

PLAYGROUND AT ST EDMUNDS AVENUE, PORTHILL
NEWCASTLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

15/00307/DEEM3

The application is for outline planning permission for a residential development of up to 8 dwellings on a former playground area at St Edmunds Avenue, Porthill. All matters of detail (appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access) are reserved for subsequent approval

The site lies within the urban area of Newcastle as identified on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.

The site is approximately 0.25 hectares in size.

The 8 week period for the determination of this application expires on the 27th May 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

Permit subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Standard time limits for submission of applications for approval of reserved matters and commencement of development;**
- 2. Approval of plans/ documents – site location plan and supporting information;**
- 3. Construction hours;**
- 4. Waste storage and collection arrangements;**
- 5. Contaminated land;**
- 6. Internal dwelling noise levels;**
- 7. Tree report recommendations;**
- 8. Any reserved matters application that involves landscaping shall include details of replacement trees and hard landscaping**

Reason for Recommendation

The site is located within a sustainable location and whilst only indicative details have been provided it has been demonstrated that a suitable housing development could be progressed on the site. The development is therefore in accordance with the guidance and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

Statement as to how the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with this application

Pre-application discussions were undertaken and it is considered to be a sustainable form of development and so complies with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. Therefore no amendments were required in this instance.

Key Issues

The application is for outline planning permission for eight semi-detached dwellings on a former playground site located off St Edmunds Avenue in Porthill. The site is within the urban area of Newcastle, as indicated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.

No matters of detail are being sought at this stage and therefore all matters reserved for subsequent approval. Therefore the main issues for consideration in this application are;

- The principle of the development
- The effect of the development on the form and character of the area
- Access and Highways implications
- Compliance with SPG 'Space Around Dwellings'

- Impact of trees

The principle of the development

The site is currently owned by the Borough Council, and is an area of informal open space. The site is considered to be a green field site.

Policy ASP5 of the Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) – the most up-to-date and relevant part of the development plan - sets a requirement for at least 4,800 net additional dwellings in the urban area of Newcastle-under-Lyme by 2026 and details that 1,000 of these should be within the Newcastle urban South and East area, which includes Porthill.

Policy SP1 of the CSS states that new development will be prioritised in favour of previously developed land where it can support sustainable patterns of development and provides access to services and service centres by foot, public transport and cycling. The Core Strategy goes on to state that sustainable transformation can only be achieved if a brownfield site offers the best overall sustainable solution and its development will work to promote key spatial considerations. Priority will be given to developing sites which are well located in relation to existing neighbourhoods, employment, services and infrastructure and also taking into account how the site connects to and impacts positively on the growth of the locality.

Whilst the site is greenfield and offers some informal recreation space for local residents, it is not designated as formal open space by the Borough Council.

The site is considered to represent a sustainable location for housing development and due to the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing the presumption should be in favour of residential development unless any adverse impacts of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal (as required by para 14 and 49).

On the basis of all of the above, it is considered that the principle of residential development in this location should be supported unless there are any adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The effect of the development on the form and character of the area

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Policy CSP1 of the Core Strategy sets out the design criteria to which development will be assessed against which include that development positively contributes to an area's identity in terms of scale, density, layout, use of appropriate material for buildings surfaces and accesses.

All matters of detail are reserved for subsequent approval but an indicative layout plan has been submitted to support the application. The indicative layout shows four pairs of semi detached dwellings in a linear layout and fronting onto St Edmunds Avenue. This layout and density would be in keeping with the existing character of St Edmunds Avenue. The layout also indicates that trees will be planted along the frontage which would continue the tree lined character of St Edmunds Avenue which is an attractive characteristic of this street.

It is considered that an acceptable layout and appearance could be achieved that would provide sufficient private amenity space and landscaping for the site which would meet the requirements of the NPPF and development plan policies.

Access and Highways implications

The indicative layout plan provided with the application identifies 8 separate accesses off St Edmunds Avenue to access the proposed dwellings.

The Highway Authority has not responded to the consultation, however it is considered that the proposed access arrangements would be acceptable, and that two off road car parking spaces per dwelling would meet the maximum car parking standards for either two or three bedroom properties.

Notwithstanding the above, access is a matter for subsequent approval and details would be required as part of the reserved matters application. As such, no conditions are required at this stage should outline permission be granted.

Impact upon residential amenity

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Space Around Dwellings provides guidance on privacy, daylight standards and environmental considerations. Adequate separation distance can be provided between the dwellings envisaged and existing properties – in line with the advice contained within the SPG. The anticipated level of private amenity space is considered generous and would provide an acceptable standard of living conditions for future occupiers.

The impact on trees

Policy N12 of the Local Plan seeks retention of trees which make a significant contribution to the character of an area. The three trees to the rear of the site are classified as category U trees, meaning that they are poor quality trees. Landscaping is a matter reserved for subsequent approval, which should include replacement tree planting. The conditions advised by the Councils Landscape Development Section are considered acceptable.

Policies and Proposals in the Approved Development Plan relevant to this decision:-

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006 -2026 (adopted 2009) (CSS)

Strategic Aim 16:	To eliminate poor quality development;
Policy SP1:	Spatial Principles of Targeted Regeneration
Policy ASP5:	Newcastle and Kidsgrove Urban Neighbourhood Area Spatial Policy
Policy CSP1:	Design Quality
Policy CSP3:	Sustainability and Climate Change

Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 (NLP)

Policy H1:	Residential Development: Sustainable Location and Protection of the Countryside
Policy T16:	Development – General Parking Requirements
Policy N12:	Development and the Protection of Trees
Policy C22:	Protection of community facilities

Other Material Considerations

Relevant National Policy Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Space Around Dwellings (July 2004)

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance SPD (2010)

Waste Management and Recycling Planning Practice Guidance Note (January 2011)

Relevant Planning History

Nil

Views of Consultees

The **Environmental Health Division** raises no objections subject to conditions for contaminated land, construction hours, internal dwelling noise levels and waste storage and collection arrangements

The **Staffordshire County Council Footpaths officer** has not responded to the consultation. Any comments received will be reported via a supplementary report.

The **Landscape and Development Section** raises no objections subject to conditions relating to the landscaping of the site to include replacement tree planting and hard surfacing. They also comment that clarification for proposals for the responsibility and management of land that will be difficult to access at the top of the gabion should be provided.

The **Education Authority** has no objections and requests no developer contributions as local schools are projected to cope with the demand likely to be created by this development

The **Highways Authority** has not responded to the consultation by the due date and as such it is assumed that they have no comments on the proposed development

Representations

5 representations have been received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Increased demand on local amenities
- Local primary schools and the high school are already over subscribed
- Loss of green, open space for local residents
- Land stability issues
- Loss of privacy, light and overlooking
- Existing car parking problems would be exacerbated
- Bat habitat will be affected
- Construction will cause disruption

Applicant/agent's submission

An indicative layout plan, along with a topographical survey, environmental assessment, noise assessment, arboricultural survey and report has been submitted.

These documents are available for inspection at the Guildhall and via the following link:
www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/planning/1500307DEEM3

Background Papers

Planning File
Planning Documents referred to

Date Report Prepared

7th May 2015