

Brownfield developments in Exeter

Schedule

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Exeter City Council

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Exeter is a city that has long embraced sustainable urban growth, and at the heart of this vision lies the effective use of brownfield land. Policy S1: Spatial Strategy in the emerging Exeter Plan sets out a strategic commitment to delivering new homes, jobs, and community infrastructure primarily within the existing built-up area. Central to this approach is the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land, supporting the city's ambition of a compact urban form. The development allocations included in the Exeter Plan have been guided by the spatial strategy.
- 1.2. The full text of Policy S1: Spatial Strategy from the Exeter Plan is provided below for reference:

S1: Spatial strategy (Strategic policy)

The spatial strategy will deliver on the Exeter Vision 2040 and the city's ambitions for net zero, climate change adaptation and resilience, high quality development, health and wellbeing, the vitality of the city centre, the natural environment, heritage and cultural diversity. The City Council will work with partner authorities and other stakeholders to deliver these ambitions.

The spatial strategy for delivering development in Exeter has 15 elements:

1. Providing good quality homes of a variety of types in the city to meet Exeter's various needs;
2. Working with neighbouring Councils to ensure that the employment needs of the wider functional economic area are met;
3. Enabling traditional and new forms of employment provision in the city, developing the transformational sectors and supporting improvements to education and skills to ensure employment needs are met;
4. Focusing the majority of development on strategic brownfield sites, particularly in locations close to the city centre to support its ongoing vitality and access to public transport hubs;
5. Enabling the development of smaller brownfield sites as they become available;
6. Considering modest greenfield development as a supplement to the overall focus on brownfield sites;
7. Providing high quality, mixed use development at optimal densities appropriate to the characteristics, heritage and function of the local area to minimise the need to travel and maximise walking, cycling and public transport;
8. Locating development near enough to key services and facilities to allow residents to meet most of their daily needs easily on foot or inclusive equivalent;
9. Protecting the landscape value of the sensitive hills which provide the vital setting of the city;
10. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity throughout the city and improving the ecological value of the River Exe, its estuary and wildlife networks;
11. Conserving, enhancing and improving access to, and interpretation of, Exeter's outstanding historic environment;
12. Steering development to avoid areas of higher flood risk where possible and managing residual flood risk as appropriate;
13. Enabling development in locations which link effectively to the Valley Parks as vital green infrastructure whilst ensuring their protection

and enhancement;

14. Reflecting local identities, providing for diverse neighbourhoods and delivering high quality public realm and community spaces to grow the city's cultural offer and drive regeneration; and
15. Delivering the range of infrastructure and services needed in a timely manner to support high quality development and our communities.

- 1.3. The strategy focuses on delivering good quality homes, enabling employment opportunities, and concentrating development on brownfield sites while considering modest greenfield development. It emphasises the need to reduce the need to travel, promote healthy lifestyles, support net zero ambitions, improve the vitality of the city centre and provide/retain greenspaces.
- 1.4. This report has been prepared to demonstrate that brownfield development is not only a policy ambition, but a form of development which has come forward in Exeter previously and continues to be deliverable. It provides clear evidence that a wide range of brownfield sites varying in location, scale, and type have already been successfully regenerated to deliver housing, student accommodation, community uses, and mixed-use developments. These developments span multiple years and reflect Exeter's consistent commitment to urban regeneration
- 1.5. By presenting a structured summary of completed, under-construction, and permitted brownfield developments, this report reinforces the deliverability of Exeter's development strategy which includes a series of brownfield development sites of different scales. It also highlights the city's ability to deliver innovative and sustainable regeneration projects, providing confidence in the future implementation of the Exeter Plan.

2.0 Brownfield Development in Exeter: Examples

2.1 The following tables summarise key completed, under-construction, and permitted brownfield developments in Exeter. These serve as strong evidence that the policy direction set out in Policy S1 is grounded in a proven track record.

Site name	Status	Application reference	Permitted date	Number of units	Development description
Former Exwick Middle School	Complete	17/1788/OUT and 19/1712/RES	07/01/2019	43 dwellings	Redevelopment of former Exwick Middle School with 43 dwellings. Dwellings include houses of various types including terraced, semi-detached and detached.
Former Foxhayes Infant School, Gloucester Road (Hayward Heights - 31 affordable homes)	Complete	19/1713/RES and 17/1789/OUT	07/01/2019	31 dwellings	The construction of 31 dwellings with associated gardens, parking and landscaping with vehicular access from Gloucester Road.
30-34 Anthony Road	Complete	18/0884/ECC	11/09/2018	3 dwellings	(ECC housing development) - Demolition of 13 no. garages and construction of three 3 bed terraced houses and associated parking and access.
Silverberry Close (ECC housing development)	Complete	13/2930/FUL	05/09/2013	8 dwellings	Deconstruction of existing, derelict methodist church and erection of two new residential terraces containing a total of eight 3-bedroom affordable houses plus car parking and access.
Chester Long Court, Vaughan Road, Hill Lane	Complete	15/0792/FUL	15/07/2015	26 dwellings	Demolition of two storey car park, relocation of western power substation, relocation of O2 substation and erection of new residential development containing 26 flats including

