

**FORMER BRISTOL STREET GARAGE, LONDON ROAD, NEWCASTLE**  
**ABODE RESIDENCIES**

**16/01106/3CN03**

The application is for approval of full and precise details of all external facing materials, including exterior parking and pedestrian hard surfaces, and revised boundary treatment as required by condition 3 of planning permission 16/01106/FUL - redevelopment of the site for 499 apartments (comprising of student accommodation).

The site lies within the Urban Area of Newcastle as indicated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.

The 8 week period for the determination of this application ends on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve**

**Reason for Recommendation**

Although no vertical gradation of colour, as suggested by the Committee, is proposed, your Officer accepts the agent's case that such elevational treatment would not be possible. The use of a different colour for each block resulting in a horizontal gradation of colour across the site is considered appropriate and the proposed materials accord with the design policies within the Council's Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Key Issues**

Full planning permission was granted in 2017 for 499 studio apartments for student occupation on the site following the completion of a Section 106 agreement (Ref. 16/01106/FUL).

Condition 3(a) of the planning permission requires the Planning Authority's agreement of all external facing materials to be used in the construction of the development (including doors and fenestration and exterior parking and pedestrian hard surfaces). Condition 3(c) requires agreement of boundary treatments. In approving the development, the Planning Committee asked that the external facing materials to be used in construction of the development be subject to Committee approval. Approval has previously been granted for the precise window detailing required by Condition 3(b).

Earlier this year the Committee refused to grant the required approval under condition 3(a) and 3(c) on the grounds that the colour of the cladding on the south western elevation of Block 1 facing Lyme Valley Parkway was considered by the Local Planning Authority to be inappropriate and to detract from the visual amenity of the Parkway. That application related to just Blocks 1 and 2.

The applicant now seeks approval for the external materials for all blocks as well as approval of boundary treatments.

Blocks 1, 3 and 4 which lie adjacent to the Lyme Valley Parkway, would comprise aluminium cladding panels with elements of cedar cladding for decorative shading areas and framing around some of the windows. Block 2, which fronts London Road, would comprise smooth red bricks along with a polar white rendered central projecting feature and silver aluminium panels at 2nd floor level. Block 5 which lies to the north-west of the site opposite Block 4 and to the rear of the dwellings on London Road would also comprise aluminium cladding panels with elements of cedar cladding. Grey coloured doors and fenestration are proposed. All the blocks are to be 4 storeys in height with the exception of Block 2 which would be 3 storeys high. The cladding on the blocks would be varying shades of grey.

With respect to the proposed parking and pedestrian hard surfaces, black tarmac is proposed for the internal roads and parking areas, grey concrete flags are proposed for the pedestrian walkways within the site boundary and permeable grasscrete is proposed for the car park area. With regard to Condition 3(c), black estate style fencing is proposed along the boundary shared with Lyme Valley Parkway.

In the previous application both Blocks 1 and 2 were to comprise silver aluminium cladding panels. In their discussion of the matter the Committee criticised the 'wall of grey' on Block 1 and reference was made to a preference for some gradation of colour on its south-west facing elevation. The applicant's agent has submitted a Design Statement to accompany this application and the following is a summary of the main points made:

- It is agreed that a variation in cladding colour will enhance the appearance of the site by preventing the blocks from appearing monotonous and the design repetitive.
- The graduated cladding effect preferred by the Committee is generally associated with much larger and taller B8 building types. This typology lends itself to the blending effect as the height allows for more increments of colour and therefore a subtle gradation that often merges with the sky.
- Meticulous thought has been applied to the potential of applying this method to the elevations however, it is deemed that the height of the blocks within this development and the cladding panels approved under the original application will restrict the successful application of this grading technique.
- The cladding panels are floor to ceiling height which means that one panel is to be utilised per floor. As there are only four floors, this means there can only be four changes in colour. The limited variation in colour would result in a stripy effect rather than a gradated effect. It is believed that this would appear jarring and seem somewhat like a vein attempt to blend different shades of cladding together.
- In addition the proportions of the windows and cladding panels make them vertical components. Introducing the horizontal bands of colour to the elevations creates a juxtaposition between the vertical and horizontal elements. These features will compete against each other and result in an appearance that is not harmonious.
- As an alternative approach the use of two colours of cladding arranged half and half has been considered. To blend with the sky, the lightest colour was applied to the top half with the next shade below. Again, the resulting appearance is not synonymous with the desired gradated appearance. Furthermore, it is thought that this proposal is weak as it fails to provide an agreeable transition between the colours and instead creates a façade comprising of large indifferent stripes.
- Generally, when two colours are used to split a façade, the lighter colour is reserved for the top floor only to help minimise the impact of the building's height. In this development, the height of the blocks does not pose a concern and therefore doesn't warrant this form of elevational treatment.
- It was realised that gradation up the building could not be achieved with the desired outcome. Therefore, thought was given to the potential gradation of cladding across the building. However, due to the staggered design of the windows and therefore staggered arrangement of cladding panels, this suggestion would not be possible as the elements do not line through with each other.
- A solution has been sought to successfully introduce additional colours of cladding across the site. To avoid the creation of striped facades and competing elements, it is proposed that each block is assigned a different colour resulting in a horizontal gradation of colour, rather than vertical.
- Blocks 1, 3, 4 and 5 would each be a different shade of grey which enables a horizontal gradation of light to dark. The cladding on block 2 would be Goosewing grey which is slightly silvery. The colours have been chosen as they are of the same tone and provide a consistent step between each other in terms of shade.

Although Block 1 and the other blocks fronting the Lyme Valley Parkway would each comprise just one colour of cladding with no vertical gradation of colour as suggested by the Committee, your Officer accepts the agent's case that such elevational treatment would not be appropriate. In the circumstances the use of a different colour for each block resulting in a horizontal gradation of colour across the site is considered acceptable.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Policies and proposals in the Development Plan relevant to this recommendation**

[Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy \(CSS\) 2006-2026](#)

Policy CSP1: Design Quality

### **Other Material Considerations include:**

[National Planning Policy Framework](#) (2019)

[Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG) (2014)

[Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document](#) (2010)

### **Relevant Planning History**

16/01106/FUL	Redevelopment of the site for 499 apartments (comprising of student accommodation) Approved
16/01106/CN03	Application for approval of full and precise detail of all external facing materials, window detailing and revised boundary treatment as required by condition 3 of planning permission 16/01106/FUL - Redevelopment of the site for 499 apartments (comprising of student accommodation) Condition 3(b) Approved
16/01106/2CN03	Application for approval of full and precise detail of all external facing materials, window detailing and revised boundary treatment as required by condition 3 of planning permission 16/01106/FUL - Redevelopment of the site for 499 apartments (comprising of student accommodation) Conditions 3(a) and 3(c) Refused

### **Applicants Submission**

- Condition discharge information document
- Design Statement

These documents are available to view on the Council's website via the following link:  
<http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/16/01106/3CN03>

### **Background Papers**

Planning Policy documents referred to  
Planning files referred to

### **Date Report Prepared**

25 September 2019