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HERITAGE  
STATEMENT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
AT LAND OFF FULLWOOD DRIVE, GOLCAR.

Ref: 2673

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CONTENTS

PAGE NO

CONTENTS		i
SECTION 1:	INTRODUCTION .....	1
SECTION 2:	DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ASSETT .....	1
SECTION 3:	IMPACT ON HERITAGE ASSETT .....	2
SECTION 4:	CONCLUSION .....	4

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

- 1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a reserved matters planning application for residential development on land off Fullwood Drive in Golcar.
- 2 This statement responds to section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected and the impact or contribution of the proposed development upon the heritage asset.

## **SECTION 2: DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ASSETT.**

- 3 The site falls within Golcar Conservation Area, within the attractive settlement of Golcar, built on the steep hillside above the valley of the River Colne which creates a very distinctive character.
- 4 The village comprises predominantly stone buildings with an informal layout creating a patchwork of built form set amongst trees and natural landscape features which frame the settlement. The streets are tight and designed for a time before the growth of car ownership, which gives an intimate feel. The network of ginnels and stepped 'cut throughs' weaving through the houses add to this character.
- 5 A large proportion of Golcar falls within a Conservation Area and there are a number of Listed Buildings although none in the immediate vicinity of the site. However, there are many attractive buildings in close proximity, the majority of which are weavers cottages and mill workers cottages which date back to the 18th and 19th century as well as the odd grander detached house.
- 6 The village is almost entirely constructed of natural stone and slate with later development more regularly coursed with fine joints and older dwellings more roughly coursed.
- 7 A distinctive light stoned mullioned window style exists which harks back to the mills with stone surrounds and recessed windows in runs of up to 7 or 8 panes of glass. Some of the mill buildings also have large openings which could be re-interpreted via larger windows in new houses.
- 8 Many of the dwellings are positioned close up to the back of the footpath as they were designed for an era prior to the private motor vehicle. Where front gardens exist they are predominantly short and enclosed with a dwarf stone wall.

- 9 Kirklees Council have published a Conservation Area Appraisal that sets out that *“Golcar is a large, closely-knit hillside village of picturesque quality. Steep slopes, steps and narrow lanes with homogeneous vernacular stone architecture and stone retaining and boundary walls characterise the settlement”*.
- 10 The Conservation Area Appraisal explains *“The urban grain of the Golcar conservation area is characterised by small linear plots which dictated the overall design of many of the buildings within the area. There are a number of detached properties but these are few in relation to the overall building stock. The detached properties included in the revised Golcar conservation boundary have small plots in keeping with the linear settlement pattern.*
- 11 *The steep hillside, is one of the defining features of Golcar. The hillside creates extra drama and interest and sets the village apart from other weavers settlements in the Colne Valley. Many of the roads in the steepest areas are linked by stone steps and footpaths, which form an important part of the character of Golcar.*
- 12 *The early settlement pattern is still clearly visible, with Golcar Flat remaining undeveloped until the twentieth century and Golcar Edge still largely undeveloped. Early transport routes remain and now form the basis for the existing transport links.”*

### **SECTION 3: IMPACT ON HERITAGE ASSETT**

- 13 The site comprises an undeveloped Greenfield site that slopes steeply from north down to the south away from the centre of conservation area. The site has been allocated for housing in the Local Plan. The site currently benefits from outline planning permission. The site has been in private ownership and provides little in terms of amenity value. It is overgrown and not suitable for general access to the public. The site is not easily visible at close quarters, but is visible from further afield to the south from Share Hill in Wellhouse.
- 14 The application site forms part of a hillside, which acts as a buffer to prevent the settlements of Golcar and Wellhouse from merging. In granting Outline planning permission for the residential development of the site, the Council considered that housing could be undertaken on the site of a layout, appearance, scale and with landscape proposals that would maintain the significance of the Conservation Area. The officer’s report to the planning committee stated that such details would be required to have regard to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to draw reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal.

- 15 The sloping nature of the site means that significant engineering is required to retain the site, however the proposed development has been designed so that the houses to the south provide retaining structures to support the access road. The only free standing retaining structures are in the gardens of the southern houses, with the retaining walls being located below the line of trees that will be retained to the south of the site.
- 16 The retention of the tree belt to the southern end of the is considered a positive factor in safeguarding the future characteristic of the Conservation Area, whilst also assisting in maintaining separation between the settlements of Golcar and Wellhouse.
- 17 The proposed development is designed to include short terraces of cottages, as well as semi-detached and detached dwellings with limited gaps between buildings ensuring that the 'connected' and close knit feel of the Conservation Area is reflected. The building layout benefits from strong building lines which reinforce the linear character of the Conservation Area.
- 18 There are two main types of cottages prevalent in Golcar:
1. The early weaver's cottages that front directly onto the highway with no garden, which tend to be built to higher densities in the steep-sided valley, where there was limited amount of flat building land available; and
  2. Mill worker's cottages and cottages built for investment, which were built later in Victorian times, with these being generally of sound construction to require the minimum of repairs. These properties tend to be set back slightly from the highway, creating a small front garden, enclosed by dwarf walls and constructed from locally sourced stone.
- 19 The proposed development includes buildings of stone construction, generally reflecting the simple form of the cottages with the light stone mullioned windows being a key factor which links the development with the architecture of the surrounding area. The proposed street through the development is designed to be a shared surface and block paved, avoiding the use of tarmac.
- 20 The proposed development has been designed to reflect and complement the character of the conservation:
- a. The buildings will be constructed of natural stone and slate which will reflect that of the surrounding area.

- b. Window styles predominantly reflect the light stoned mullioned style window which is prevalent in Golcar
- c. The buildings reflect the linear south facing multi-storey houses of Golcar. Many of the buildings in Golcar are two storey, but due to the sloping nature of the area and of the site, taller three storey dwellings are also an appropriate response, including split level properties built into the slope which reinforce the local character.

#### **SECTION 4: CONCLUSION**

- 21 The proposals will deliver development on a site defined as an Opportunity Area within the expanded Golcar Conservation Area. The development has been sympathetically designed, with the layout and house types addressing the prominent relief of the hillside site. The scale and appearance of the proposed houses draw influences from the traditional properties within the village. The proposed scheme of landscaping retains the mature tree belt to the southern boundary, helps the development assimilate into its surroundings.
- 22 The proposed development will compliment the mixed character and features of the surrounding conservation area. It will not be visible from nearby and from further afield the character of the site will remain tree lined.
- 23 In terms of section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework the proposed development will not impact on the heritage asset, which in this case is the conservation area