



Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2020-2040

Hearing Statement – Matter 4 The Housing Requirement

NC77: Bent Farm, Newchapel

April 2025

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Hearing Matters	5

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 Condate 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 Condate, 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 4 The Housing Requirement

Issue 4 - Is the identified housing requirement in table 2 justified and consistent with national policy?

- 2.1 As drafted, the Plan provides for 8,000 homes over the plan period (400 dwellings per annum), based on the following spatial distribution:
- Strategic Centre of Newcastle-under-Lyme – 5,200 dwellings;
 - Urban Centre of Kidsgrove – 800 dwellings;
 - Audley and Bignall End – 250 dwellings;
 - Betley and Wrinehill/Madeley and Madeley Heath – 250 dwellings;
 - Loggerheads – 450 dwellings;
 - Baldwins Gate – 250 dwellings; and
 - Keele and Keele University – 800 dwellings.
- 2.2 We consider that is lower than it should be as it does not respond to the Council’s new mandatory housing target and historic undersupply, while the proposed supply contains significant levels of student accommodation, an issue that has been picked up in recent appeal decisions.
- 2.3 Setting aside issues associated with the Plan’s overall housing number, the distribution of development from a spatial perspective is flawed. Two of the Plan’s key economic drivers – Land at Junction 16 of the M6, and Chatterley Valley, Lowlands Road – are located within the north of the Borough along the A500 corridor, while the plan also provides the policy context for the regeneration of Kidsgrove town centre. However, while it is acknowledged that the northern area of the Strategic Centre of Newcastle-under-Lyme will provide a certain level of the housing requirement in support of these allocations, the closest areas from a spatial perspective are Audley and Bignall End, and the Urban Centre of Kidsgrove, the two combined provide just 1,050 homes, or 13.1% of the overall proposed housing land supply. This is clearly an unbalanced approach, particularly taking into consideration public transport connections, and therefore doesn’t recognise the impact of housing need arising from strategic employment allocations.
- 2.4 It is also noted that the housing number associated with the Strategic Centre of Newcastle-under-Lyme incorporates an ‘urban extension’ which is detailed in Policy SP11 (Lyme Park, Silverdale) and is associated with the proposed development of the Keele Municipal Golf Course to provide 900 homes within a country park setting. The justification of the release of the golf course from the Green Belt was based around the extension of the Keele Science Park, and the growth aspirations of Keele University.
- 2.5 However, while the extension of Keele Science Park still appears to be deliverable, the growth aspirations of the university would appear to be facing some serious challenges linked to the funding crisis facing the higher education sector, and the post-Brexit challenges facing international students. Indeed, in May 2024, Keele

University invited 2,300 members of staff to consider voluntary redundancy, while more recently, the university has signalled its intention to implement a programme of compulsory redundancies, which has led to strike action. Therefore, the major Green Belt release that underpins the proposed urban extension is unjustified in the current context in that the allocation – the single biggest in the Plan – clearly overplays the impact of housing need arising from the strategic employment allocations in that particular location.

- 2.6 Therefore it is considered that Policy PSD3 requires amendment to properly respond to the Plan's proposed economic strategy and any increase in the Council's housing target. Suggested amendments have been detailed in another Hearing Statement.

Contact



Dave Proudlove
Projects Director

Mobile: 07713 133257
Email: dave@condate.co.uk