

## Evidence of Delivery on Challenging Sites

1.1 It would be easy to assume that with its rich and complex historic environment, high number of brownfield sites, and lower land values in some areas of the city, the Council and developers struggle to get difficult sites delivered. This is simply not the case. The Council has produced this note to highlight that despite its challenges, Gloucester City has a strong track record of enabling development on difficult sites.

## Regeneration in Gloucester

2.1 Since the 1990s the Council's direction has been one of regeneration. During this time the council moved its offices to the derelict historic docklands to kick start a regeneration programme that has been hugely successful and is still on-going. From 2004 until 2012 the city was home to the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company (GHURC). The takes a strong regeneration lead in delivering the Regeneration Strategy (EXAM OTH003) and is currently actively involved in bringing forward the redevelopment of Kings Quarter, St Oswald's and the Fleece Hotel, amongst others. The Regeneration Strategy commits the Council to a 'positive planning environment', to 'encourage investors and developers to work together', to use public sector assets and influence to encourage developments'.

2.2 As an example of the Regeneration Strategy in action, Kings Quarter has a £107m investment to deliver the element known as The Forum, a mixed-use scheme including new homes, over 120,000 square feet of office space and a hotel. Kings Square is currently receiving a £5m redevelopment and the Council's development partner is set to redevelop the Kings Walk shopping centre. The site is located close to the new bus station and railway station. The railway station is also being improved with investment from the Gfirst LEP and the Government of £6m.

2.3 To demonstrate Gloucester's positive planning environment it is useful to look at refusal rates, which are extremely low. From April 2018 to March 2021 of the 84 major planning applications determined only 3 were refused. Planning Officers, Housing Strategy Officers, Conservation Officers, and the City Archaeologist are positive, proactive and solutions focussed. To ensure the delivery of sustainable development, they will negotiate with applicants to improve schemes from a design and heritage perspective, and work with them to secure public subsidy to mitigate risk and ensure affordable housing can be delivered on those sites where viability is more of a challenge, creating mixed and balanced communities.

2.4 The Council has a good working relationship with Historic England, Homes England, Registered Providers and the Gfirst LEP. The Council's Housing Growth Board regularly reviews key sites in the City and that action is taken to ensure delivery. Senior officers and Homes England attend these meetings, with separate meeting held between the Council and Homes England affordable housing lead.

## Examples of Delivering on Complex Sites

3.1 There follows several examples where sites have been delivered despite constraints. This is not an exhaustive list there are many more examples that could have been chosen.

**Brownfield City Centre Site**



**Description:** Demolition of existing structures. Erection of 95 residential units (with associated communal areas, storage and plant) and Use Class A1 unit, with associated landscaping

**Homes completed** 95

**Affordable Housing:** 95

**Including:**

5 homes built to category M4(3) standard Wheelchair Housing

14 dwelling of Specialist Housing – for eligible persons with mental health care needs).

**Planning:**

**Committee approval:** 31.05.16: Scheme consented subject to the necessary conditions, and the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

**Consented:** 29.09.16 (Legal Agreement signed and sealed )

**Scheme Completion:** March 2020 (initial completions in 2019)

**Planning Constraints**

1. Area of Principal Archaeological Interest.
2. The south and north western parts of the site are within Flood Zone 2.
3. River Tywver runs in a culvert through the site.
4. Heritage: Northgate Street and Worcester Street are historic streets, each with a distinct historic character.
5. Contaminated Land (site of former tannery – presence of asbestos)
6. Viability- The applicant submitted a viability report that confirmed that the scheme was deliverable through external and internal subsidy.

**Partners:**

Newland Homes Rooftop Housing Group Homes England

**Commentary:**

The development has made very effective use of previously undeveloped land with the density of the scheme being around 190 dwellings per hectare. Viability addressed through Local authority, and Homes England Partnership with Rooftop Housing Group providing subsidy to deliver the scheme.

**Brownfield site**



**Description:** Erection of 450 dwellings and construction of retirement village for elderly persons consisting of 161 apartments.

**Homes completed:** 450

**Affordable Housing:** 161 apartments 8 bungalows (extra care housing) and 56 general needs affordable homes

**Planning:**

**07.10.03** – principle of the development

established and granted outline planning permission by the Secretary of State.

**16.01.06** – erection of 450 dwellings reserved matters application was approved subject to conditions.

**21.09.07** – approval of reserved matters for the construction of a retirement village for elderly persons consisting of 161 apartments and 8 bungalows.



**Planning Constraints**

1. An oil pipeline runs across the western part of the site. Site preparation and design of the internal road network was required to avoid the pipeline.
2. The site was previously a landfill and has been raised. Chemicals from the previous landfill site were a constraint.
3. Right of access to neighbouring fields had to be accommodated into the design.
4. The River Twyver runs along the northern site boundary.
5. An existing pumping station is located on site creating a 15m cordon sanitaire.

