Date | 16/03/2026

Pre-application Consultation Covering Note

Location: **4, 4A and 4B Hunter Street, Chester, CH1 2AR**

Proposal: **New build apartment block (19 units over 5-storeys) plus single detached dwelling, access, parking and associated works (including demolition of all buildings on site)**

Occupied by a series of poor-quality buildings, offering no positive contribution to the designated Conservation Area, the site represents an opportunity to utilise a brownfield site. A new-build redevelopment proposal providing high-quality residential accommodation in the core of the city centre, endorsed by one of the key actions of the Council's One City Plan.

We will work collaboratively to promote Chester as a truly liveable city, so that landlords and developers have the confidence to invest, and so city centre living is attractive and accessible for a broad range of people. We will increase the residential offer in the city by promoting and re-purposing vacant sites, reconfiguring underused buildings and taking opportunities to build stronger communities in Chester city centre. This will involve reimagining and re-zoning the city centre to create recognisable communities, with a geographic identity and public realm which brings people together and reduces the isolation that can be associated with city centre living.

One City Plan (Making Group – Thriving People & Communities)

Key designations:

- Chester City Conservation Area (and associated Characterisation Study
- City Centre Inner Zone (Parking Standards)
- Proximity to Listed Buildings
- Area of Archaeological importance
- Non-designated heritage asset

Principle of development:

- Policy STRAT2 (LP1) – within settlement boundary of sustainable settlement
- Policy STRAT3 (LP1)* – housing supply in Cheshire West & Chester
  **prescribed figures superseded by policy applied by NPPF (2024) and associated 5-YHLS. Presumption in favour of sustainable development.*
- Policy DM1 (LP2) – use of previously developed land in sustainable settlements
- Policy SOC1 (LP1) – 30% affordable housing provision*

not viable to provide on-site, but will be secured via a commuted sum payment through a S106 Agreement

Key development management items:

Design

A provisional proposal was presented for the purpose of a pre-application enquiry. Whilst the principle of development was supported, the quantum of development and appearance was not supported by the LPA. For the purpose of a formal application we have progressed a revised proposal, of smaller scale and a design complementing the wider context of this area within the Conservation Area.

Amenity

The proposal has accommodated space standards, overlooking, loss of light etc.. aligned with the policy provisions regarding residential amenity. Views from the site to neighbouring uses are mitigated through enclosing and framing of balconies to direct views and restrict overlooking. A noise assessment has been undertaken to ensure amenity of the proposed residents is protected, being in a city centre environment. Design solutions have been applied to accommodate this.

Transport

Site access and parking provision have been assessed and a design solution applied accordingly. The site is a highly sustainable location, served by a number of public transport options, justifying a reduced parking provision against policy standards. Given the city centre location this is acceptable approach defined within the Council's Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

Biodiversity

Consideration has been given to the ecological features within the site, as the proposed new buildings are within the footprint of existing buildings or within the hardstanding areas of the site. The post-development plan confirms that all but one of the trees onsite will be retained, together with the hedgerow along the western site boundary. Any habitat losses will be addressed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (10%+, predominantly via off-site units).

Heritage & Archaeology

Historical survey work undertaken across the site, in conjunction with the Northgate development. This has been superseded by further site investigations. Ultimately, the evaluation process has resulted in the preparation of bespoke foundation designs to ensure the archaeological remains are largely preserved in-situ. The proposal is the subject of a Heritage Statement, assessing Heritage Significance and ultimately providing objective and robust assessment of the proposed development in terms of impact (beneficial / harmful) on heritage assets and the wider conservation setting.

Flooding / Drainage

Being Flood Zone 1, the site is at a low risk of surface water flooding. The development will follow a recognised drainage strategy for such an urban environment and apply the principles of SuDS.

Developer Contributions (to be assessed as part of application determination)

- Education – commuted sum payment to be calculated.
- Healthcare - commuted sum payment to be calculated.
- Open Space / Sport / Recreation – commuted sum payments for off-site provision and management of.

Community Infrastructure Levy

Apartments are exempt in line with the Council's charging schedule.

Summary

Supported by an extensive portfolio of surveys and reports, this proposal for residential development on a vacant brownfield site in the heart of Chester City Centre will provide much needed attractive and accessible accommodation, supporting the 'making' objectives of the One City Plan. Policy compliant, at both a national and local level, such development represents a positive addition to the wider regeneration area in the city centre and should be supported wholeheartedly.

We welcome your comments on the proposals as presented, ahead of finalising and submission of the planning application to Cheshire West and Chester Council (expected by mid-April).