

LDP3: CALL FOR IDEAS

PROPOSED SITE FOR HOUSING AT NORTH BANK, WHITING BAY, ISLE OF ARRAN

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View from North on public road

PROPOSAL

This proposal is submitted in response to the Call For Ideas by North Ayrshire Council as part of the process for producing its LDP3 Local Development Plan.

This document describes the proposal as well as demonstrating the development potential of the land and goes on to assess the proposal against the Site Appraisal Methodology adopted by the Council.

The proposal is for the area of land indicated on the Location Plan with a red boundary to be included within a re-aligned settlement boundary for Whiting Bay.

The site is approximately 2.67 hectares in area and is owned by Wilma Currie, Colleen Davidson, Isabel MacMillan and Leigh Middleton. It is accessed by the adopted Barn Brae Road to the North-West of the site which runs in a North-Easterly direction until it meets the main A841 road.

It is currently a grazing pasture and is bounded by a public road to the North, houses to the East and South and a house and agricultural land to the West. The West side of the site is heavily wooded with mature trees (shaded green on the location plan). The site is split in two by a small stream and slopes gently down from West to East.



PROPOSAL

The proposed site affords an opportunity to create 6 generous sized house plots with ample amenity space and extensive tree planting to extend the existing woodland and enhance the biodiversity of the land.

The plots are of sufficient size to provide substantial gardens and to accommodate private wastewater treatment.

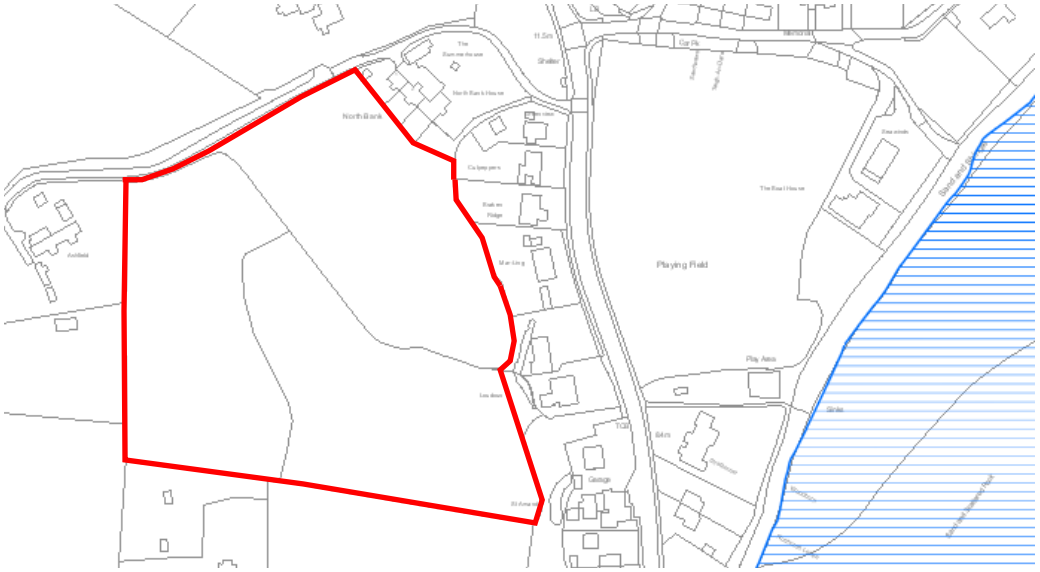
Access can be taken from the public road to the North of the site.

The proposals would repeat the existing development pattern on the A841 main road, with enough space to plant a screen of shrubs and trees to protect the privacy of the existing houses while at the same time, because of the elevation of the site, affording panoramic sea views from the proposed houses.

The substantial amenity space to the West of the service road will further enhance the amenity of the houses, providing open space for the residents.

SITE APPRAISAL

The following appraisal assess the proposed site against the 9 criteria listed in the Council's Site Assessment Matrix.



Extract from North Ayrshire Council Biodiversity Designations Map

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

BIODIVERSITY

The site is outwith any area identified by North Ayrshire Council as being of particular siginficance in terms of biodiversity. However, the plot sizes afford the opportunity for the planting of a high number of trees. This, together with generous provision of amenity space which can be sown with native wild flowers and shrubs will significantly enhance the site's biodiversity providing a habitat for pollenating insects, birdlife and small mammals in contrast to the site's current status as grazing land which makes it relatively poor in terms of biodiversity.