**Partners**

Westbury Homes

Rooftop

Hammerson

**Commentary:**

The development has made very effective use of previous industrial land providing 74 dwellings per hectare. The whole regeneration of this part of Gloucester has created a mixed-used site that offers a range of housing options, including one-bedroom flats and four-bedroom houses.

**Blackfriars Car Park**

Ref: 16/01525/FUL, 18/00156/FUL

**Brownfield city centre site**

**Description:** Re-development of the site for the construction of Phase 1 student's residences accommodation of 295 bedrooms, and Phase 2 comprising 186 bedrooms.

**Homes completed:** 481

Student Flats

**Affordable Housing:** 0

**Planning:** Phase 1 for 295 bedrooms consented 10.02.17. Phase 2 for 186 bedrooms consented 08.11.18

**Scheme Completion:** Phase 1 completed in 2019, Phase 2 estimated to complete by 2024.



**Planning Constraints**

1. The site sits within the Barbican conservation area and is bounded by the City Centre conservation area and the Docks conservation area.
2. The site is adjacent to the listed Gloucester Prison and Shire Hall.
3. Two scheduled monuments partially buried beneath the site.
4. Existing rights of access site were limited.
5. Significant level changes (circa 5m) adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.

**Partners**

University of Gloucestershire

Cityheart Living

Gloucestershire County Council

**Commentary:**

The Blackfriars student accommodation development was previously operating as a car park owned by Gloucestershire County Council.

The development of the site has conserved and enhanced the qualities of the conservation area, and when completed will facilitate a crucial link from the City Centre to the Docks.

The absence of affordable housing provision is off set by the provision of student accommodation that meets the needs of the University of Gloucestershire.



**Monk Meadow Quay**

**Ref: 14/00709/FUL, 18/00680/REM**

**Brownfield city centre site**



**Description:** Mixed use regeneration, comprising re-use of buildings and new build to accommodate residential, employment, retail and leisure uses and an education centre for Gloscat and enhancement works to and Llanthony Priory together with public transport improvements.

- Homes consented:** 409
- Affordable Housing:** 5 (1.2%) (S106 Developer contribution)  
342 (Grant supported Affordable Housing- Guinness Partnership and Heylo)
- Completions:** 190 as of end March 2021 (99 Affordable Homes) (219 outstanding)
- Planning:**
- Committee approval:** 13.01.15 (14/00709/FUL) Scheme consented subject to the necessary conditions, & the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.
- Consented:** 29.09.16 (Legal Agreement signed and sealed )
- Variation of Conditions:** 18/00685/FUL Conditions 5 & 6 to alter plans, documents & masterplan) and 73 (to reduce affordable housing provision) of permission ref. 14/00709/FUL.
- Reserved matters:** 18/00680/REM approval for 409 no. residential units pursuant to outline permission ref. 14/00709/FUL (as varied) for Monk Meadow phase (phase G)
- Scheme Completion:** Estimated completion 2023/2024

**Planning Constraints:**

1. Flooding risk
2. Contamination requiring the site to be raised.
3. Canal tow path mitigation
4. Land remediation (c. £2million) including a range of

**Commentary:**

The development has made very effective use of previously developed land with the density of the scheme being around 87 dwellings per hectare. Crest Nicholson's viability appraisal led to a reduced Affordable Housing Contribution.

Subsequently Homes England has provided subsidy to deliver Affordable Homes through the Guinness partnership. The Local Economic Partnership provided funding to assist with the decontamination of the site.

**Former Gardner Denver (339 Barton Street)**

**Ref: 11/01410/FUL**

**Brownfield – suburban - former industrial /employment site**



**Description:** Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 83 dwellings with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space.

**Homes completed:** 83

**Affordable Housing:** 27 (S106 Developer Contribution)  
Including one home built to Habinteg Wheelchair Standard.

**Planning:**

**March 2011** A Concept Statement for the Gardner Denver site was produced by the Council providing guidance on the redevelopment of the site.

**Committee approval:** 03.04.12: Scheme consented the completion of a Section 106 legal Agreement

**Consented:** 01.10.12 (Legal Agreement signed and sealed).

**Scheme Completion:** Completed 2013/14 (Affordable Housing Quarter 3)

**Planning Constraints:**

1. Brownfield industrial site, contaminated land
2. Air Quality (site sitting between 2 Air Quality Management Zones)

**Partners:** Barratt Greensquare Housing Group

**Commentary:**

The development has made effective use of previously undeveloped land with the density of the scheme being 42 dwellings per hectare. Viability was reviewed and contribution of 33% affordable housing was sought below the then 40% requirement. No public subsidy was used although discussion regarding achieving additional affordable housing were conducted between the Council Greensquare and Barratt.

