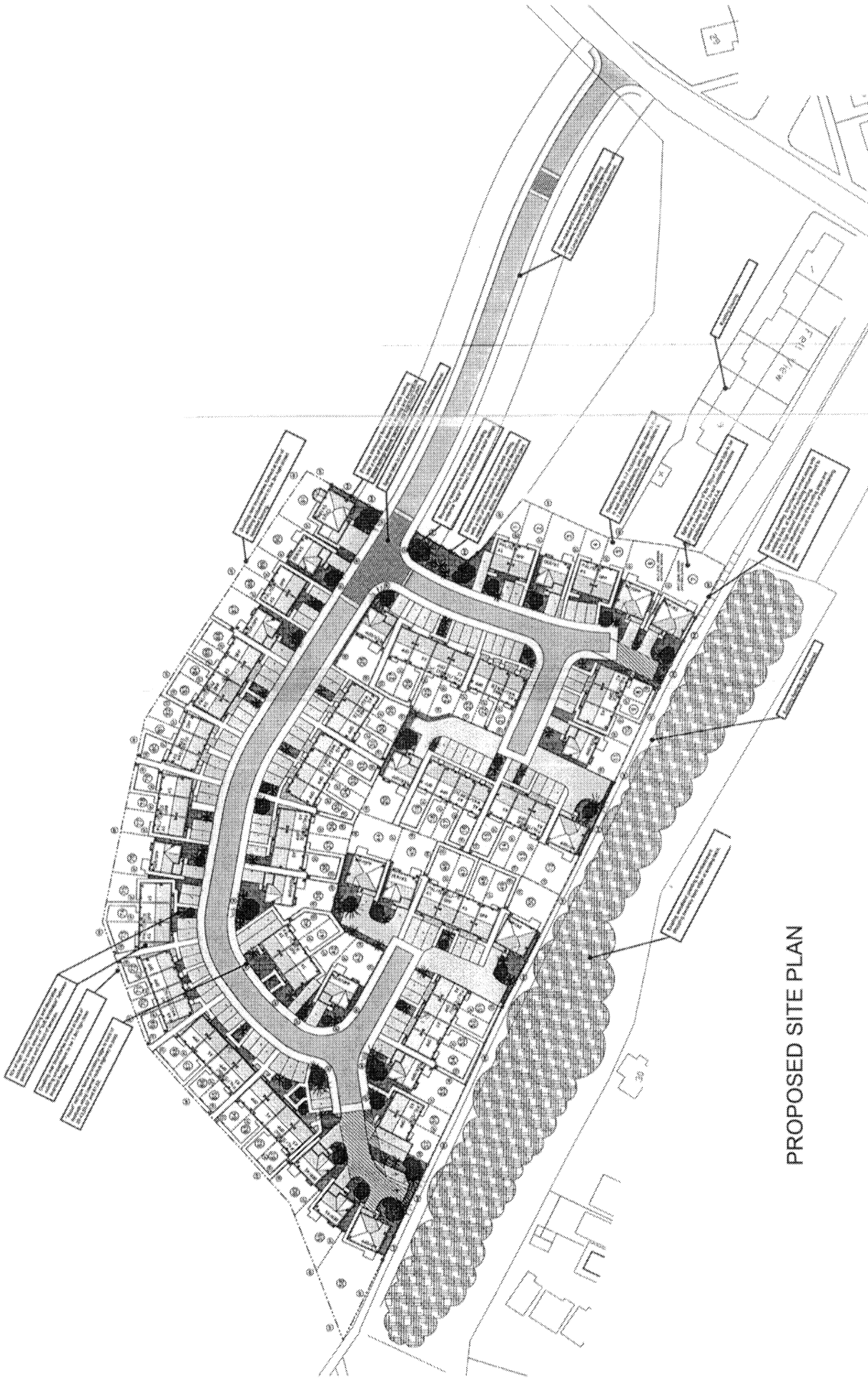
Application site



Erection of ninety one dwellings with associated highway and landscape work
Land to the north and east of Fell View
The Grove

