



Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan Examination

Action Point 22 - SP11: ‘Lyme Park’ - (1) Council to consider the need and approach to phasing of site SP11 including the individual parcels within the site. Consider how the country park will be implemented and managed to ensure it comes forward as part of any development. (2) Explain how surface/ground water flooding has been considered in terms of the scale of development for the site, with reference to the position of a ‘spring’ under the site.

Introduction

1. This note has been prepared by the Council to provide further information on the phasing of site SP11 ‘Lyme Park’, the role of the Country Park and surface/ground water flooding.

Phasing of Site SP11 ‘Lyme Park’

1. The principle of residential development on land formerly used as a Golf Course was put forward as a proposal in the First Draft Local Plan in 2023. Consultants BDP subsequently produced a report for the Borough Council “Site Promotion Representations for Former Keele Golf Course” (representation reference NULLP49) which set out a masterplan led approach for 900 homes across the site to inform the consideration of the site in the Final Draft Local Plan at Regulation 19 stage. The remainder of the site was proposed to be a Countryside Park. The Final Draft Local Plan, at Regulation 19 stage (and following the implementation of the site selection methodology), proposed to allocate the land for residential development, infrastructure related uses and a countryside park.
2. There will be four separate residential components (alongside infrastructure requirements) with these specific areas being brought to the market at different times after the anticipated adoption of the Local Plan. It is proposed that the Council will dispose (sell) the individual sites without the benefit of planning permission. The area designated as a countryside park will remain within the ownership and control of the Borough Council.

3. The four residential sites as set out in the BDP report are:
 1. Keele Square (proposal for 255 homes) – SP11 (1)
 2. Keele Woods (proposal for 310 homes) – SP11 (2)
 3. Ashbourne Drive (proposal for 235 homes) – SP11 (3)
 4. Park Road (proposal for 100 homes) – SP11 (4)
4. As noted in the examination hearing sessions, in respect of education infrastructure, Staffordshire County Council would expect the primary school (as part of SP11 (1) at Keele Square) to be brought forward at a trigger of 400 homes being built.
5. Sites 2 (SP11(2) and 3 (SP11(3) are anticipated to be brought to the market upon adoption of the Local Plan in 2026 but no earlier than summer 2026.
6. Site 1 (SP11(1) is anticipated to be brought to market in 2029.
7. Site 4 (SP11(4) is anticipated to be brought to the market in 2031.

Development of the Countryside Park

8. In March 2025, the Borough Councils Cabinet provided additional information on and confirmed the intention to deliver a countryside park on the former Keele Municipal Golf Course comprising the areas not designated for housing development under the Councils emerging Final Draft (Regulation 19) Local Plan.
9. The site ceased operating as a golf course in 2012 but has remained accessible to the public. The site is generally in very good condition, and it is considered will adapt into a Countryside Park relatively easily. To that end the Council intends to develop the Countryside Park in three phases: short, medium and long term.
10. In respect of site SP12 “site off Glenwood Close, Silverdale”, which is an omission site, it is proposed in the submission version of the Plan that the site is removed from the Green Belt and allocated as part of the Countryside Park to avoid an isolated parcel of land in the Green Belt. However, for clarity and the avoidance of doubt in respect of any obligations on the landowner of site SP12, the Council is proposing to exclude SP12 from the Countryside Park designation as a modification to the Policies Map. The removal of site SP12 from the Countryside Park would not undermine the Council’s Objectives of bringing the Countryside Park forward.

Short Term

11. This initial phase of the Countryside Park will be delivered in spring 2026 and will involve refurbishment / improvements to the existing carpark (originally provided to serve the golf course) signage and gates to all access points onto the site. There are 6 areas of open water present on the site which will be subject to safety provisions being assessed and provided, i.e. life buoy rings and warning signage.
12. Management of the site at this stage will be undertaken by the Council's Streetscene service who will inspect and maintain infrastructure to ensure safety and enjoyment of the public. The site will be brought into the Council's existing Grassland Management Strategy which is now in its third phase, and the tree stock will be managed in accordance with the Council's existing Tree Management Strategy. Costs for this stage will be met from the Council's Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy revenue budget.
13. At the same time and in parallel, the Council will commission a Master Planning exercise, as required by Policy SP11 (criteria 7) including an ecological survey and management plan to inform further development and management of the Country Park into the medium and long term as development of the residential sites progresses.

Medium Term

14. Utilising the outcomes of the Master Planning exercise the Council will look to ensure effective management of the site as residential development starts to commence. This phase will also consider and provide for any additional infrastructure, eg relocated car park, public toilets, café, visitor centre which the Master Planning exercise considers would be feasible, affordable and beneficial to the site for the enjoyment of the public. Costs for provision of any additional infrastructure and ongoing management would be sought through developer contributions linked to the residential sites forming SP11.

