

Full planning permission is sought for residential development comprising 175 dwellings and associated landscaping. The site is part of a wider masterplan aspiration for Ryecroft.

The site lies within the Urban Area of Newcastle as indicated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map and adjoins Newcastle Conservation Area. The Newcastle Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document identifies the site as lying within the Northern Quarter.

The 13-week period for the determination of this application expired on 26 February but an extension of time has been agreed to 2 May 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

PERMIT the application subject to conditions relating to the following matters:-

- 1. Standard time limit for commencement of development**
- 2. Approved plans**
- 3. Off-site highway works**
- 4. Cycle parking**
- 5. Submission of a Traffic Management Plan**
- 6. Reinstatement of redundant vehicle access**
- 7. Servicing Management Plan**
- 8. Construction Environmental Management Plan**
- 9. Travel Plan**
- 10. Noise attenuation scheme**
- 11. Contaminated land**
- 12. Lighting**
- 13. Landscaping scheme**
- 14. Detailed drainage design**
- 15. Material samples**
- 16. Boundary treatments**
- 17. Construction hours**

Reason for Recommendation

The scheme would regenerate a previously developed site and contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre. There would be no adverse impact on the setting of any listed buildings or on the character of the Conservation Area and the scale and design of the development would be appropriate. There would be no adverse impact on the local highway network in terms of safety and/or capacity and subject to appropriate conditions to ensure sustainable transport objectives, it is not considered that an objection could be sustained.

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

Amended/additional information has been sought and received and the proposal is now considered to be a sustainable form of development that complies with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Key Issues

Full planning permission is sought for residential development comprising 175 dwellings and associated landscaping. The site is part of a wider masterplan aspiration for Ryecroft.

The site lies within the Urban Area of Newcastle as indicated on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map and adjoins Newcastle Conservation Area. The Newcastle Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document identifies the site as lying within the Northern Quarter.

The key issues in the determination of the application are:

- Is the principle of the proposed development on the site acceptable?
- Would there be any impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area?
- Would there be any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area?
- Is the proposal acceptable in terms of highway safety and sustainable travel initiatives?
- Are acceptable residential amenity levels achieved for the occupiers?
- Does the development provide an appropriate level of Biodiversity Net Gain?
- What, if any, planning obligations are necessary to make the development policy compliant?

Is the principle of the proposed development on the site acceptable?

Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

Local and national planning policy seeks to provide new housing development within existing urban development boundaries on previously developed land. The site is located within the Urban Area of Newcastle.

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 a target of at least 3,200 dwellings within Newcastle Urban Central (within which the site lies).

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.

The SPD places the application site within the Northern Quarter which is a mixed zone which has been defined in recognition of its shared potential for significant redevelopment. Redevelopment opportunities could lead to a greater mix and intensity of uses. Additional residential development could be appropriate here, as well as leisure, offices and hotel development, so long as the main function of the Primary Shopping Area is maintained and enhanced.

The Newcastle Town Centre SPD states that encouraging mixed-use development increases the diversity of uses within a locality. As a result, such development would enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre by encouraging its use by a greater range of people for different purposes, possibly at different times of the day and night. This helps to strengthen the social fabric and economic viability of the Town Centre. It also has positive implications in terms of sustainable development as it encourages proximity of uses, reducing the need to travel.

This is a previously developed site in a highly sustainable location within the Town Centre which has many shops and services with regular bus services to destinations around the borough and beyond. It is considered that the site provides a sustainable location for additional residential development that would accord with the Town Centre SPD.

Would there be any impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area?

The site is adjacent to the north-western boundary of Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings within the site, but there are a number nearby.

The LPA has statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to 'pay special attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of

the conservation area and to 'have special regard' to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of nearby listed buildings.

Local and national planning policies seek to protect and enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and development that is contrary to those aims will be resisted. There is a statutory duty upon the Local Planning Authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of Conservation Areas in the exercise of planning functions.

The NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Saved NLP Policy B9 states that the Council will resist development that would harm the special architectural or historic character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Saved Policy B5 states that the Council will resist development proposals that would adversely affect the setting of a listed building.

