

Detailed findings

Information provided by the Coal Authority in this report is compiled in response to the Law Society's CON29M Coal Mining enquiries. The said enquiries are protected by copyright owned by the Law Society of 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL.

The Coal Authority owns the copyright in this report and the information used to produce this report is protected by our database rights. All rights are reserved and unauthorised use is prohibited. If we provide a report for you, this does not mean that copyright and any other rights will pass to you. However, you can use the report for your own purposes.

1 Past underground coal mining

The property is not within a surface area that could be affected by any past recorded underground coal mining.

2 Present underground coal mining

The property is not within a surface area that could be affected by present underground mining.

3 Future underground coal mining

The property is not in an area where the Coal Authority has received an application for, and is currently considering whether to grant a licence to remove or work coal by underground methods.

The property is not in an area where a licence has been granted to remove or otherwise work coal using underground methods.

The property is not in an area likely to be affected from any planned future underground coal mining.

However, reserves of coal exist in the local area which could be worked at some time in the future.

No notices have been given, under section 46 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991, stating that the land is at risk of subsidence.

4 Mine entries

There are no recorded coal mine entries known to the Coal Authority within, or within 20 metres, of the boundary of the property.

5 Coal mining geology

The Coal Authority is not aware of any damage due to geological faults or other lines of weakness that have been affected by coal mining.

6 Past opencast coal mining

The property is not within the boundary of an opencast site from which coal has been removed by opencast methods.

7 Present opencast coal mining

The property does not lie within 200 metres of the boundary of an opencast site from which coal is being removed by opencast methods.

8 Future opencast coal mining

There are no licence requests outstanding to remove coal by opencast methods within 800 metres of the boundary.

The property is not within 800 metres of the boundary of an opencast site for which a licence to remove coal by opencast methods has been granted.

9 Coal mining subsidence

The Coal Authority has not received a damage notice or claim for the subject property, or any property within 50 metres of the enquiry boundary, since 31 October 1994.

There is no current Stop Notice delaying the start of remedial works or repairs to the property.

The Coal Authority is not aware of any request having been made to carry out preventive works before coal is worked under section 33 of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991.

10 Mine gas

The Coal Authority has no record of a mine gas emission requiring action.

11 Hazards related to coal mining

The property has not been subject to remedial works, by or on behalf of the Coal Authority, under its Emergency Surface Hazard Call Out procedures.

12 Withdrawal of support

The property is not in an area where a notice to withdraw support has been given.

The property is not in an area where a notice has been given under section 41 of the Coal Industry Act 1994, cancelling the entitlement to withdraw support.

13 Working facilities order

The property is not in an area where an order has been made, under the provisions of the Mines (Working Facilities and Support) Acts 1923 and 1966 or any statutory modification or amendment thereof.

14 Payments to owners of former copyhold land

The property is not in an area where a relevant notice has been published under the Coal Industry Act 1975/Coal Industry Act 1994.

Statutory cover



Coal mining subsidence

In the unlikely event of any coal mining related subsidence damage, the Coal Authority or the mine operator has a duty to take remedial action in respect of subsidence caused by the withdrawal of support from land or property in connection with lawful coal mining operations.

When the works are the responsibility of the Coal Authority, our dedicated public safety and subsidence team will manage the claim. The house or land owner ("the owner") is covered for these works under the terms of the Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991 (as amended by the Coal Industry Act 1994). Please note, this Act does not apply where coal was worked or gotten by virtue of the grant of a gale in the Forest of Dean, or any other part of the Hundred of St. Briavels in the county of Gloucester.

If you believe your land or property is suffering from coal mining subsidence damage and you need more information on what to do next, please use the following link to our website which sets out what your rights are and what you need to consider before making a claim.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/coal-mining-subsidence-damage-notice-form



Coal mining hazards

Our public safety and subsidence team provide a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week hazard reporting service, to help protect the public from hazards caused by past coal workings, such as a mine shaft or shallow working collapse. To report any hazards please call **01623 646 333**. Further information can be found on our website: www.gov.uk/coalauthority.

