



Hallgarth Residents Association

Meeting with Persimmon

Tuesday 12th November 2024

This meeting was regarding the proposed development of 145 houses on land adjacent to the Hallgarth estate, to the west of High Sparrowmire.

Hallgarth Residents Association presented representatives from Persimmon with statements and questions on 5 key topics, as voted for by Hallgarth residents. The key questions, along with additional questions asked by meeting attendees, are included below. An additional response from Persimmon, as well as the current draft illustration of the site, is included at the end of the meeting minutes.

Access

What safety considerations can be included into the design to reduce accidents at the junction with Windermere Lane?

Speed surveys show that the 30mph limit is not being followed along this section of Windermere Road, so the junction design will take into account features that respond to real-life use of road. E.g. traffic islands, and right turn lane into the new junction.

Current proposals show separate access to Lane Foot, but they're looking into the prospect of combining those into a single road.

They are taking into account types of journeys that will be made from the new development, looking at encouraging use of public transport, but Persimmon have to assume that all journeys would be private transport and how that could be managed. 'Trip rates' are being assessed with WaF to help identify what improvements would have to be made to junctions. They are also considering what impact those additional journeys would have on air quality in Kendal.

The current proposals don't have a secondary access through to Hallgarth, and Persimmon's preference is for just for one access point, but they expect that Westmorland and Furness Council (WaF) may want a through route connection.

Traffic

What investigations have Persimmon carried out to understand the impact on the Hallgarth roads and how will the designs, including links between the estates, ensure that there is no detrimental impact to the traffic on Hallgarth, including promoting non-car travel?

Currently Persimmon do not plan to have a vehicle connection between the two sites. If that changes (if WaF insists on connection) they will examine the impact.

Additional parking would depend on connectivity. WaF would promote use of cycle routes and bus routes. Persimmon have been in touch with bus route providers to look at the options of extending the current bus service or creating a new route. This would depend on preference of service providers. If there is a connection through the site that a bus could use, that could affect the decision.

Cycle paths have a requirement of gradient to make sure they are useable (i.e. not too steep) and they are taking into account the gradient of Windermere Road. Ideally Persimmon want to offer a number of connection points to the estate for cyclists and pedestrians, including less steep options, to encourage greener forms of travel.

A Travel Plan has to be made as part of their planning application, and this includes promoting public transport through various incentives, for example providing new homeowners with season bus tickets.

Flooding

What are the proposals to ensure that sewage and surface water is able to continue to flow, rather than backup into Hallgarth houses and roads and that any drainage features on the new development will be safe for all?

Drainage is the immediate issue when Persimmon first considered this site. They have conducted camera surveys with site teams, and have spoken to United Utilities (UU) to discuss current flooding schemes.

They have mapped the sources of the flood water. A lot of off-site surface water runs from hills behind the field. Catchment analysis shows this run-off heads towards High Sparrowmire. Persimmon are looking to redirect this to the north, away from High Sparrowmire.

The Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) pond is not intended to be permanently wet, instead filling up during a strong storm period over 24hrs, and draining away within another 24hrs in a controlled way. The new driveways would also redirect water into drains.

Proposals currently show both a SuDS pond and underground tank, which would have significant capacity far beyond what is currently there. Part of the site flows north towards Carling steps. Persimmon are working with council to develop a plan that will overcompensate, holding back the water over and above the current expected rate.

Persimmon have taken into account the impact of climate change and the increased frequency of extreme weather events. All rainfall and any catchment water has to be dealt with to a capacity of 115% (over and above what the expected amount would be).

Sewage would be via a gravity connection to High Sparrowmire. Persimmon feel that from anecdotal evidence that flood water is getting to the Hallgarth foul network. By redirecting flood water, they will relieve the foul network on the current estate.

***Note – There is an additional response from Persimmon regarding drainage at the end of this document.

Affordability

How will you ensure that your affordable housing is truly affordable to the current residents of Kendal that are in need of housing?