Long Term

15. The long term will look to how the site is managed once all housing development is completed and will seek to develop a rolling 5 year management plan for the site, to protect and conserve appropriate habitats while balancing the need for the public to access and enjoy nature and recreation on the site.
16. With the above in mind, the Council would like to add some text, as a new criterion, to note that financial contributions will be required to support the

ongoing maintenance of the Country Park to go towards the provision of facilities and maintenance of the Park. This is proposed as follows:

17. Criteria 17: **Financial contributions to the delivery of infrastructure and ongoing maintenance of the Countryside Park.**

Location and Scale of Development – Ground Water and Location of the Spring

18. The site is in Flood Zone 1. There are small areas of flooding from minor watercourses in the site that would need to be analysed as part of the development proposals and the impacted areas protected from development.

19. To the centre of the site lies Springpool Spring and Pond. A desk-based Phase 1 Geoenvironmental study was undertaken in 2021 on the site. This identified from site plans the location of Springpool Spring and Pond towards the centre of the site (as shown in Figure 1):-

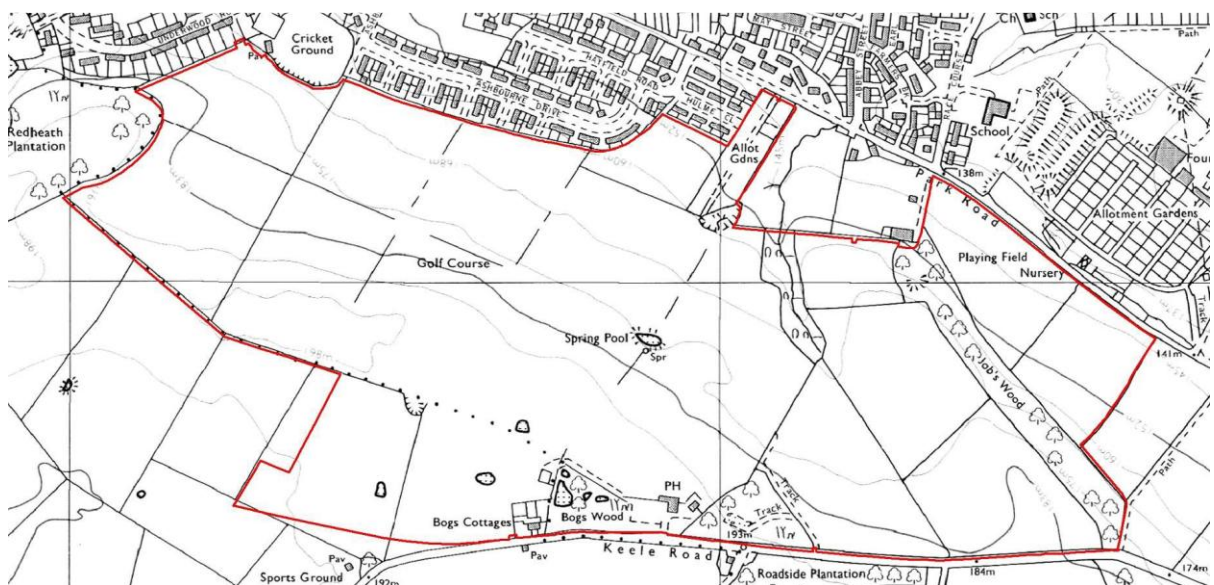


Figure 1: 1981 Location Plan for Site SP11

20. According to the Geoenvironmental study, the discharge from the spring is carried to a storm sewer in Glenwood Close. A second spring in the site has an outfall on Park Road.

21. The BDP Report and masterplan “Site Promotion Representations for Former Keele Golf Course” (representation reference NULLP49) took account of the location of the spring when designing the layout of the site. Page 49 of the site

promotion masterplan refers to the spring in the centre of the site which discharges into a bunded pond that, whilst not considered as a reservoir, if the bunding were to fail, water would flow to the north across the site, which has been taken into account in terms of the layout of the site. The site masterplan notes that surface water drainage should be attenuated to the equivalent greenfield runoff and attenuation provided to contain the 1:100 year return period event with a 40% allowance for climate change before the controlled discharge is connected to the culverted watercourse.

22. The level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) considered groundwater emergence (EX/NBC/06b) alongside other flood risk impacts. The Level 2 SFRA identified the need for sites to consider the issue of groundwater emergence in site specific flood risk assessments, but it did not identify a specific issue at SP11 [EX/NBC/06 & EX/NBC/O6a].
23. As part of the policy wording for the site, criteria 8 of SP11 refers to development taking into account flood risk from all sources including surface water flooding. The supporting information in paragraph 13.168 of the Local Plan refers to the need to take account of the spring location in the wider masterplan of the site. The Council would agree to a form of words being added to Criteria 8 of the policy to specifically refer to the location of the spring and the addition of text to say that an assessment of the structural stability of the bund at the spring should be undertaken and mitigation measures identified, as appropriate. The amended criteria 8 is proposed below:-
24. Criteria 8 A sequential approach will be taken within the site to direct development to areas at lowest risk of flooding taking account of flood risk from all sources including surface water flooding. **This should include an assessment on the structural stability of the “Springpool Spring and Pool” Bund and mitigation measures identified and implemented, as appropriate.**