

**Northumberland and Newcastle Society
Planning and Development Team – December 2023**

Planning Comments

Application Reference	Application Type	Location Details	Proposal
2023/1944/01/LBC	Listed Building Consent	Former Tenje Restaurant, Barrack Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 4LA	Demolition of previous extensions & terrace, alterations including new link extension, fenestration, ramp & terrace to facilitate use of former restaurant as offices (Class E)
2023/1917/01/DET	Detailed Application	As above	Demolition as above plus new parking areas / use of part of car park for vehicle storage
Planning Officer Comment	Colin Rising		
	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme.</p> <p>The Society welcomes and enthusiastically supports schemes that bring sympathetic and sustainable use to vacant heritage assets. Whilst as a general principle we are opposed to demolition of structurally sound buildings on embodied carbon and climate change grounds we do recognise some selective demolition is justified in appropriate circumstances and this is one such case.</p> <p>This scheme will offer greater public access to, and appreciation of the historic fabric of a significant local heritage asset given the site is currently unoccupied and not accessible.</p>		
2023/1823/01/DET	Detailed Application	Barker And Stonehouse, Strawberry Buildings Leazes Park Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4PQ	Demolition of former Barker & Stonehouse building (Use Class E), change of use of Strawberry House from Class E to Sui Generis as student accommodation, erection of 6 storey 260 unit student accommodation building (Sui Generis) associated hard / soft landscaping & engineering works.
Planning Officer Comment	Josh Murphy		
	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following comments.</p> <p>The Society notes this scheme adds further student accommodation to an area of the city which has attracted substantial development in recent years. We accept this scheme is responding to a generic requirement and will fulfil an important reuse of a vacant retail site that has no other obvious viable, sustainable proposals.</p> <p>In our assessment this appears to be a higher quality building than the existing Vita block on Strawberry Place. We note the design has been subject of reduction in height by one storey, however we still feel it is too bulky and tall for the setting. We would suggest it could be stepped down a storey or two at some point on the Leazes Park Road facade to reduce the dominance on the street scene there. It is evident this area of the city is building up quite a student monoculture and we would wish to see a more eclectic mix of building types to maintain a greater sense of community.</p>		

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2023/1675/01/DET	Detailed Application	446 Westgate Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 9BN	Alterations to form 7no. commercial (retail and café/restaurant) units (Classes E(a) and E(b) at ground floor level. Change of use of first and second floors to create 6no. flats (Class C3(a). External ground floor alterations include new shopfronts / recladding & fascia to accommodate roller shutters, resurface terrace & provision of planters, stairs & outdoor seating, removal of rear fire escape stairs.
Planning Officer	Colin Rising		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following comments.</p> <p>The Society notes this scheme relates to a reuse of a building formerly housing a local branch bank and as a general principle we welcome applications that give sustainability to such buildings. This is a building of quality that has the capability to fulfil the proposed use, offering an opportunity to provide a high standard of residential space in an area of the city that is seeing significant new investment.</p> <p>The proposed shopfront facing Westgate Road is an improvement to that elevation, however we believe the extension of retail-style fascia boards to the Wingrove Road façade is a backward step. The rendered finish to this elevation appears inappropriate and of insufficient quality, given that Wingrove Road is overwhelmingly residential in character.</p> <p>The proposed internal layout of some of the apartments should be improved as it appears there is insufficient space in some cases for a table to eat at in the open plan reception/kitchen. It must be recognised that these flats are for permanent residential use and should be desirable places to live.</p>		
2023/1895/01/DET	Detailed Application	Eldon Leisure High Friars, Eldon Square, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7XY	Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to flexible use including Commercial, Business and Service uses, Amusement Centre, Drinking Establishment & indoor motorised electric go-karting track (Class E/Sui Generis), associated external alterations include partial removal of roof fronting to Blakett St to create outdoor terrace garden.
Planning Officer	Jessica Annan		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following comments.</p> <p>The Society welcomes the repurposing of this part of Eldon Square which has in recent years been significantly underutilised. For many years we have maintained that the city needed to have more to attract visitors than being a party destination. The partial removal of the roof fronting Blakett Street and Old Eldon Square along with the increase in glazing to this elevation will dramatically improve the streetscape and if plans for pedestrianisation are fulfilled, help to recreate a “fourth range” to Old Eldon Square. We do have a concern as to the viability of all of the roof gardens springing up throughout the city but recognise that the City</p>		