In answer to the questions in the Site Assessment Matrix:

- Will the proposal protect both designated and non-designated sites from adverse impacts? YES
- Will the proposal contribute towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, including strengthening nature networks? YES
- Will the proposal protect and expand forest, woodland and trees? YES

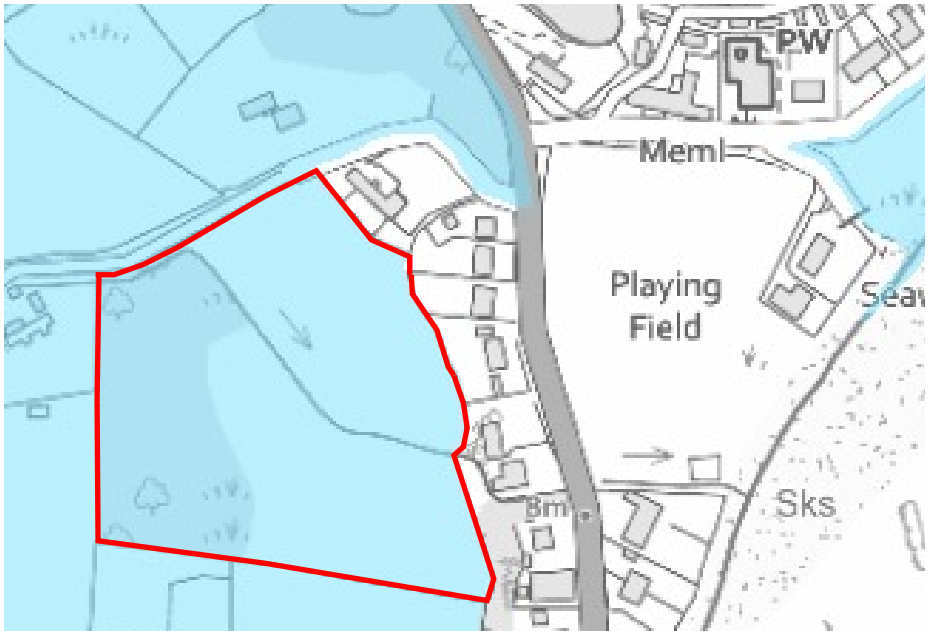
POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

The site is within 164 and 207 metres of bus stops, 150 metres from Sandbraes playing field, 340 metres from a shop and 600 metres from Whiting Bay Primary School making all these facilities well within a 20 minute walk from the site.

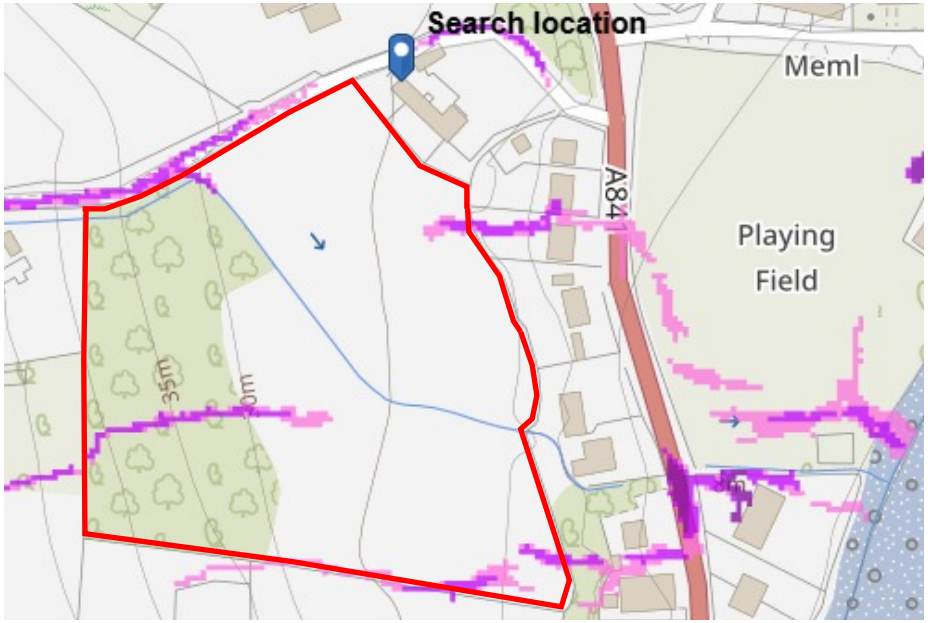
With an easy walk to the beach and open spaces such as Sandbraes playing field, the site affords access to open space and, with excellent visual amenities, ample space around the houses due to generous plot sizes and a rural setting, the proposal will have a positive effect on physical and mental health for occupants.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions:

- Is the proposal consistent with the principle of local living? YES
- Will the proposal promote and enhance access to open space/green networks? YES
- Will the proposal have a positive impact on health and wellbeing? YES



Extract from North Ayrshire Soils Designation Map



Extract from SEPA Flood Risk Identification Map

SOIL

The site is designated as soil Class 4.2 which is Good Quality Grazing Land.