A Heritage Statement that accompanies the application concludes that there would be no harm to the significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets. It states that the proposed development would enable the re-use of the site and would revitalise this aspect of the setting of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Conservation Area. The proposed development is said to be of suitable height, scale and massing, utilising materials sensitive to Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area and consistent with nearby listed and non-designated heritage assets.

The visibility of the proposed development from the CA would be confined to the courtyard buildings in views along Merrial Street. With the use of Staffordshire red brick to the Merrial Street frontage the development would be contemporary, yet contextual, and the materials palette would draw reference from the materials of the CA. Additionally, the articulation of the roof pitches and gable-ends of the proposed built form fronting Merrial Street would reflect elements of the fine urban grain of the town.

The re-use of the site is an opportunity to revitalise the immediate northern setting of the CA. The height, scale and materiality of the development would contribute to local distinctiveness and would preserve the character and appearance of Newcastle Town Centre Conservation Area and so its significance would be sustained.

The Conservation Officer agrees with the findings of the Heritage Statement stating that the proposal provides a positive opportunity for the town and the Conservation Area by providing an attractive setting for the heritage assets, allowing interesting views and creating a contemporary but respectful new design for Newcastle.

To conclude, it is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on the setting of any listed buildings or on the character of the Conservation Area.

Would there be any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area?

Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 135 of the framework lists 6 criteria, a) – f) with which planning policies and decisions should accord and details, amongst other things, that developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Policy CSP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy seeks to ensure that new development is well designed to respect the character, identity and context of Newcastle's unique townscape and landscape including its rural setting and the settlement pattern created by the hierarchy of centres. Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document provides further detailed guidance on design matters in tandem with CSP1.

The proposed development would consist of four main development zones: 01) the northern parcel adjacent to the new multi-storey car park which would comprise three blocks of terraced houses; 02) & 03) a central link zone connecting the town centre with the wider residential area and comprising a collection of stacked apartments; and 04) a corner plot fronting onto Merrial Street and Corporation Street comprising a courtyard block arrangement. Accommodation across the site would include studios, 1 and 2 bed apartments and 3 and 4 bed houses.

The site is laid out to respond to the existing site levels, provide connectivity back into the town centre, respond to the frontages of Merrial Street and work alongside the new car park and the proposed McCarthy Stone development. Through the centre of the site, a landscaped green link is proposed, linking the northern neighbourhood across the A52 to Corporation Street and acting as the green heart to the scheme.

The new green spine would be lined either side by two four storey apartment buildings ensuring this key public route benefits from passive surveillance. These apartments would have a mixture of private and communal entrances fronting onto the public realm.

To the north would sit two and three storey terraced houses, located around shared gardens with areas of private defensible space. Areas of periphery parking are provided to the western edge of the application zone, freeing up the interior of the site for pedestrian movement and activity. Extensive landscaping would provide acoustic buffering to the nearby road.

To the south against Merrial Street, a new courtyard building is proposed at a higher site level than the rest of the proposal. The courtyard building would sit around a greened public courtyard providing an enclosed public green space, in contrast to the linear link. The blocks would have a prominent presence on Merrial Street and Corporation Street with a relationship back to the town centre and the neighbouring redevelopment at York Place.

The materials have been derived from the local vernacular and are a mixture of red and silver/grey brick, with metal highlights to buildings including square profiled cladding to the upper levels. The palette reflects the history of the town and the industrial heritage of the wider area whilst providing examples of high-quality contemporary detailing.

The landscape masterplan would be formed from 5 distinctive landscape characters, complementing each other and making a liveable and sustainable place for residents. The public open spaces in the scheme would provide the residents and the wider community with a place for social interaction and informal, safe children's play. The area would include ample trees and shrub planting, natural play features, integrated SUDs, swales and rain gardens all of which would increase biodiversity.