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	Council as a major owner of Eldon Square must endeavour to maximise the potential of this strategic city centre asset.		
2023/1894/01/DET	Detailed Application	Debenhams, 26 Saint Andrews Way, Eldon Square, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7XD	Change of use from Commercial, Business & Service (Class E) to mixed use comprising food, drink, cultural, art and entertainment hub with sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises (Class E(b), drinking establishment (Sui Generis), venue for live music performance, theatre, dance and performance related activities (Sui Generis), ancillary indoor recreation (Class E(d) & art exhibitions / markets (Class E(a) and F1(B) with associated external alterations including partial removal of roof and replacement with retractable structure, creation of new entrance onto Newgate St with creation of 2 No. flexible units (Class E) at ground floor and erection of music box to roof.
Planning Officer	Jessica Annan		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following comments.</p> <p>The Society welcomes the repurposing of the former Debenhams store which was a considerable investment for the City Council as a major shareholder in Eldon Square. The loss of such a high-profile retailer along with its subsidiary brands was symptomatic of the decline in the retail sector nationwide.</p> <p>The description “‘family leisure attraction’ we feel is a misnomer and read ‘pub’ but given that the development is in the epicentre of the city’s party scene, opposite the Gate, it isn’t particularly out of place. We are concerned that it may suffer from low footfall during the daytime which may impact on the long-term viability of that end of the centre. The outdoor elements at the top of the building are inevitably going to lead to noise generation which will have to be considered and mitigated. The inclusion of “the Music Box” for live theatre and performances will be a welcome addition to the city as over the years it has lost many of the smaller venues which are vital for new and aspiring young talent.</p> <p>We welcome the proposed impressive new entrance on Newgate Street with the exciting atrium but would like to see the façade in general enlivened. We commented negatively on the poor elevations when Debenham’s originally received planning approval and would urge the developers to rectify the situation this time around and seek to offer more to compare with the Gate on the other side of the street.</p>		
2023/1775/01/DET	Detailed Application	Monument Mall Brunswick Place, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7AL	Partial refurbishment / external alterations to Monument Mall for commercial units (Class E), new commercial unit incorporating rooftop extension and rooftop terrace (Class E/Sui Generis) & associated external works including

