



Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2020-2040

Hearing Statement – Matter 2 – Vision & Objectives, the Spatial Strategy, and the Site Selection Process (Policies PSD1, PSD2, PSD3, PSD4)

NC77: Bent Farm, Newchapel

April 2025

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1. Introduction

The Statement

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Condate Ltd. in response to the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan Examination in Public, and in particular in respect of site NC77: Bent Farm, Newchapel which was allocated within the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan but discounted from the Regulation 19 version.
- 1.2 Condate is working with the landowner and a housebuilder to progress the development of the site for residential, care provision, and small-scale local retail uses.

NC77: Bent Farm, Newchapel – The Site and Surroundings

- 1.3 The site comprises 13.87 acres of predominantly scrubland, a small area of previously developed land associated with the now demolished Packmoor Working Men's Club, and a number of lock-up garages off Turnhurst Road. The boundaries of the site are formed by built form to the north and east (Newtown), hedgerows and trees to the west along Birchenwood Road, and a housing estate dating from the late 1990s/early 2000s to the south.
- 1.4 The site is located in a predominantly residential area, but immediately opposite the site is a local medical centre, public house, and a pharmacy. The Packmoor Ormiston Academy (primary level) is within a five-minute walk of the site, as is the Packmoor Community Hall.
- 1.5 Newtown and Turnhurst Road forms part of one of the area's main bus routes, and there is a bus stop directly opposite the site.
- 1.6 It is important to note that the City of Stoke-on-Trent/Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme boundary passes through the site – 54% (7.49 acres) is within Newcastle-under-Lyme, 46% (6.38 acres) is within Stoke-on-Trent – and it is located within the Stoke-on-Trent Green Belt.

The Proposed Development

- 1.7 Our indicative development proposal is as follows:

Newcastle-under-Lyme Portion

- 57 homes – 40 open market sale, 17 affordable (Use Class C3);
- 70 unit care facility (Use Class C2);
- 3 retirement bungalows (Use Class C3); and
- Local Centre and associated car parking and service area (Use Classes Ea and F.2a).

Stoke-on-Trent Portion

- 35 homes – 24 open market sale, 11 affordable (Use Class C3); and
- 9 retirement bungalows (Use Class C3).

- 1.8 It is intended that the development proposal (the Newcastle-under-Lyme portion) will accord with Policy HOU2: Housing Mix, Density and Standards of the draft Local Plan. As such the mix for the 57 C3 dwellings will be as follows:
- 2-bed – 23 (40%);
 - 3-bed – 26 (45%); and
 - 4-bed – 8 (15%).
- 1.9 The mix for the 17 affordable units, care facility and retirement bungalows will be agreed in consultation with the Council’s strategic housing team and the selected Registered Provider.
- 1.10 In terms of the site’s ability to be progressed, it is:
- **Available:** the site is being taken forward via a promotion agreement between the landowner and Condote and therefore is available;
 - **Developable:** the site will be developable subject to policy change and successful allocation – this representation demonstrates the justification and begins the building of an evidence base; and
 - **Deliverable:** as referred to above, the site is being progressed via a promotion agreement between the landowner and Condote, who will be working with a housebuilder around the delivery of the scheme. In addition, a locally operating Registered Provider will be engaged to secure the provision and management of affordable and retirement elements, while the landowner will be responsible for the delivery and management of the local centre.
- 1.11 It is anticipated that the scheme could be progressed and completed over a four year period from granting of a planning permission. Assuming that the site is subsequently allocated in the Plan, then a policy compliant planning application could be submitted in the first half of 2026. If a permission is granted late 2026, this would see the completion of the development by late 2030/early 2031.

2. Hearing Matters

Matter 2 – Vision & Objectives, the Spatial Strategy, and the Site Selection Process (Policies PSD1, PSD2, PSD3, PSD4)

Issue 2 – Are the provisions of the Plan in relation to the Spatial Strategy justified and consistent with national policy?