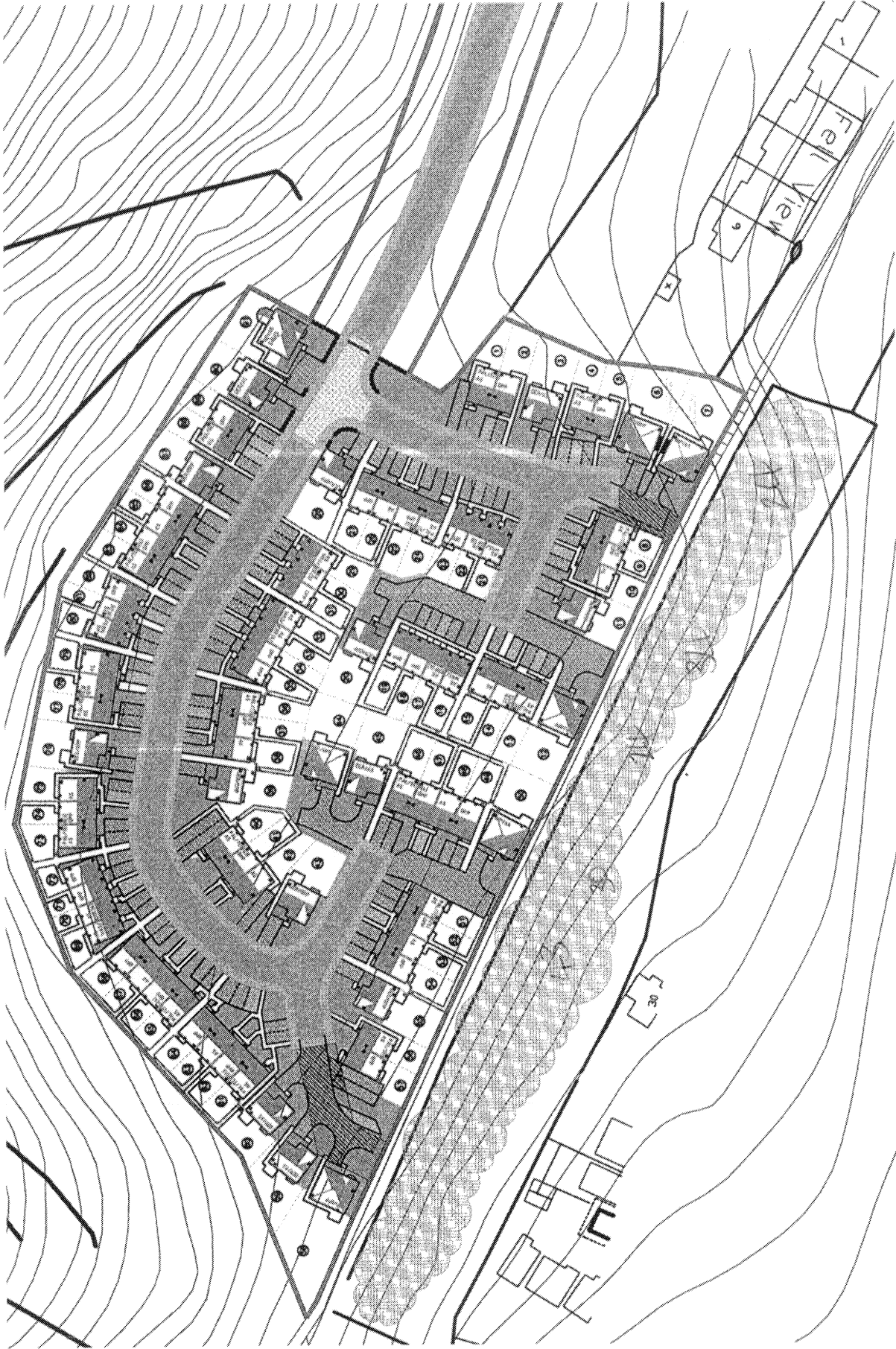
07/009



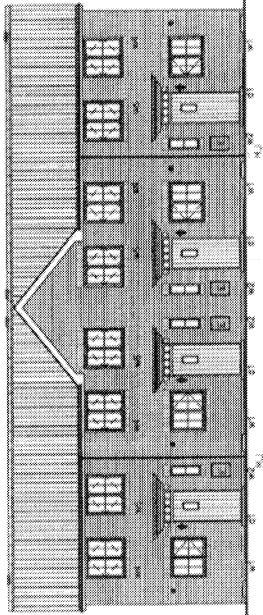


PROPOSED SITE PLAN

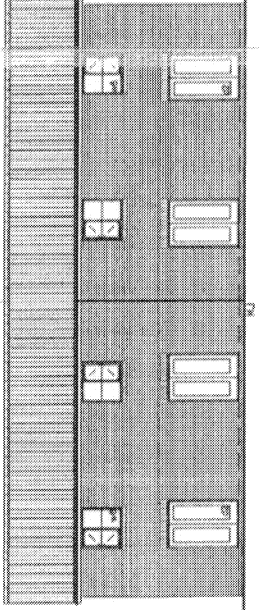
Erection of ninety-one dwellings with associated highway and
landscape work
Land to the north & east of Fell View
The Grove
Consett 07/009



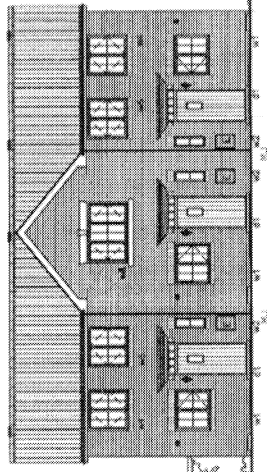
Erection of ninety-one dwellings with associated highway and
landscape work
Land to the north & east of Fell View
The Grove
Consett
07/009