Prior to submission of the application, the scheme was presented to a Design Review Panel (DRP), as encouraged by the NPPF. The DRP welcomed the proposed masterplan and landscape-led approach and the robust vision to create 'homes in a park', a car-free development, a green axial spine route which will provide an attractive and active route for new and existing residents, and a new housing 'offer'/new way of living. They stated that the development will provide well considered, new and exciting urban living opportunities within Newcastle-under-Lyme which respond positively to the

site's setting and conservation area, with the potential to benefit the town and its residents (new and existing).

The Panel made recommendations regarding boundary treatments and development of the materials palette and regarding the provision of additional information. In response, boundary treatments have been developed to soften edges where possible, enhancing the feeling of a new parkland. Fencing strategies have been developed to provide high quality communal spaces with boundaries primarily being derived through planting and paving strategies, as appropriate. The site has been subdivided into three separate character zones which each promoting their own individual qualities, expressed through the building typology and landscape strategy. A detailed materials palette has been included with the application.

It is considered that the development would be of high quality with the proposed dwellings set within an extensively landscaped parkland. The different character areas would create a variety of verdant spaces with planting and boundary treatments helping to define areas with the provision of accessible routes throughout ensuring that the site is opened up for all. The proposals would provide a design solution that is both responsive to the heritage context as well as providing new links to the northern neighbourhoods across the A52. The palette of materials reflects the history of the town and the industrial heritage of the wider area whilst providing examples of high-quality contemporary detailing.

Overall, it is considered that the scale and design of the development would be appropriate and with the implementation of an appropriate landscaping scheme, there would be no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Is the proposal acceptable in terms of highway safety?

The NPPF, at paragraph 111, states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The proposed site layout would be largely vehicle-free. Clearly defined pedestrian routes would be provided throughout the landscape layout which would provide access to the dwellings and a means of accessing the site via Corporation Street, Merrial Street and Ryecroft.

The development would provide 21 car parking spaces, including one disabled space. The houses would be provided with a parking space each (15 spaces) and the apartments would be provided with 6 spaces on site.

The application states that the location of the site is such that a high proportion of residents would live without owning a car. The submitted Transport Assessment asserts that car ownership data shows that 65% of households in flats live without owning a car and 35% of households have a car. It is stated that any additional parking demand associated with the apartments would be accommodated in the Castle Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP). The parking arrangements at the site would be marketed upfront so all residents are aware of the options available to them. Residents would be expected, as required, to organise their own parking arrangements in the MSCP.

Roads and paths within the newly proposed landscape have been designed to allow for the access and egress of fire tender vehicles across the site. Pathways have been designed to accommodate the necessary tender widths and weights.

Temporary stopping activity for deliveries and servicing is proposed via provision of a new loading bay (20m) on Corporation Street. The existing length of on-street parking comprising seven short stay spaces would be reconfigured to suit the introduction of the dropped kerb access to the green spine, the reinstatement of a footway at the redundant southern access point and to provide the loading bay for service activity associated with the development. The proposed arrangement would require modification of the existing Traffic Regulation Order which would be undertaken at the developer's expense, to provide the 20m loading bay and four short stay parking bays.

A Travel Plan would be adopted at the site to promote and support sustainable trip making. 175 cycle parking spaces would be provided for residents and visitors.

The Highway Authority (HA) has no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions. Subject to the imposition of such conditions, it is accepted that the proposed development would not have any adverse impact on highway safety.

Are acceptable residential amenity levels achieved for the occupiers?

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF lists a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking, one of which states that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) - Space Around Dwelling provides more detailed guidance on privacy and daylight standards including separation distances between proposed dwellings and new development in relation to existing dwellings.

The application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment which raises no concerns and a Noise Assessment which recommends mitigation measures. These documents have been considered by the Environmental Health Division who have raised no objections to the application subject to conditions.

Acceptable separation distances are proposed between the proposed development and both existing dwellings and those proposed on the adjacent development site.

Whilst there is ambition for extensive shared public space on the site, well defined private areas and shared private areas are also proposed for residents only to enjoy safely. Semi-private shared resident spaces have been created to encourage a sense of ownership among residents.