WaF Council's policy is that 35% of site is affordable. Persimmon will be building three types of affordable house – rented, low-cost (price capped by local council), and first homes (ring-fenced to first time buyers). All three types have an 'approved persons' criteria and will be offered to those people first. They will offer to locals first, then an increasingly wider catchment, and Persimmon are required to show WaF evidence that they have offered these affordable homes to the approved persons for a certain amount of time before widening the catchment.

Persimmon have had informal discussions with WaF about what they would like to see. WaF want to make sure the affordable housing is distributed through the site rather than one corner, and that they won't appear any different to the other non-affordable homes, or what is known as 'Tenure blind'. The affordable homes will be 1-3 bed homes including apartments.

As part of their legal agreement with WaF, Persimmon must build the estate in stages, with affordable housing built at the same time as market housing, so there will not be a risk of the open market homes being built first and the affordable homes built last or ignored.

Previous developments in Kendal have proposed a certain percentage of affordable housing, which has then been reduced. Can Persimmon guarantee they will adhere to their proposal of 35%?

35% is the policy requirement from WaF and Persimmon has no intention of reducing this percentage.

The guidance and legislation around changing contributions of affordable housing has been tightened – at one point developers could use their costs to show they couldn't afford to make contributions, but this is now not an excuse. Community contributions are now much more strict.

Construction

How will persimmon ensure that disruption during construction to residents and local wildlife is minimised, and that the development includes areas enabling conservation and protection of our existing wildlife?

Construction traffic will come via the Lane Foot road. Persimmon will build a spine road all the way to the SuDS pond at the other end of the development, enabling the footpath to be restored as quickly as possible. Due to health and safety concerns they will have to look at a temporary closure or temporary diversion around the site to allow pedestrian access to the fields to the north, along the right of way. Persimmon will work with WaF to decide which is the best option.

Persimmon have to provide a construction management plan that explicitly includes a construction surface water scheme to show how they will deal with volumes of water and silt during construction. They have an environmental management system in place on every site they develop to look at key environmental issues.

Wildlife surveys have been conducted on site. Persimmon have to show 10% 'biodiversity net gain' – and improvement of biodiversity on site - and are working with landscapers to look at planting and landscaping, and how these will contribute to the existing habitats. For this site, it will mainly be tree and hedge planting. They are aiming for more than a 10% gain to the site.

They also have to consider the use of land by people, and balance green areas with pedestrian access with areas that aren't as well accessed, in order to promote wildlife.

They will look at profile of the SuDS pond to perhaps deepen some areas to encourage permanent pond for wildlife (rather than the entire pond draining away after high rainfall events). If they do this, they will take into account any safety measures necessary.

There is an existing high voltage cable in the northern-most field, with a pole mounted transformer, so there will need to be a new transformer on site, so this will not cause any issues to power on Hallgarth. They have also been in discussion with their affiliated internet provider Fibre Nest, which is offered to new residents at significantly reduced rate.

Many new houses in Kendal are being built without eaves, which is counterproductive for birds such as swifts. Will Persimmon be building eaves on their houses?

Persimmon are reviewing their usual designs with architects to look at promoting nature. Their recent development in Ulverston has houses built with eaves. They are also looking at putting bird boxes on all suitable houses. The inclusion of eaves and bird boxes wouldn't be included in their 10% biodiversity net gain, as this is not considered habitat creation, just an opportunity to nest. Persimmon have their own project called 'Homes for Nature' which looks at other wildlife features such as hedgehog highways.

There is a hierarchy of delivery of this 10%. On-site habitat creation is preferred, but they can create habitats off-site if on-site delivery is not possible. Persimmon has to provide annual statements to WaF to show how they are providing and managing this for at least 30 years (exact length of time depends on council) starting from when the final house is occupied.

What is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contribution for this development?

Around £100psm, 15% of which goes directly to council, with the remainder into a community fund.

What will the solar panel policy be for their new home owners?

Currently all houses in their design have solar panels. It is very likely that the development will be gas free, potentially with all houses fitted with air-source heat pumps. Persimmon have a 'fabric first' approach, where they consider insulation and construction of properties first. They cannot say for certain at this stage that all their houses will have solar panels (although currently in the design they do) as they need to consider the best way to enhance the efficiency of their houses.