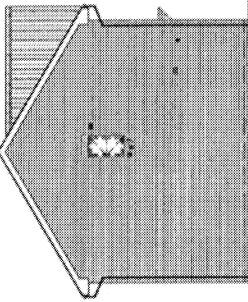
Front Elevation - Four Block



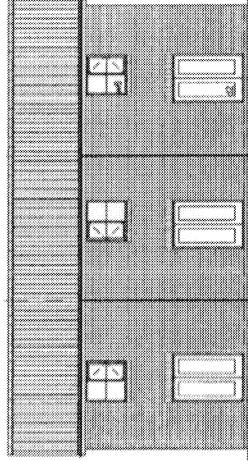
Rear Elevation - Four Block



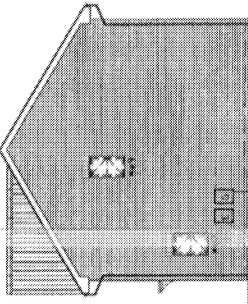
Front Elevation - Three Block



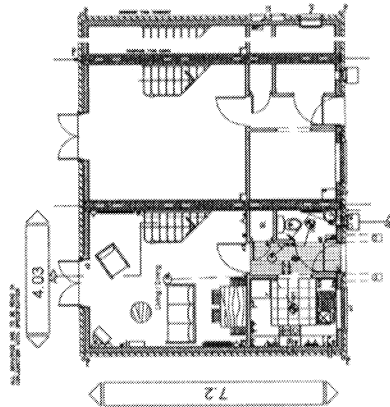
Gable Elevation



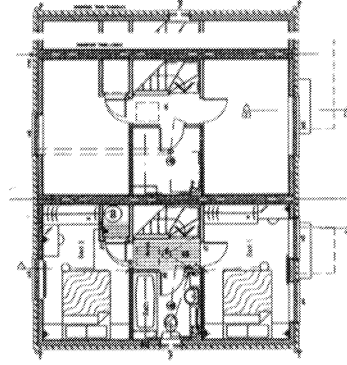
Rear Elevation - Three Block



Gable Elevation

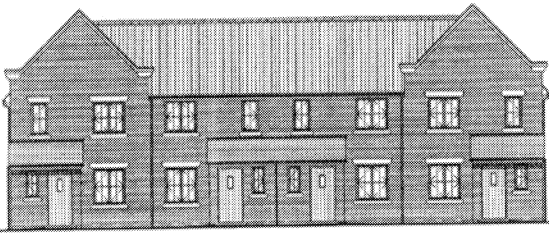


Ground Floor Plan

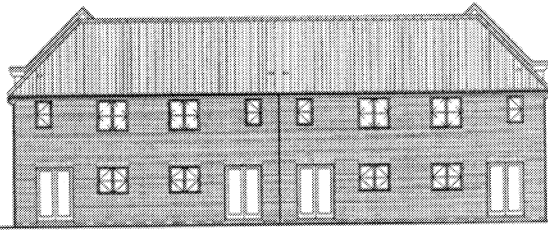


First Floor Plan

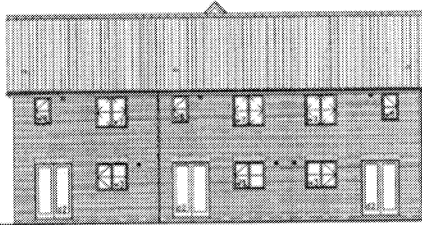
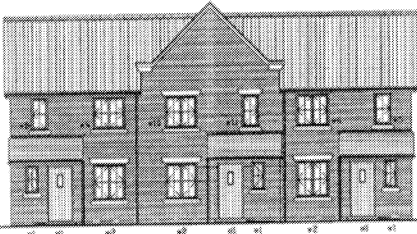
Erection of ninety-one dwellings with associated highway and landscape work
Land to the north & east of Fell View
The Grove
Consett
07/009