In conclusion, subject to the imposition of conditions, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any significant adverse impact on the amenity of the occupiers of existing or proposed dwellings. The proposed development therefore accords with the Council's SPG and the guidance and requirements of the NPPF.

Does the development provide an appropriate level of Biodiversity Net Gain?

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). This is a way of ensuring that development has a measurable positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there. It requires developers to deliver a BNG of 10%.

The application is accompanied by a BNG Technical Note which concludes that the proposal would deliver a net percentage change significantly above the required 10%.

What, if any, planning obligations are necessary to make the development policy compliant?

Section 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations states that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

The Highway Authority has requested financial contributions of £186,643.00 towards improvement of pedestrian/cycle infrastructure, £10,000 towards amendment of the TRO on Corporation Street and £6,000 towards travel plan monitoring.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board requires a financial contribution of £98,399 to be targeted towards supporting the future development/adaptation/expansion of premises within the Newcastle Central and Newcastle South Primary Care Networks.

These are considered to meet the tests identified in the NPPF and are compliant with Section 122 of the CIL Regulations.

The applicant has submitted a Viability Assessment which seeks to demonstrate that the above financial contributions would render the scheme unviable. The viability case has been considered by independent and suitably qualified valuers and it is accepted that the scheme cannot meet the requisite planning obligations.

APPENDIX

Policies and proposals in the approved development plan relevant to this decision:-

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

Policy SP1:	Spatial Principles of Targeted Regeneration
Policy SP3:	Spatial Principles of Movement and Access
Policy ASP5:	Newcastle and Kidsgrove Urban Neighbourhoods Area Spatial Policy
Policy CSP1:	Design Quality
Policy CSP2:	Historic Environment
Policy CSP3:	Sustainability and Climate Change
Policy CSP5:	Open Space/Sport/Recreation
Policy CSP6:	Affordable Housing
Policy CSP10:	Planning Obligations

[Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan \(NLP\) 2011](#)

Policy H1:	Residential Development: Sustainable Location and Protection of the Countryside
Policy T16:	Development – General Parking Requirements
Policy T17:	Parking in Town and District Centres
Policy B14:	Development in or Adjoining the Boundary of Conservation Areas
Policy C4:	Open Space in new housing areas
Policy IM1:	Provision of Essential Supporting Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Other Material Considerations include:

[National Planning Policy Framework](#) (2024)

[Planning Practice Guidance](#) (2014 as updated)

[Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents](#)

[Developer contributions SPD](#) (September 2007)

[Affordable Housing SPD](#) (2009)

[Space Around Dwellings SPG](#) (SAD) (July 2004)

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

[Newcastle Town Centre SPD](#) (2009)

[Newcastle-under-Lyme Open Space Strategy](#) – adopted March 2017

Relevant Planning History

06/01181/OUT	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 6 non-food retail units (Class A1) with associated car parking, access and landscaping works – Approved
14/00657/FUL	Temporary Winter Wonderland consisting of an ice rink, bar, German market units and fair – Approved
17/00959/FUL	Temporary circus consisting of three big tops, box office/bar tent, café tent, company catering tent, toilets and showers and space for caravans and trailers – Approved
19/00470/DEEM3	Temporary ad-hoc use of cleared site of former supermarket for the holding of licenced events such as circuses, fairgrounds, ice rinks etc. – Approved

21/00908/DEM	Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of former offices and associated structures – Approved
23/00192/DEEM3	Erection of a Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) with associated access, servicing and landscape works – Approved
24/00017/DEEM3	Full planning application for the temporary transfer and storage of excavated materials from the multi-storey car park (MSCP) development site to the adjacent civic building demolition plot for a period of 2 years - Approved
24/00792/FUL	Development of 53 no. retirement apartments (Use Class C3), including new vehicular access, car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure – Pending consideration

Views of Consultees

Active Travel England recommend the use of their Standing Advice.

Staffordshire County Council as the **Mineral and Waste Planning Authority** makes no comment.

NatureSpace states that the development would be unlikely to have an impact on great crested newts or their habitats and therefore has no comments to make.