An electric only estate means the power demands will be enormous, and the current grid is already stretched. How will this be accommodated?

Persimmon will give Electricity North West (NEW) a supply amount, who will advise what is available. Potentially Persimmon may have to pay ENW to upgrade substations or other infrastructure to ensure there is adequate supply.

Solar panels are not always suitable for adding power to the local grid, so this would need to be assessed first.

Persimmon are looking at the most efficient way to reduce carbon use, using new technologies.

Regarding the CIL contributions, the development land is in Burneside parish. Would that affect who the money goes to?

Persimmon are not able to say, this would need to be put to WaF council.

Regarding surface water, can UU works in Kendal actually take the increased use?

Persimmon have asked UU for a connection, which UU has agreed to and have given them a point of connection. Persimmon don't get a choice where this connection is. There is currently a significant amount of surface water getting into the network uncontrolled, so the new development will actually improve the situation by guiding any surface water in a controlled manner.

There is a concern that once the development is finished Persimmon will walk away from the site. UU's track record with maintenance is not good. What's the maintenance plan and who will pay for it?

Any hydro-breaks (used to slow down the water) are maintained by UU.

The SuDS features planned (pond and storage tank) will be managed by a new management company appointed by Persimmon, and paid for by the new home owners, who will become managers of the company. It will cost the new homeowners £100-£200 per year, and is not dependent on house size, but would be different if it's an apartment.

Would affordable houses also have to pay for this management company?

Yes.

Do you use local contractors to build your houses?

Persimmon is based in Lancaster. They try to use local contractors when possible, but not all specialist construction can be covered locally. Persimmon also have an extensive apprenticeship scheme.

Will the affordable housing have to be purchased by a provider first before building?

Yes. Persimmon already spoken to several local housing providers who have expressed interest. In the last 10 years Persimmon have always delivered the amount of affordable housing they have promised.

Parking is a problem on Hallgarth. Current parking areas will be removed if the secondary access point is put in at Kettlewell/High Sparrowmire junction. Would Persimmon consider providing parking for current Hallgarth owners on boundary?

As Persimmon is not currently looking at secondary access, then no, they will not be providing additional parking. However, they expect that WaF will be keen to add a secondary connection. If this is the case then Persimmon will reassess the impact on parking and highway safety.

Are you expecting to build anything more than 2 storeys?

There are some properties that are being proposed as 3 storeys. Due to sensitivity of height levels of land, they have made a 3D model of the landscape to be able to assess the different height levels and reduce any over-looking of existing properties.

Are Persimmon building a play area on-site? Have you considered the distance parents and children would have to travel to existing area?

Persimmon have asked WaF if they'd prefer an on-site play area or a contribution to an off-site play area, but haven't yet had a response.

Have you considered the importance of the footpath to the north (connecting Moore Field Close to Burneside Road) as it makes the closest school, shop, and pub actually in Burneside? This footpath is not in a good condition and not accessible for wheelchair users or prams.

Persimmon will take this into consideration.

Regarding flood water drainage to the north. Your current flood modelling won't show the true impact, and won't work when going against topography.

Catchment areas have been modelled and assessed. Surface water and land drainage is to be carried into drainage schemes. It's key to get the infrastructure right during construction, and leaving as much topsoil in place as possible. Persimmon has experience of several sites with serious water conditions on site, and are confident that they can deal with the conditions in the field. Although the development means increased amounts of concrete, the water is being collected in the SuDS pond and storage tank, will be diverted in the right direction rather than onto houses.

Will the driveways be permeable?

Persimmon tends to use block paving which is semi-permeable, and has a detailed assessment of their hard surfaces and the rate at which water runs off.

If Persimmon only has one entry-exit point from the new estate, this could cause a problem if an accident blocks access. Is there any scope for secondary access not through Hallgarth?

There is potential for the cycle/pedestrian ways to have removable bollards to allow emergency vehicles access if needed.

New residents have to pay for management of water, but will also have a bill for UU for waste water?

Yes, new residents will pay water bill for management of adoptable water sewers (managed by UU). On top they will pay for management of on-site SuDS pond, grass cutting, maintenance of planting etc. Everything green outside plot boundaries would be included in that £100-£200. Apartments will have an additional fee for their common areas.