However, Grade 4 agricultural land is classified as poor quality land with severe limitations that significantly restrict the types of crops that can be grown and/or the level of yields that can be achieved. It is typically best suited for grass, with occasional, and often variable, yields of arable crops like cereals and forage crops.

The loss of this land to housing will therefore not result in the loss of high value agricultural land.

However, the tree planting and appropriate planting of the amenity space will contribute to an improvement in the soil.

In answer to the questions in the Site Assessment Matrix:

- Will the proposal have an adverse impact on high value agricultural land? NO
- Will the proposal protect and enhance carbon rich soils? Not Applicable
- Will the proposal contribute to maintaining or improving soil health and function? YES

WATER

The proposed use of the site for housing will have no detrimental effect on the water quality in the surrounding area.

The SEPA flood risk map for the area shows that there is a limited risk of fluvial flooding. However, the site is large enough to enable the housing to be located away from any areas of flood risk. A surface water SUDS drainage system, designed to drain the site appropriately with attenuation, will manage any flood risk as well as potentially reducing any existing risk to neighbouring land or properties.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions:

- Will the proposal protect and enhance water quality? YES
- Will the proposal increase the number of people or properties at risk of flooding? NO

AIR
The proposals will have no adverse effects on air quality.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions;
- Will the proposal avoid adverse impacts to air quality? YES
- Will the proposal contribute to reducing emissions of key pollutants? Not applicable
- Will the proposal contribute to reducing levels of nuisance? Not applicable

CLIMATIC FACTORS
The proposed houses will be constructed in accordance with the Building Standards and will necessarily require to reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse gases. The location and orientation, as well as the plot sizes, will make Passivhaus status achievable. The use of sustainable materials, renewable energy sources, with appropriate designs to avoid over-heating, as well as the aforementioned sustainable urban drainage installation will facilitate climate change adaptation.

As a requirement of the Building Standards, the proposed houses will require to be fitted with Electric Vehicle charging points, promoting the use of electric vehicles with no carbon emissions.

With local amenities within a 20 minute walk, including nearby bus stops, providing public transport access to other key facilities such as healthcare, supermarket and secondary schools, the proposal enables the prioritisation of sustainable travel.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions:
- Will the proposal minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions? YES
- Will the proposal promote climate change adaptation? YES
- Will the proposal prioritise sustainable travel in accordance with the hierarchy? YES



Extract from North Ayrshire Council Landscape Classification Map

MATERIAL ASSETS

The proposed houses, due to their orientation and location will benefit from the use of renewable energy sources and, as aforementioned, have the potential to achieve Passivhaus status maximising the use of renewable technologies.

Wastewater would be organically treated on site, avoiding any addition to the loading of the public infrastructure while the use of rainwater harvesting will reduce the demand from the public water supply.

The site is not brownfield and there are no vacant or derelict buildings on it.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions:

- Will the proposal support development of renewable technologies? YES
- Is the proposal consistent with the waste hierarchy? YES
- Will the proposal promote and facilitate the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings? NO

CULTURAL HERITAGE

There are no buildings or features of cultural heritage on or near the site and so this section is not applicable.

LANDSCAPE

The site is designated as being within the Coastal Fringe and Agriculture area.

It is a gently sloping site with houses to the East, South and West with woodland also to the West and the proposed use would be consistent with this, adding low density housing and more trees to maintain the existing surrounding landscape character.

In answer to the Site Assessment Matrix questions:

- Will the proposal have an adverse impact on the special qualities of a designated landscape or area of wild land? NO
- Will the proposal maintain or enhance the landscape character of the area? YES

DELIVERABILITY ASSESSMENT:

OWNERSHIP
The owners of the land wish to develop it.

MARKETABILITY
The site is located on the edge of Whiting Bay, one of the three main villages on Arran and an area which is highly attractive to home-owners. The owners have successfully marketed another site within the village, where construction of two houses is due to commence later in 2025.

VIABILITY
The anticipated infrastructure costs involve constructing the service road, installing electricity supplies and installation of a sustainable urban drainage system to handle surface water on the site. The estimated costs of these are £120,000, £20,000 and £20,000 respectively.

It is anticipated that the plots would sell for an average price of £140,000 each which will provide a net profit of £680,000.

ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY
Access to the site is by the adopted road to the North of the site. Although a broad single track road, verge widths at convenient points provide the opportunity to create passing places in accordance with Roads Design Guidelines.

WATER AND WASTEWATER
While this assessment will be undertaken by the Council, informed by Scottish Water, it is important to note that wastewater will be by private wastewater treatment and there is an opportunity for the houses to incorporate rainwater harvesting to reduce the demand on the public supply network.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT ASSESSMENT:

LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS
The proposal is not for affordable housing. However, by providing desirable plots for owner-occupied houses, the proposal will increase local housing supply which in turn will help to alleviate pressure at the lower end of the housing market, to the benefit of younger families seeking to buy a first home. Alternatively, due to its proximity to local amenities, it may be suitable for affordable housing although the higher density of this may prevent some of the intended environmental and amenity potential being realised.

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES
The construction of passing places on the adopted access road will improve road safety and amenity for the existing properties served by the road.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY
Development of the site will secure the amenity of the surrounding area by improving biodiversity, eradicating any invasive plant species and maintaining the road, boundaries and landscape.

COMMUNITY WEALTH - DIVERSE OWNERSHIP
This section is not applicable.

COMMUNITY WEALTH - FAIR EMPLOYMENT
This section is not applicable.

COMMUNITY WEALTH - FINANCIAL POWER
The six houses the proposal represents will increase the population of Whiting Bay with a consequent spend in local businesses as well as generating additional Council Tax to support local amenities. There is also potential for a developer contribution to provide financial support for local enterprise.

COMMUNITY WEALTH - LAND AND ASSETS
The proposal will realise the potential of an area of land which is of little value both in terms of agriculture and amenity, making much better use of it.

COMMUNITY WEALTH - PROCUREMENT
While of admittedly modest effect, the occupiers of the six proposed houses will nonetheless make a contribution to local businesses, particularly in the retail and hospitality sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposal would make use of an area of agricultural land, on the edge of the settlement boundary, to create a residential pocket characterised by its excellent green credentials, enhanced biodiversity and easy sustainable access to local amenities.

The value of the plots that would be created by the proposal would comfortably absorb the necessary associated infrastucture costs, including improvements to the existing adopted public road.

With regard to the Community Wealthbuilding initiative of North Ayrshire, and in particular Arran, the plots would be of sufficient value to enable a developer contribution towards local community projects and facilities.

The proposal scores highly on the Council's Site Assessment Matrix and would be a beneficial addition to the settlement of Whiting Bay.

The completed Site Assessment Matrix is appended on the following pages.

Stage 1 – Environmental Assessment

Topic	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic Factors	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape
Objective	Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity	Protect and enhance quality of life	Maintain and improve soil quality	Reduce flood risk and protect and enhance the water environment	Maintain and improve air quality	Minimise greenhouse gas (GHS) emissions and adapt to the current and future impacts of climate change	Promote the sustainable use and management of material assets	Protect and enhance the historic environment and its setting	To safeguard and enhance landscape character
Sub-Objective(s)	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper	See Environment Evidence Paper
Relevant Spatial Data and Assessments	Map of biodiversity designations Map of North Ayrshire's woodlands	North Ayrshire 20-Minute Neighbourhood analysis Open Space Audit	Map of agricultural land quality and carbon rich soils and peatland	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Water Classification Hub	Blank	Blank	North Ayrshire Vacant & Derelict Land	Map of cultural heritage designations	Map of Landscape Character Areas and Designations Settlement Edge Landscape Sensitivity Study
Assessment Questions	Will the proposal protect both designated and non-designated sites from adverse impacts? Will the proposal contribute towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, including strengthening nature networks? Will the proposal protect and expand forest, woodland and trees?	Is the proposal consistent with the principle of local living? Will the proposal promote and enhance access to open space/green networks? Will the proposal have a positive impact on health and wellbeing?	Will the proposal have an adverse impact on high value agricultural land? Will the proposal protect and enhance carbon rich soils? Will the proposal contribute to maintaining or improving soil health and function?	Will the proposal protect and enhance water quality? Will the proposal increase the number of people or properties at risk of flooding?	Will the proposal avoid adverse impacts to air quality? Will the proposal contribute to reducing emissions of key pollutants? Will the proposal contribute to reducing levels of nuisance?	Will the proposal minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions? Will the proposal promote climate change adaptation? Will the proposal prioritise sustainable travel in accordance with the hierarchy	Will the proposal support development of renewable technologies? Is the proposal consistent with the waste hierarchy? Will the proposal promote and facilitate the reuse of brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings?	Will the proposal safeguard both designated and non-designated sites from adverse impacts? Will the proposal enable the positive re-use of historic environment assets? Will the proposal improve the resilience to climate change of the historic environment?	Will the proposal have an adverse impact on the special qualities of a designated landscape or area of wild land? Will the proposal maintain or enhance the landscape character of the area?
Assessment	Land is currently poor agricultural land providing grazing pasture	The site is within easy walking distance of local amenities and amenity of site will be enhanced	It is not high value agricultural land	No effect on water quality Limited fluvial flood risk	No pollution sources at present No pollutant effect from proposal	Greenhouse gas will be minimised. The proposals will be resilient to climate change. The proposals facilitate sustainable travel	Uses renewables, on site wastewater treatment	N/a	No adverse effect on landscape character. Tree and wild flower planting will enhance