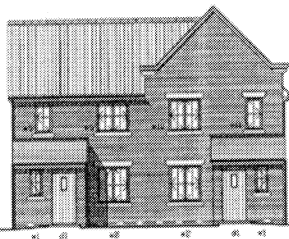
Front Elevation - Four Block



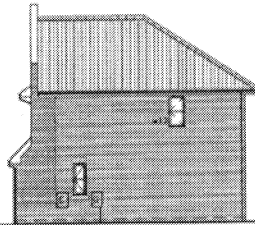
Rear Elevation - Four Block



Rear Elevation - Three Block



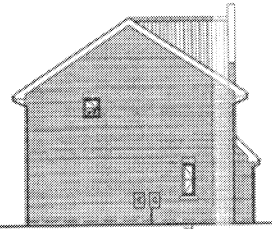
Front Elevation - Semi Block



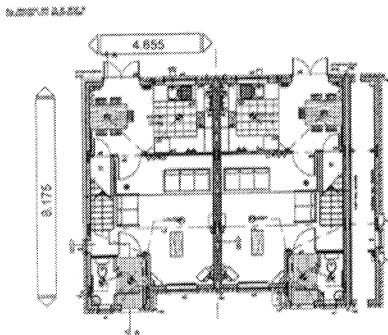
Gable Elevation



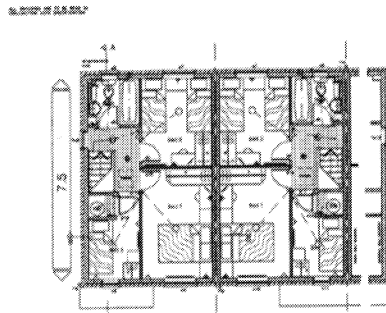
Rear Elevation - Semi Block



Gable Elevation

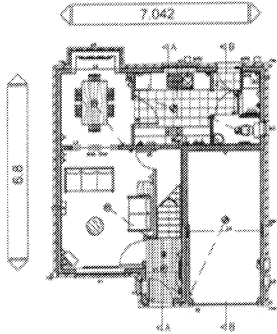
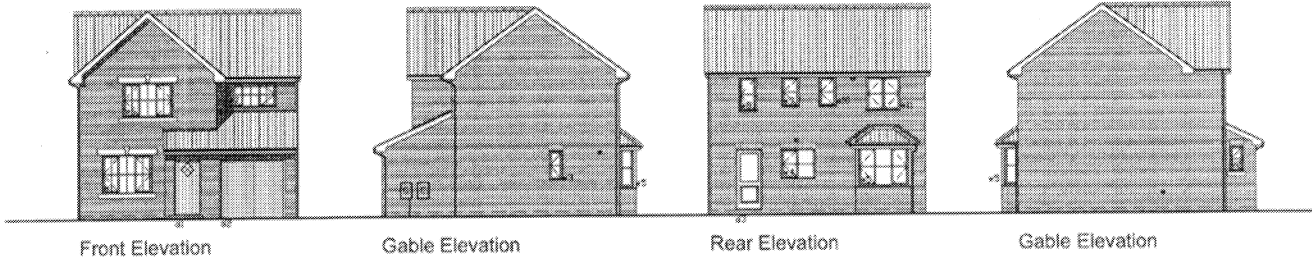


Ground Floor Plan

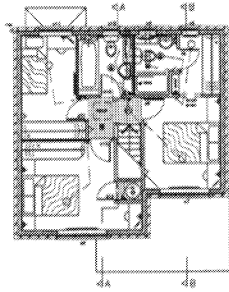