Glossary



Key terms

adit - horizontal or sloped entrance to a mine

coal mining subsidence - ground movement caused by the removal of coal by underground mining

Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991 - the Act setting out the duties of the Coal Authority to repair damage caused by coal mining subsidence

coal mining subsidence damage - damage to land, buildings or structures caused by the removal of coal by underground mining

coal seams - bed of coal of varying thickness

future opencast coal mining - a licence granted, or licence application received, by the Coal Authority to excavate coal from the surface

future underground coal mining - a licence granted, or licence application received, by the Coal Authority to excavate coal underground. Although it is unlikely, remaining coal reserves could create a possibility for future mining, which would be licensed by the Coal Authority

mine entries - collective name for shafts and adits

payments to owners of former copyhold land - historically, copyhold land gave rights to coal to the copyholder. Legislation was set up to allow others to work this coal, but they had to issue a notice and pay compensation if a copyholder came forward

shaft - vertical entry into a mine

site investigation - investigations of coal mining risks carried out with the Coal Authority's permission

stop notice - a delay to repairs because further coal mining subsidence damage may occur and it would be unwise to carry out permanent repairs

subsidence claim - a formal notice of subsidence damage to the Coal Authority since it was established on 31 October 1994

withdrawal of support - a historic notice informing landowners that the coal beneath their property was going to be worked

working facilities orders - a court order which gave permission, restricted or prevented coal mine workings

PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
King Street & Thornhill Road, Falkirk



Design and Access Statement

Revision B

March 2021

Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Planning History
3.0	Site Contamination Coal Mining Risk
4.0	Proposal Housing Type Low Carbon Development
5.0	Access & Transport Location & Local Amenities Car Parking Provision Sustainable Travel and Bus Routes Bicycle Provision Pedestrians Community Centre & Neighbouring Area Construction Access
6.0	Landscaping Public Open Space Landscaping Works Maintenance
7.0	Waste, Recycling & SUDS SUDS
8.0	Security SBD Construction
9.0	Conclusion

1.0

Introduction

Covell Matthews Architects (the Agent) have been instructed by G&N Homes (FK-L) Limited to provide architectural and planning advice with regard to the proposed development of Affordable Housing flats, associated amenities and landscaping on a vacant site at the corner of King Street and Thornhill Road, Falkirk.

This Supporting Statement accompanies the design drawings to form a full planning application submitted to Falkirk Council under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006).

2.0

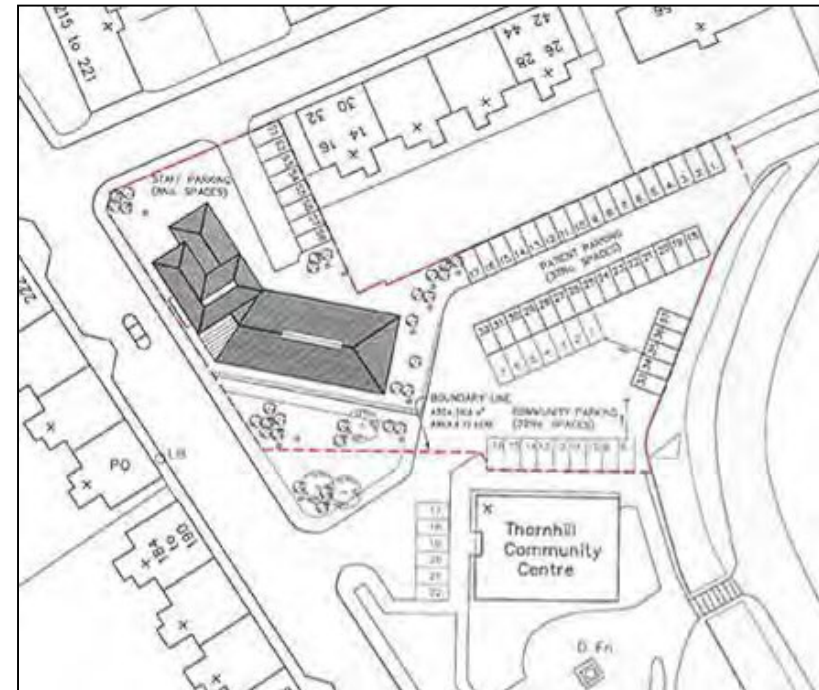
Planning History

A previous application for the erection of a medical centre and associated parking was granted in October 2006 (Ref 06/0499/FUL). This approved development was never started and subsequently the site has remained vacant and unused for the past 13 years since the approval, if not longer prior to the application.

Pre-application advice was sought for this proposal and received from John Milne in October 2017 (Ref ENQ/2017/1019).

An official pre-application submission was made for this proposal on the 27th July 2018 (Ref EHQ/2018/0760). Advice was received from various consultants resulting in extended discussions and site re-designs to incorporate requests and suggestions where reasonably possible. Where full compliance with requested changes has not been possible – justification and support has been provided.