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			works to shopfronts, new accesses, servicing and refuse storage.
Planning Officer	Helen Spoors		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following amendments.</p> <p>The Society is broadly supportive of the aim to re-invigorate these sections of Monument Mall and to add beneficial use of the rooftop terrace. We are particularly pleased with the plans to enhance the Brunswick Place public realm as we feel this is an undervalued alternative access between Northumberland Street and the Grey's Monument piazza. This space is currently used to store unsightly refuse bins and is inherently unattractive.</p> <p>The scheme recognises the exemplary former Woolworth building façade, with its fluted 1930's design, however we feel this element of the scheme is overshadowed by a dominant ground floor entrance to Northumberland Street together with an equally imposing large glass box at roof level. The city's 1930's architecture often appears to be less valued than other historic developments despite being of high quality construction and of considerable visual interest. In this sense the N&N believes the design of the Northumberland Street façade would be much improved if more respect and emphasis is given to the established 1930's fluted elevation.</p> <p>It is evident that the design of the Blckett Street elevation and roof extension seeks to achieve a subtle outcome and the Society welcomes this empathetic approach.</p> <p>In conclusion the Society feels the overall scheme represents a good balance of useful space combined with reinvigorating retail elements that require a range of activities to deliver 'competitive socialising' as described within the application.</p>		
2023/1865/01/DET	Detailed Application	Plot 1, Building B, The Helix, Saint James Boulevard, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 5TF	Erection of 7 storey hotel (198 bedrooms) (Class C1) with ancillary café and bar at ground floor level function rooms at basement level (Class E/Sui Generis), associated access, servicing and landscaping.
Planning Officer	Helen Spoors		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) submits the following generic comments in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>The Society notes this site is located within the Helix development zone as defined in the Newcastle strategic local plan. The Helix has evolved a scale and architectural style of its own over time and we believe this hotel plan follows that evolving concept. Although this building is clearly much more bulky than the Georgian terraces on Westgate Road, nonetheless it should respect and have synergy with its surrounding environment rather than be driven entirely by the Helix vernacular. We do recognise that having a new hotel for a neighbour rather than a vacant plot might help lift the bottom end of Westgate Road.</p> <p>There are some issues relating to loss of daylight to the rear of some properties on Westgate Road but that would be the case with almost any development on this site. In our assessment the proposed building's non-descript, box like design is a missed opportunity to add visual attraction to this element of the Helix zone.</p>		

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2023/1450/01/DET	Detailed Application	Former Kelly's Yard Foundry Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne,	Erection of 4 storey mixed-use short-term let 15 bed aparthotel (Sui Generis) with commercial unit to ground floor (Class E) associated parking & infrastructure
Planning Officer	Jessica Annan		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme subject to the following comments.</p> <p>The Society notes the ongoing development interest in the Ouseburn Valley that has attracted numerous residential schemes. It is evident that there is delicate balance to be achieved in facilitating residential schemes that can coexist alongside the established cultural activities that are synonymous with this neighbourhood.</p> <p>Ouseburn was recognised as a World leading 'cool neighbourhood' (Time Out magazine - Oct 2021) and the key issue here is noise as the proposed development will inevitably need to deal with this significant 'agent of change' consideration. We would expect the scheme to achieve the highest levels of acoustic mitigation for residents to avoid potential conflict with established local live music events. In many cities areas like Ouseburn have been regenerated by artists and musicians only to be changed radically by subsequent excessive residential development as people attracted by an area's vibrancy subsequently impede that vibrancy through noise complaints. There have been high profile cases such as Manchester's Northern Quarter and Digbeth in Birmingham, the Society is concerned that Newcastle does not repeat these mistakes and would like to see a holistic approach to community building.</p> <p>We understand the scheme has been informed by previous design iterations, we recognise it is a functional, utilitarian building reflecting much of new development in Ouseburn. Notwithstanding this and subject to our comments above we believe this is a reasonable scheme.</p>		
2023/1818/01/DET	Detailed Application	Northumbria University, Wynne-Jones Centre, Ellison Pl, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 8ST	Erection of a 5 to 7 storey building, including partial re-use of the existing structure, to create a new facility for the purpose of education and research.
Planning Officer	Josh Murphy		
Comment	<p>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N) supports grant of approval for this scheme.</p> <p>The Society supports the repurposing the existing Wynne-Jones Building and applauds the designer's decision to reuse the structural framework for construction of the new Northeast Space Skills and Technology Centre (NESST).</p> <p>The massing of the new building is very similar to that it replaces which is now looking tired and very dated. The Society notes that Ellison Place doesn't really have any overall coherent architectural character so there isn't any real concern about context. The elevation facing the central motorway is a vast improvement over what's currently there, creating a stunning landmark that will help to link visually with the equally impressive Computer and Information Sciences Building opposite which the university opened in 2018.</p>		

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	<p>It is a strong and very imposing design fit for purpose and its tenants. It will be a great advert for the university and the city of Newcastle as millions will see it throughout the world on Great North Run day.</p>
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