First Floor Plan

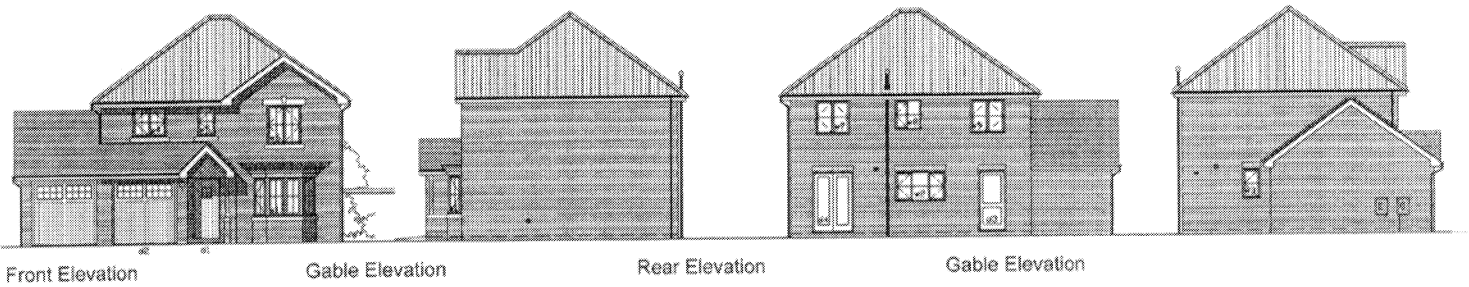
Erection of ninety-one dwellings with associated highway and landscape work
Land to the north & east of Fell View
The Grove
Consett
07/009



Ground Floor Plan

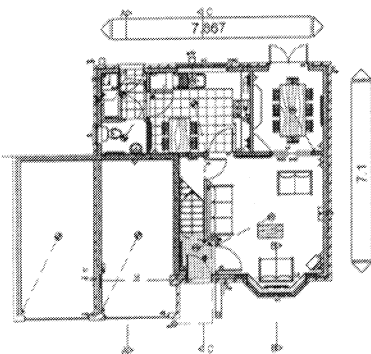


First Floor Plan

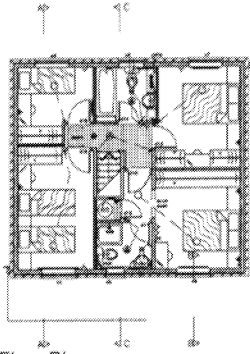


SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

Erection of ninety-one dwellings with associated highway and landscape work
Land to the north & east of Fell View
The Grove
Consett

07/009