The submission of this planning application following the above mentioned pre-application submission has been delayed due to the change in developer; however the principals of the application and the Housing Association involved have remained the same.



Proposed Medical Centre Application Site Plan
By Kenneth Reid Architects

3.0

Site

A vacant Brownfield site located on the corner of King Street and Thornhill Road that extends down and around between the rear gardens of existing King Street dwellings and Victoria Park to the east. The site is used by local residents as a pedestrian thoroughfare from Thornhill Road to Victoria Park playing field and as a car park for the neighbouring Thornhill Community Centre.

The highest level of the site is the north west corner on King Street and then slopes down across the site approximately 3.5m towards the playing fields and to the north east. The site is currently a mix of grass and asphalt surfaces of poor quality.

A variety of housing types ranging from 2 storey rendered semi-detached and terraced houses to 3 storey rendered blocks of flats can be found in the residential streets to the north of the site and backing onto the site from King Street. The large Victoria Park playing field dominates the eastern boundary along with a public basketball court and a number of children's playgrounds. Immediately south of the site is Thornhill Community Centre, a public garden extends further down Thornhill Road behind the centre. Thornhill Road bounds the west of the site with 2 storey stone faced terraced houses immediately opposite. A church is located diagonally opposite the sites key King street/Thornhill Road corner.

The site is located only 150m outside the boundary of the council designated Falkirk Town Centre.



Looking across corner from Thornhill Road towards King Street



Looking down pedestrian pathway from Thornhill Road towards playing fields



Looking back at site from most north eastern point

Contamination

We have received the following feedback from the SI contractors:

“Having reviewed the chemical results and ground gas/water monitoring results thus far the interim report is as follows.

No elevated toxic/phytotoxic contamination was recorded in the shallow soils, however, asbestos was detected (0.013%) at 0.5m depth in TP02 (refer Appendices). From the proposed development layout, this sample location appears to be below an area of proposed hardstanding (car parking/road area). Provided these development proposals do not change – at this preliminary stage – we do not envisage any further remedial action will be required in relation to the asbestos detection (i.e. it was not recorded anywhere else within the site and is below an area of proposed hardstanding).

UKWIR analysis has indicated that polyethylene (PE) pipes will be suitable for the proposed development.

The ground gas/water monitoring thus far has not indicated any concern related to significant ground gas (methane/carbon dioxide) generation. Carbon dioxide was recorded to range from 0.4 to 2.1% v/v. Methane was recorded as 0.0% v/v for the duration of the monitoring period thus far. There are still another 3 rounds of monitoring to complete, however, so the potential for ground gas issues cannot be discounted.”

Coal Mining Risk

“Based on the published geological information, records relating to past mineral operation and mineral reports which were done in the past, we can anticipate the following information regarding the existing geology and mineral activity in the proposed site:

According to published geological information, the superficial deposits in this area are alluvial in nature -clay, silt, salt and gravel- and estimated to be in the order of 35 - 40 metres thick, based on nearby boreholes reports. The solid strata immediately underlying the area belong to the lower part of the Productive Coal Measures and appear to dip generally towards the south-west. The foregoing series of rocks are sedimentary in nature and are represented by cyclic sequences of sandstone, siltstone, fireclay and mudstone, interspersed with seams of coal and ironstone.

However, based on the mineral report made in the past, according to the Geological Memoirs of the District published in 1917, no minerals groups appear to be well developed in the central or deepest part of the Falkirk Coalfield.

Although The Coal Authority website recommends a mining report to be undertaken for this area, the previous site investigations state that while the seams located at or about the base of the Productive Coal Measures were extensively extracted nearby, no record was found of workings extending under or in close proximity to the site under review. Therefore, it was concluded in a previous site investigation that the underlying minerals are low risk.”

4.0

Proposal

The introduction of a residential development on a long standing vacant site will be beneficial to the amenity of the neighbourhood as well as increase the security and amiability of the existing pedestrian thoroughfare which currently passes through the inactive, unobserved site.

The proposal is to provide 23 Affordable Housing units with associated car parking and amenity spaces. The units are spread between two 3 storey buildings, Block A occupying the corner location facing onto King Street and Block B located further into the site maximising views over Victoria Park playing field.