- 2.1 We consider that the overall development strategy that underpins the Plan to be flawed for the following reasons.
- 2.2 While the two key employment allocations in the Plan are acknowledged – ‘Land at Junction 16 of the M6’ (Policy AB2), and ‘Keele Science Park Phase 3’ (Policy KL13) – the importance of ‘Chatterley Valley, Lowlands Road’ (Policy BW1) appears to be downplayed. However, the Chatterley Valley site and the proposed Junction 16 allocation are both located off the A500 corridor, and therefore provide the economic context for growth in the north of the Borough.
- 2.3 A further key consideration relating to the proposed Chatterley Valley allocation is that it is located within the northern extremity of the Ceramic Valley initiative, a cross-boundary project led by the Borough Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council. Therefore it is in this part of the North Staffordshire conurbation where the majority of recent and planned economic activity is taking place, and thus where a large proportion of the area’s employment opportunities will be located.
- 2.4 Alongside this, Policy RET5 (Kidsgrove Town Centre) provides the policy context for the regeneration of Kidsgrove town centre, and while the principle of this is to be supported, the detail is in need of strengthening (this is considered below).
- 2.5 However, the plan’s proposed housing land supply does not respond to this economic context, and neither does it respond to the Council’s new mandatory housing target (this is considered below) which should address historic under-delivery across the Borough, particularly affordable housing. It should also be noted that significant levels of student accommodation are included within the proposed housing land supply. Therefore it is considered that the plan’s proposed housing supply will need to be increased accordingly.
- 2.6 Having considered the above, Policy PSD1 will need to be addressed accordingly. Suggested amendments are detailed below. In addition, the shortcomings of Policy PSD1 also impact on Policy SD3 and resulting Site Allocations. These issues are addressed below.

Required Modifications

- 2.7 At the very least, we consider that a series of modifications are required to a number of policies in order to make the Plan sound. However, it may be that deficiencies with certain policies – such as PSD1, PSD3 and PSD5 – are so fundamental that significant work would be necessary to correct the Plan.

2.8 In order to make the Plan sound, we consider that modifications are needed to the following policies:

- PSD1: Overall Development Strategy
- PSD3: Distribution of Development
- PSD5: Green Belt
- RET5: Kidsgrove Town Centre

2.9 Required modifications to Policy PSD5 are considered in a separate Hearing Statement. In addition, there are also implications for Site Allocations that will need to be addressed accordingly, and these are considered elsewhere.

2.10 Required modifications to Policies PSD1 and PSD3 are considered below. These modifications also have implications for Policy RET5.

PSD1: Overall Development Strategy

2.11 Point 1 will need to be amended to reflect the Council's new mandatory housing target. This will need to be addressed as there is a significant difference between that, and the figure that the Plan is responding to.

2.12 The new mandatory target indicates a requirement to plan for the following:

- 10,900 for the plan period 2020-2040
- 545 dwellings per annum

2.13 Therefore point 1 within Policy PSD1 should be modified as follows:

"A minimum of 10,900 dwellings will be delivered in the Borough over the Plan period 2020–2040 which equates to 545 dwellings per annum."

PSD3: Distribution of Development

2.14 Policy PSD3 will be the most complex to address and it will require the Council to carry out some 'homework' and detailed analysis in terms of the unbalanced nature of the distribution of development in the context of the key economic drivers in the north of the Borough, and the new mandatory housing target.

2.15 While the new mandatory housing target may well mean increased housing numbers across all areas of the borough, particular attention will need to be paid to the Urban Centre of Kidsgrove, and will necessitate amendments to Policy RET5 (this is considered below).

RET5: Kidsgrove Town Centre

2.16 Given the Council's aspirations to drive the regeneration of Kidsgrove town centre, we consider that Policy RET5 is somewhat limited, and is not broad enough to deliver meaningful change. As such, we consider that Policy RET5 should be modified by adding the following to point 1 of the policy:

- Support for opportunities to diversify the town centre offer by introducing other compatible uses in appropriate locations, including residential.

2.17

In addition, a point 2 should be added to the policy as follows:

- The Council will support increased residential development in locations that benefit from good public transport links with the town centre and that will support the area's economic growth and the town centre's regeneration.

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