When are you hoping to start construction?

Persimmon are hoping to put in a planning application soon, with the successful application within a year. They will then start building as soon as possible.

Will Persimmon appeal if planning is not approved?

It would depend on the reasons why the application wasn't approved.

Can you guarantee that this SuDS pond will alleviate my flooding?

Yes, absolutely. Having looked at plans, flood risk assessment, and historical flooding of area, it's clear that Persimmon is able to improve the flooding and take the pressure off Hallgarth. They will be

re-directing the water using cut-off points and swails (shallow water course) through a network that is properly managed.

What if children play in these drainage places?

Almost every housing development site now has permanent or semi-permanent drainage ponds. Some sites have fencing, it depends on the situation of the site. They are attractive features that are being introduced across every housing development. Sometimes pipes are used for water direction.

The pond will be set at ground level, with an embankment around the outside, and a pipe going from the pond into a tank, through a hydro break, and then north towards Burneside.

Won't this make flooding in Burneside worse?

Persimmon are increasing the capacity on-site to control the water during flooding events. Looking at models of events Burneside shouldn't be affected. Flood risk assessment is then looked at WaF who check calculations and advise any changes, and give overall approvals.

Are you aware of the plan for the new pumping station in Burneside?

Yes, our engineers have looked at that and have taken it into account.

The green section at the north of the site, is there any guarantee that won't be built on?

That area is quite steep, and the council doesn't want the drumlin affected. The 10% biodiversity net gain takes this area into account, so we're not looking to build any more houses there.

Have you got expectations for how many locals would be buying these houses?

We do keep records of buyers and what their previous postcode was. We generally find that quite a high proportion of buyers are coming from within 5 miles.

Why don't you build more than 35% affordable housing?

It comes down to the viability of the site. Persimmon are still in discussion with WaF about the exact mix of housing.

If there is no secondary road access, will there be two footpaths?

Yes, our ideal scenario would be two cycle/footpaths connecting to Hallgarth, and no additional road access to Hallgarth.

What is the best way for us to feedback to you about your final design?

We're assimilating the responses to the initial flyer which had a link to a comments form. We can look at making that available again once we have a final design.

***Note – Persimmon have now stated that they will keep the consultation website open until Thursday 12th December for additional feedback (www.high-sparrowmire-kendal.co.uk).

The following statements from Persimmon were provided after the meeting.

Drainage

The proposal is to restrict the rate of run-off for the entire development area to no more than currently runs off the site at any one time. Because of how the water flows from the site during storm events, this equates to a 50% reduction against the current greenfield run off rate (i.e. what current runs off the field) in a significant storm event. The reduction in rate varies between these no rain and storm event scenarios, but always between existing and 50% improvement. This approach reduces downstream flood risk issues that were identified to the north (Carling Steps). It should be noted that the approach will also significantly improve the current flood risk issues the LLFA (Lead Local Flood Authority) have identified to the east of site, for all storm events and no discharge from the site is proposed to the system to the east. The calculations also allow for a 50% climate change allowance.

Ecology

We mentioned a ecology related scheme - Homes for Nature to which I said I would provide link to further information - <https://www.futurehomes.org.uk/homes-for-nature>. The Homes for Nature commitment will see a bird-nesting brick or box installed for every new home built, as well as hedgehog highways as standard on every new development taken through planning from 1st September 2024.

To clarify, species specific based features such as bat and bird boxes do not count towards the Biodiversity net gain on the site, which focuses on habitats that a range of species need to complete their lifecycles. So these are in addition, and regardless of their need or necessity under planning.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)

It is expected that the CIL payment from the site will be in the region of £1.1m, with additional monies expected to be requested by the Council towards primary school places, play area(s). Please note this is not a definitive list, just indications from pre-application discussions.

Solar Panels

We can confirm that in direct response to one of the questions, Persimmon do not restrict home owner from putting on their own PV panels on to our properties following purchase (if they don't already have them).

This image is a draft illustrative layout of the proposed development.