The corner of King Street and Thornhill Road has been identified as an opportunity to create architectural focus and strengthen the corner within the urban realm. Corner windows on each floor sit in the prominent position maximising views from inside as well as creating interest externally. A rusty red timber effect cladding has been proposed to surround the corner windows, accentuating it further. The timber effect cladding is also utilised throughout each building to highlight the main entrances and add texture to some of the less fenestrated facades. The remainder of the buildings comprise a mixture of a crisp smooth finish white render contrasted by a dark rough brick, and an equally dark concrete tiled roof. Block B which is positioned further away from existing neighbouring dwellings is 3 storeys high. Block A is 3 storeys high for the majority however the roof height drops slightly over the corner and reduces to 2 storeys where directly adjacent the existing dwellings on King Street.

The balanced mixture of materials intentionally fragments each block, reducing the mass of the buildings, and the colour palette introduces a modern sense to the traditional form, helping to accentuate and rejuvenate the currently tired, unoccupied corner site.

Housing Type

The units are to be 100% social rented housing. The flats are designed for general needs provision with the exception of the two ground floor flats in Block A which are wheelchair accessible and one of the ground floor flats in Block B which is ambulant disabled/older person accessible. All flats are designed to comply with Housing for Varying Needs standards.

The proposed accommodation schedule is:

9no. 1 bed flats

13no. 2 bed flats

1no. 2 bed house

Falkirk council has confirmed a high demand for Affordable Housing and this residential site close to the town centre, amenities and transport is the ideal location for a 100% Affordable Housing development.

Low Carbon Development

The buildings will benefit from photovoltaic panels integrated into the roofs for generating sustainable electricity and will be constructed to achieve Silver Active Standard in Section 7, Sustainability, of the Scottish Building Regulations.

Sustainable Travel Packs will be provided to residents when they first move into their new home. More information has been provided on this in the Access and Transport section following.

5.0

Access & Transport

Location & Local Amenities

This development comprises 100% Affordable Housing. Location is first and foremost the key to providing not only low cost rented housing but low cost living. Affordable housing could potentially become un-affordable if not correctly located within easy access of public transportation and basic services and amenities such as shops, schools, childcare, medical assistance and community recreation spaces.

Public transport is easily accessible, local and larger retail stores are within walking distance, the catchment schools are within walking distance or have a school bus provided, there is a local nursery located within walking distance as is the local medical centre. Residents could happily live within this development without the need of a car & its associated expenses.

Falkirk Travel Plan guidance states that pedestrians will walk approximately 20 minutes and cyclists will travel 30-40 minutes to access jobs and services.

In addition to all of the essential services listed in the table, Victoria Park playing fields, numerous children's playgrounds, basketball courts and public gardens neighbour the site and are easily accessed by potential residents, as is the Thornhill Community Centre.

Car Parking Provision

When applying Standard Guidance, Falkirk Transportation Department has advised the need to provide 42 parking spaces for this site:

- 1 space per 1 bedroom flat (9 spaces)
- 2 spaces per each 2 bedroom flat (28 spaces)
- approx. 20% visitor parking (5 spaces)

This requirement is no different to that expected of mainstream housing developments as specified in The National Roads Development Guidance, despite lower car use being anticipated due to income levels.

The National Roads Development Guidance specifies the parking provision for Housing Associations to be 0.2-0.5 spaces per dwelling plus 0.3 spaces visitor parking per dwelling, lower than that specified for mainstream housing. Furthermore, SEStran suggests an even lower rate of 0.5 spaces per any dwelling type whether 1 or 2 bedrooms, given the location of the site.

Based on the town centre location and anticipated car ownership our initial pre-application for car parking was 100% or 23 parking spaces, one per flat in total – as illustrated (adjacent image).

A new and separate car park for Thornhill Community Centre providing 16 spaces was also proposed.



Previous site layout with 23 parking spaces

Following discussions with Planning and Transportation, the number of car parking spaces has been substantially increased to 35 spaces in addition to the 16 spaces for Thornhill Community Centre:

- 1 space per 1 bedroom flat (9 spaces)
- 1.5 spaces per 2 bedroom flat (21 spaces)
- approx. 20% visitor parking (5 spaces)

Note that 2 wheelchair spaces are included within the above figures, located close to the rear entrance of Block A which houses the 2 wheelchair accessible flats

As already highlighted, this is an affordable housing development for lower income residents. The provision provided allows for 100% of units to be designated 1 car space and 30% of units to be designated an additional second car space, plus visitor spaces.

There is completely unrestricted on street parking available surrounding the site and in the neighbouring areas on and directly off King Street. A dedicated pull-in parking lane extends down Thornhill Road directly opposite the site.

