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Objection to Soundness of Land Allocations DPD

Proposal:

Non Revision of Settlement Boundary

Site:

Vacant Plot

Between Daisy Hill Cottage and

Urswick Hall Cottage

Great Urswick

Introduction

- 1 This statement relates to the objection to the settlement boundary at Great Urswick which was not revised to include the land hatched red on the attached plans, otherwise referred to as 'the site'.
- 2 The Land Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) has undergone various consultations. This objection is based on the soundness of the proposed allocation with regard to whether it is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- 3 The site subject to this objection is located to the west of Daisy Hill Cottage, Great Urswick. It is located between Daisy Hill Cottage and Urswick Hall Cottage.

Site Description

- 4 The site is located between Daisy Hill Cottage to the east, and Urswick Hall Cottage to the west. The southern boundary forms the boundary with the highway, and the northern boundary is a post and wire fence with agricultural fields beyond. The northern boundary is a continual line of the boundaries to residential garden areas of properties to the east, although this line does not project as far as the garden areas of Cherry Tree and Meadow Bank located further to the east.
- 5 The ground levels vary in this part of Urswick, and the current ground level is higher than Urswick Hall Cottage but is slightly lower than Daisy Hill Cottage.
- 6 In terms of frontage to the highway, the northern side of the highway from The Derby Arms to the eastern extent of the settlement boundary is entirely made up of residential properties, with the exception of the land subject to the objection. The site is an unbuilt plot of land in what is otherwise a continuous built up frontage. Housing continues further to the east beyond the site. The southern side is also entirely made up of residential properties, but the southern side is slightly more open in character and those properties lie adjacent to Urswick Tarn.
- 7 Historically a number of mature trees lined the road in this location. In approximately 1978 Urswick Hall Cottage was built resulting in the loss of a number of trees. In 2011 the remaining 3 mature trees were granted consent for their removal because they were in a dangerous state, and replacements were planted in March 2012 in accordance with that consent.

Policy Context

- 8 The recent publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaces all previous guidance in the form of PPGs, and PPSs. Overall the NPPF gives a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- 9 The South Lakeland Core Strategy Policy CS4 does make provision for small scale housing development in local service centres, of which Great Urswick on one. In addition paragraph 2.25 of the explanatory text of the Core Strategy does define infilling as building taking place on a vacant plot in an otherwise built up street frontage.

Issues

- 10 The proposal by the Council not to revise the boundary in this location raises a number of issues, these include:
 - Infill plot
 - Landscape effect
 - Precedent

Infill plot

- 11 It is clear that the site is an infill plot which is in accordance with the definition as set out in the Core Strategy. There is an anomaly whereby the settlement boundary was not previously revised to include Urswick Hall Cottage and garden area (edged green on the plan) at the time of the last Local Plan, nevertheless it does not diminish the site's status both visually and physically as an infill plot within a built up frontage.

Landscape effect

- 12 The suggested revision to the boundary to include the area edged red, would bring it in line with the extent of garden areas surrounding it. The site would not project beyond that line, and its projection is less than those other properties to the east. It forms a logical extension of the garden areas in that area.

- 13 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. With this in mind, the inclusion of this site would have minimal landscape effect, and is significantly less intrusive, if at all, than extending the settlement boundary elsewhere. Extending the settlement boundary elsewhere would be less sustainable by reason of harm to the character of the area.

Precedent

- 14 Precedent is a factor not often taken into account in planning decisions nevertheless it has been argued that if this extension was allowed, it would give rise to pressure elsewhere for such extensions. This assumption is ill-founded. This is because there are no other similar situations to be found in Urswick or other settlements. In any event other settlements have their own characteristics and should be determined on those merits. In the case of this site, it is surrounded by housing on either side and if the settlement boundary revision is allowed, it would not give rise to pressure to allow other sites, are there are no other sites similar to this.
- 15 There is an area of land to the south east between Tarn House and Willow Grove, however this location is different. This is because of its context with the setting in close proximity to the Urswick Tarn, and views from across the Tarn. In addition, the southern side of the road is more visually open in character and those open areas are subject to other designations which would in any event preclude development from taking place.

Soundness

Justified

- 16 There is no assessment to justify why the site subject of this objection should not be included within the settlement boundary.

Effective

- 17 The site, if included within the settlement boundary would enable effective monitoring of the site to take place, subject to future approvals by the Council.

National Policy

- 18 The proposed inclusion of the site within the settlement is consistent with the general thrust of new central government guidance which is for presumption in favour of sustainable development. This new guidance has been issued part way through the Land Allocations DPD process and is a material consideration. Accordingly, it has not demonstrated that there would be harm by its inclusion, or why it would be contrary to the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Conclusion

- 19 The site is visually and physically an unbuilt plot of land in an otherwise built up frontage. It accords with the Core Strategy definition of an infill plot.

- 20 The proposed extension of the settlement boundary would bring it in line with the garden areas of properties surrounding the site, and there is no assessment or justification as why this would be harmful.

- 21 Recent central government guidance in the form of the NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There is no assessment or justification as to why this site's inclusion within the settlement boundary would be contrary to that presumption. The Core Strategy does permit new development in local service centres of which Great Urswick is one. However, it is understood that the NPPF was published part way through the Land Allocations DPD process. Within this in mind, revisions could be made to make it accord with that more recent guidance.

- 22 On the basis of consideration of the requirements set out above, the proposed non inclusion of the land within the settlement boundary is **not sound**. Therefore this objection is justified, and the proposed land should be included.

Great Urswick & Little Urswick