The **Environmental Health Division** has no objections subject to conditions regarding a construction environmental management plan, noise attenuation scheme, contaminated land and boilers.

The **Highway Authority** (HA) has no objections subject to conditions regarding off-site highway works, cycle parking, submission of a Traffic Management Plan, redundant vehicle access to be reinstated, a Construction Environmental Management Plan and Servicing Management Plan.

Section 106 contributions are required as follows:

- £186,643.00 towards improvement of pedestrian/ Cycle Infrastructure within Merrial Street between the site frontage and A34 Ryecroft
- £10,000 towards amendment of TRO on Corporation Street
- £6,000 towards Travel Plan monitoring

Staffordshire County Council as **Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** has no objections subject to a condition requiring details of the final surface water drainage design.

The **Conservation Officer** states that whilst not within the Conservation Area (CA) boundary, the site is close to the north and north-west boundaries and is now an open area of demolished buildings and a surface car park which does not contribute towards its character. The topography of the town plays an important part in views within the town centre, in certain instances allowing for extensive views out but also enclosing areas so views can be limited.

The consideration of the context and the material palette is acceptable. The success will be with the relationship that each element has with each area and the landscaping and crucially the boundary treatments and how this affects the interaction within the area and movement through it. The proposal re-establishes frontages and activity on the site and the most visible from the CA will be on the Merrial Street frontage. These will have Staffordshire red brick which will help with assimilation into the town. The brick detailing and banding adds interest to the buildings creating attractive views through to the landscaped garden. The smaller grey bricks will give an original feel which is quite European. The profiled metal cladding for the central building may be a step is too far for some and so consideration could be given to the grey brick taken up higher perhaps to balcony level.

The scale of the new development is broadly acceptable and has the potential to compliment well the adjacent buildings both within and close to the CA. This proposal provides a positive opportunity for the town and the CA to help better reveal the significance of the heritage assets by providing an

attractive setting, allowing interesting views and creating contemporary but respectful new design for Newcastle. The site forms part of a master plan which brings together the other elements on the site, such as the new multi-storey car park, and other residential areas. The building design is complimented by a high-quality green environment which is colourful and interesting.

The **Conservation Advisory Working Party** agreed that the new buildings directly adjacent to Merrial Street were the strongest parts of the scheme. The heavy use of Staffordshire blue brick was questioned, as this brick type was traditionally not used to cover the entirety of buildings, and more red brick should be incorporated into the scheme.

Concerns were raised about the design of the largest centrally positioned building which was considered to have a 'workhouse' like design with a roof that didn't reflect the local vernacular, as well as with respect to the lack of parking spaces and the reliance on the new Rycroft car park building, which may not be suitable for all users. As a minimum the site should provide pick up points for residents.

Overall, the Working Party considered that the proposal required further thought and only around a third of the scheme was of an acceptable design standard.

The **Landscape Development Section** has no objections in principle subject to agreeing the detailed landscaping scheme and SUDS layout.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB) requires a sum of £98,399 towards supporting the future development/adaptation/expansion of premises within the Primary Care Networks in alignment with strategic estates planning, which will enable the ICB to work towards the aim of tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience, and access for patients.

Staffordshire County Council as **Education Authority** does not seek an education contribution from this development for primary or secondary school provision.

Staffordshire Police **Crime Prevention Design Advisor** welcome the positive regenerative benefits to the town that are likely to arise from redevelopment of the site broadly along the lines that are proposed. There is a clear indication at this stage that security and safety will be suitably considered and hopefully fully imbedded within the proposals and the finished redevelopment. There are plenty of positives potentially which are translated into the layout proposals in the main, but much will depend upon the attention to detail.

No comments have been received from **Waste Services, Housing Strategy, Cadent, United Utilities, Staffs Wildlife Trust** or **Newcastle South Local Area Partnership** and given that the period for comment has passed, it must be assumed that they have no comments to make.

Representations

None

Applicant's/Agent's submission

All of the application documents can be viewed on the Council's website using the following link: <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/24/00840/FUL>

Background papers

Planning files referred to
Planning Documents referred to

Date report prepared

17 April 2025