The proposal for 35 parking spaces falls slightly short of that requested by Transportation. However the town centre location, affordable nature of this development and close proximity to public transport we would hope should allow Falkirk Council to justifiably relax the standard parking guidance and ensure the development of this brownfield site for badly needed social rented housing can proceed.



Current site layout with 35 parking spaces



Unrestricted on-street parking on King Street



Bike rack system



Unrestricted on-street parking on Thornhill Road

Sustainable Travel and Bus Routes

The Falkirk Council Local Transport Strategy commits to developing an infrastructure to promote active & sustainable travel. The Executive Summary includes the statement that “The Council recognises that whilst the car fulfils an important function for a variety of journey purposes unrestrained growth in car usage cannot be accommodated indefinitely by engineering measures.” It is our understanding that the councils aim is to minimise car use and encourage sustainable travel options both to benefit the environment as well reduce congestion on the roads.

To support these aspirations and raise awareness of non-car travel options, new residents of this development will be provided with a Sustainable Travel Pack. The pack will include such information as locations of key services & amenities and walking & cycling routes to them, as well as public transport route maps and timetables. This will promote sustainable travel rather than car use.

Bicycle provision

One bike parking space has been provided per flat, as specified for standard housing in The National Roads Development Guidance. The bike store is within a designated secure internal space accessed from outside with a key. One bike store room is provided within each building block to ensure adequate, easy to access and secure storage.

Pedestrians

The existing pedestrian thoroughfare through the site from Thornhill Road directly to Victoria Park, as well as the current gravel path skirting the boundary between Victoria Park and the application site are being maintained for public use and will be upgraded with new tarmac surfaces as part of this proposal. The path cutting through the site adjacent the car parking spaces will be raised to provide a 100mm high kerb safeguard between the path and car parking.

Community Centre & Neighbouring Area

In addition to the 35 parking spaces for the use of residents, there are 16 parking spaces provided solely for the use of the neighbouring community centre, replacing the existing community centre spaces which are currently within the application site. Fourteen of the proposed spaces are within the application site and two are immediately adjacent on Council owned land. All 16 spaces were originally provided within the application site. However, Transportation advised that a 2m wide pathway was required around the community centre and as a result 2 of the spaces had to be moved out with the application site to ensure this can be provided.

The community centre spaces are accessed via the existing community centre car park. We have kept each car park and associated entrances separate to avoid confusion and reduce the possibility of residents using the spaces allocated for the community centre and vice-versa.

Through consultation with planning officers Mandy Brown and Lynn Slavin we are aware of the recent wider development of the area around the community centre. These works involve the upgrade of the Sir John de Graeme fountain and pathways around the centre and Victoria Park. The dedicated car park proposed will complement these works.

The upgrade of the public paths through the site tie in with the recently completed upgrade of surrounding paths and the proposed development of the fountain, which we believe was due to begin in Autumn 2019.

Mandy Brown has also confirmed that they consulted with local councillors and the Roads Department regarding the two proposed options for the fountain area upgrade, both of which can be seen in the diagram below. The majority opted for Option 1, without the 4 parking spaces. This would suggest that there isn't an existing need for additional parking in the area immediately around the community centre as the opportunity to provide more parking was declined.



Proposed Fountain works Option 1 – Remove Parking
By Ian White Associates Landscape Architects



Proposed Fountain Works Option 2 – Limited Parking
By Ian White Associates Landscape Architects

Construction Access

As with all new development, the construction will have a short-term impact on local residents/adjacent uses such as the community centre. To minimise this impact the developer has provided a construction management plan with the application. The community centre car park will be provided in advance of the main works and alternative footpaths through the site will be provided until the new development is complete.



6.0

Landscaping

Public Open Space

The development of this brownfield site is unlikely to result in a significant loss of functional open space. Falkirk Council Landscape Officer has confirmed the existing site is not currently viewed as high quality open space. The proposed development provides an opportunity to improve the quality of external open space. Nearby playground encouraging wider use. In addition to the external spaces provided within the site there is substantial high quality, functional and diverse public open spaces immediately adjacent to the site. These include Victoria Park playing field & courts, numerous playgrounds and a public garden. Upgrading works to the public garden are proposed to begin early 2019 as already discussed in this Statement.

Landscaping Works

As indicated on the proposed site plan, the proposed development buildings are surrounded by a range of landscaping and amenity spaces across the site. Hedging provides segregation of different spaces, delineating public from private use, and when mixed with timber fencing also provides security around the site boundary. Pedestrian paths provide ease of movement throughout the site, both for residents wanting to access their flats and the public wishing to pass through the site.