Topic	Biodiversity	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air	Climatic Factors	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape
Potential Mitigation and Enhancement	Planting of trees and wild flower meadow will enhance biodiversity	Easy walking access and improved living environment	Planting and improved biodiversity will improve soil	SUDS drainage will better protect neighbouring properties	None	Passivhaus potential, proximity of bus service, ev charging	Renewable energy, wastewater treatment	N/a	Planting will enhance landscape from overgrown field
Summary	Positive	Significantly positive	Positive	Significantly positive	Neutral	Significantly positive	Significantly positive	Neutral	Significantly positive
Overall Score	1	2	1	2	0	2	2	0	2

Stage 2 – Deliverability Assessment

(note: not all topics will be applicable to non-housing proposals)

Topic	Ownership	Marketability	Viability	Access & Accessibility	Water and Wastewater Capacity	GP Capacity	School Capacity
Objective	Site owned or controlled by a developer / Site owned by a public body and identified for disposal / Landowner interest in development	Site located in area with sales potential (taking account of market absorption factors) and/or developer has track record of delivery	Site is viable taking into account land values, expected sales values, site abnormals and infrastructure requirements	Access to the site is available, without needing third party agreement or a formal agreement is in place	Existing capacity at Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment Works	Existing capacity at catchment primary and secondary schools	Existing capacity at catchment primary and secondary schools
Assessment	Landowner wishes to sell for development	Desirable site. Proven track record of sales for development	Value comfortably exceeds enabling costs	Road improvements possible on existing verges	To Be Informed by Scottish Water	To Be Informed by NHS Ayrshire & Arran	To Be Completed by NAC Education
Potential Mitigation and Enhancement	None	None	None	None	To Be Informed by Scottish Water	To Be Informed by NHS Ayrshire & Arran	To Be Completed by NAC Education
Summary	Objective met	Objective met	Objective met	Objective met	To Be Informed by Scottish Water	To Be Informed by NHS Ayrshire & Arran	To Be Completed by NAC Education
Overall Score	2	2	2	2	**/ -1 / -2**	**2 / 1 / 0 / -1 / -2**	**2 / 1 / 0 / -1 / -2**

Stage 3 – Community Benefit

(note: not all topics will be applicable to non-housing proposals)

Topic	Local Housing Requirements (including affordable housing)	Local infrastructure, facilities and services	Residential amenity	Community Wealth Building – Diverse Ownership	Community Wealth Building – Fair Employment	Community Wealth Building – Financial Power	Community Wealth Building – Land and Assets	Community Wealth Building – Procurement
Objective	Meets local housing requirements, including affordable homes	Proposal provides or enhances local infrastructure, facilities and services	Proposal improves the residential amenity of the surrounding area	Enable SMEs, employee-owned businesses, cooperatives and community enterprises to locally generate wealth to stay within the community	Create fair pay, local recruitment, progression and training opportunities	Maximise the impact of financial investment and grow local businesses, enhance innovation and empower communities	Maximise the function and ownership of land and buildings for the benefit of communities and enterprises	Goods and services are bought locally, creating dense local supply chains
Assessment	Not affordable housing	Road improvement and landscape maintenance	Biodiversity, access and amenity improved	Not applicable	Not applicable	Occupiers will contribute to local economy	Poor quality agricultural land	Occupiers will contribute to local economy
Potential Mitigation and Enhancement	Affordable housing possible	Improvements will benefit surrounding properties	Improvements will achieve	Not applicable	Not applicable	Potential developer contribution	Potential developer contribution	Potential developer contribution
Summary	Objective can be met	Objective met	Objective met	Not applicable	Not applicable	Objective can be met	Objective can be met	Objective can be met
Overall Score	1	2	2	0	0	1	1	1