The development provided a total of 0.17 hectares of dedicated on-site open including the provision of an equipped area of play. A financial contribution of £16,268 towards local library services and a financial contribution of £173,732 towards improvements to the public open spaces, play areas and local attractions within the Barton and Tredworth Ward were agreed.

**Brownfield Site**



**Description:** Demolition of existing buildings and clearance of site, and erection of 63 affordable homes.

**Homes consented:** 63 (100% affordable)

**Planning:**

**Committee approval:** 04.10.16 (16/00815/FUL) Scheme consented subject to the necessary conditions, & the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

**Consented:** 10.02.17 (Legal Agreement signed and sealed )

**Scheme Completion:** 2019

**Planning Constraints:**

1. The site contains a part culverted stream
2. Part of the site is in a flood zone
3. Site's proximity to a row of listed buildings
4. Contamination from previous use as a factory

**Partners:** Rooftop Housing Group Markey Construction Homes England (HCA)

**Commentary:**

The development has provided a range of housing types in an area of Gloucester where demand for family sized housing was relatively high.

The development has made very effective use of previously derelict land. Significant public funding has made the development possible, the total scheme cost were in the region of £4,000,000 with Homes England Grant of £682,750 being used.

**Brownfield Site**



**Description:** Site for residential development and associated infrastructure works, up to 142 dwellings

**Homes consented:** 142

**Affordable Homes:** 10

**Planning:**

**Committee approval:** 03.02.09 (08/01171/OUT) Scheme consented subject to the necessary conditions, & the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement.

**Consented:** 14.03.11 (Legal Agreement signed and sealed )

**Scheme Completion:** 2013

**Planning Constraints:**

1. Flood risk
2. Contamination due to previous use of site

**Partners:** Linden Homes Cottsway

**Commentary:**

The development has made effective use of former industrial land in Gloucester city providing 142 homes with a density of 41 dwellings per hectare.

The site is located on the west side of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and has enhanced the towpath and National Cycle Network Route. 15% of all homes across the site were Lifetime Homes.



**Tanners Hall, 37-39 Worcester Street**

**Ref: 18/01395/FUL**

**Brownfield – inner city site – Grade II listed ruin of a 13th century town house**



**Before**



**After**

**Description:** Demolition of a single storey building. Erection of a new four-storey building incorporating a no. one-bedroom apartments and 5 no. two-bedroom apartments.

**Homes completed**      **24**

Affordable Housing:      24 Homes England funded units, no S106 developer contribution

#### **Planning Constraints**

1. Area of Principal Archaeological Interest.
2. Heritage: the ruin of a Grade II listed building and located in a Conservation Area.
3. Contaminated Land – historic on-site presence of tanning pits and more recent use as a garage.
4. Viability- The applicant submitted a viability report that confirmed the scheme could not deliver affordable housing through S106 contributions.

#### **Planning Process:**

In 2011 a planning application was approved to redevelop Tanners Hall, but no progress was made, and the planning application lapsed. In 2018 planning permission and listed building consent was granted. On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019 planning permission was granted and the development completed in January 2021.

**Partners:** Cape Homes and Gloucester City Homes

#### **Commentary:**

The development has made effective use of derelict brownfield land in Gloucester city providing 24 apartments on approximately 0.22 acres. The viability appraisal produced no affordable housing contribution, but Homes England funding and the partnership between Cape Homes and Gloucester City Homes enabled all 24 apartments to be developed as affordable rented homes.

The completed development has successfully incorporated the Grade II listed Tanners Hall, preserving the historic integrity of the site. Members of the general public are now able to visit the former hall and learn about its history.

**Albion House**

**Ref: 15/00672/COU**



**Description:** Demolition and alterations to Listed Building and adjoining structures to provide 9 apartments within Albion House.

**Homes completed:** 9

**Affordable Housing:** No affordable homes

**Planning Constraints**

1. Heritage – Albion House itself is Grade II listed and considered a focal building within the Conservation Area.
2. State of disrepair – Albion House was vacant for 15 years and was in a poor state of repair.
3. Viability – Complexities and costs associated with the conversion and archaeological mitigation works resulted in no affordable housing contribution.

**Planning Process:**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015 planning permission was granted and the development completed in 2018.

**Partners:** Cape Homes

**Commentary:**

Built in 1831 as the Albion Hotel. The building received Townscape Heritage Initiative funding for conversion into 9 apartments. The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) in Southgate Street, Gloucester, ran from 2013 through to 2020. It was a £1.2 million-pound heritage led regeneration scheme, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to 75% of the total cost and match funded by Gloucester City Council.

Original features including panelling, cornicing and original sash windows were retained and repaired in the development. The scheme proved more financially successful than first thought.

The end valuation was higher than anticipated and a small reclaim of grant was required. In 2018 'Believe in Gloucester' awards, Albion House won the Regeneration Award. In total the scheme cost £633,163 and £93,846 of grant funding was provided, restoring 550m<sup>2</sup> of floor space.