A tree survey was carried out in July 2018 by Arboricultural Consultant, Alan Motion. The full survey and report can be supplied if necessary. There are 13 existing trees within and immediately adjacent to the development site. As many of the healthy trees will be retained as possible. Nine existing trees will be removed and replaced with ten new trees. There have been no trees placed under protection in the tree survey report. The report also includes specifications for constructing car parking spaces within the root protection zone of some of the trees which will be abided by. The council Landscape Consultant expressed concern that we are proposing to remove 2 existing lime trees to create the new car park entrance, disrupting the lime avenue along Thornhill Road. We looked at trying to relocate the car park entrance to be able to retain at least one, if not two of these trees, however in doing so rendered the car park impossible for refuse vehicles to negotiate through. We have taken the consultants advice however and have introduced 3 new lime trees along the frontage of Thornhill Road adjacent to the car park entrance/where the existing lime trees are positioned. This will retain the avenue of lime trees importance within the streetscape.

Along with the replacement trees we are designating open grassed areas as well as native shrub planting areas to help create protection and privacy to ground floor windows as well border pathways and car parking.

Maintenance

All proposed planting will be installed in the first planting season after building completion and will be monitored and maintained periodically thereafter. Any unsuccessful planting will be removed and re-planted in the next planting season.



7.0

Waste, Recycling & SUDS

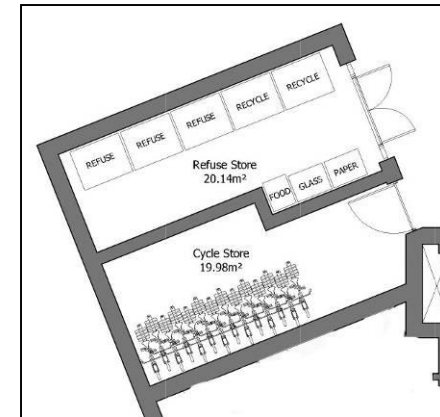
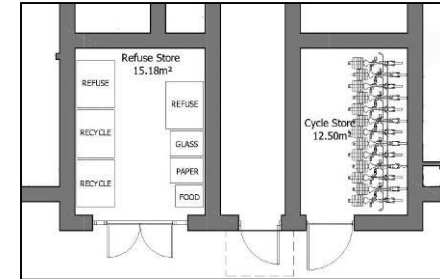
Bin stores are provided in each block. Each store is internal, accessed from outside and located with level access to the central parking court for ease of refuse collection.

Block A (9 units) has allowance for:

- 2 x 1280L refuse bins
- 2 x 1280L package recycling bins
- 1 x 360L glass recycling bin
- 1 x 360L paper recycling bin
- 1 x 240L food bin

Block B (14 units) has allowance for:

- 3 x 1280L refuse bins
- 2 x 1280L package recycling bins
- 1 x 360L glass recycling bin
- 1 x 360L paper recycling bin
- 1 x 240L food bin



SUDS

This application includes a Sustainable Drainage System that has been designed by Rudd Davidson Consulting Engineers. This will be located beneath the car park, and a copy of the design has been included in this submission.

8.0

Security

An 1800mm high timber boundary fence with hedging will be placed on all boundaries around Block B and between the application site and community centre. This is to create a physical boundary for the site while surrounding views will be maintained for the residents on all floors due to the building ground floor level being higher than the path and fence/hedge level. A 900mm high hedge will bound Block A and the grass amenity and parking area behind it as this is a more overlooked area with less risk of intrusion. The eastern boundary between Block A and the neighbouring property on King Street will have an 1800mm high timber fence.

Secured By Design

The development will be certified Secured by Design, Silver Award. We have had confirmation from our SBD officer that Silver Award is acceptable on this site.

Construction

Throughout the construction period the site will be secured by 2400mm high Heras security fencing around the site perimeter with site access and egress through the designated gate on Thornhill Road.

9.0

Conclusion

This proposal for 23 Affordable Housing units is an ideal development for this long-standing brownfield site in Falkirk close to the town centre, local amenities & public transport. The two buildings sit comfortably on the site and their aesthetic and size complement and rejuvenate the existing character of the neighbourhood.

Having refined the site throughout the pre-application consultation period, we strongly believe that the final layout presented for this application is a successful balance of buildings, landscaping, thoroughfares and car parking providing what will be a successful development for the neighbourhood.

We submit this proposal with confidence that it meets requirements and respectfully ask that you support this application.

END