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					new adjacent car parking facilities and landscaped areas. Opened in late 2018, Chester Long Court is an ECC housing development offering 26 high-quality, affordable homes built to Passivhaus standards. The development emphasizes energy efficiency, featuring triple-glazed windows and impenetrable insulation, resulting in reduced energy bills for residents.
Former County Ground Rugby Stadium, Chieftain Way	Complete	03/1611/OUT and 07/1761/RES	23/08/2004 02/11/2007	100 dwellings	Residential redevelopment including use of improved/new junctions to Church Road and Ferndale Road (all other matters reserved for future consideration). Redevelopment to provide 100 dwellings, parking, access to highway and associated works (approval sought of reserved matters on Ref. No. 03/1611/01 granted 23 August 2004) for siting, design, means of access, landscaping and external appearance.
Lazy Landlord Inn, Bonhay Road	Complete	01/1518/FUL	28/06/2002	27 dwellings	Redevelopment to provide 5 terraced houses and 22 self-contained flats, car parking, access to highway and associated works.
Artillery Court - Barrack Road	Complete	99/1022/FUL	12/12/2000	19 dwellings	Redevelopment of site to provide 8 three storey terraced dwellings, 11 flats on 2/3/4 floors, temporary gatehouse, 10 garages, 20 car parking spaces, pedestrian and vehicular accesses to highway and associated works
Isca Road/Painters Court - Water Lane	Complete	99/0266/FUL	07/02/2000	32 dwellings	Redevelopment of site to provide 19 flats and 13 houses in three and two-storey blocks, parking for 36 cars, vehicular and pedestrian access to highway, landscaping and associated works

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Former Paediatric Hospital, Wonford Road/Fleming Way	Complete	99/0442/OUT and 00/1111/RES	01/06/1999 01/08/2000	114 dwellings	Redevelopment of site for residential use to include accesses to highway (outline) Residential development to provide 114 detached, semidetached and terraced houses, conversion of existing buildings to 15 dwellings and refurbishment of lodge (total 130 units), 191 car parking spaces and associated works (reserved matters for siting).
St Leonard's Quarter, Topsham Road (former deaf academy)	Under construction	17/1640/FUL	28/06/2018	146 dwellings	Redevelopment of the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education (eRADE) site to provide 146 new homes (C3), a care home and assisted living units (both C2), accommodation for a pre-school, access related works, provision of landscaping and open space and other associated works.
Former St Lukes High School, Ringswell Avenue	Complete	19/1406/FUL	02/09/2020	60 dwellings	Construction of 60 dwellings (use class C3), means of access, public open space and associated infrastructure.
Richmond Court - Off Queen Street	Complete	00/1111/RES	15/11/2000	15 dwellings	Residential development to provide 114 detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, conversion of existing buildings to 15 dwellings and refurbishment of lodge (total 130 units), 191 car parking spaces and associated works (reserved matters for siting, de
Former Exwick Middle School, Gibbs Meadow	Complete	17/1788/OUT and 19/1712/RES	03/06/2020	43 dwellings	The construction of 43 dwellings with associated gardens, parking and landscaping with vehicular access from Gloucester Road via Higher Exwick Hill.
78-86	Complete	18/0886/ECC	29/11/2013	10 dwellings	Demolition of 2 no. residential buildings

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Bovemoors Lane					containing 4 no. flats and 30 no. garages, and redevelopment of site comprising construction of 10 no. 3 bed 4-person terraced houses and associated access and parking.
Old Coal Yard, Exmouth Junction (Phase 2), Mount Pleasant Road	Under construction	22/0817/RES	21/10/2022	165 dwellings	Redevelopment of the site to provide 165 homes, including a mix of apartments and terraced houses.

3.0 Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and Co-Living

- 3.1 Exeter's approach to managing student growth is guided by Policy H10 of the Exeter Plan, which supports well-designed, purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) in sustainable locations to help reduce pressure of growth in houses of multiple occupation. PBSA developments contribute positively to housing delivery focusing student needs into dedicated developments in the city centre, on the university campuses and with good access to public transport.
- 3.2 This section highlights a selection of recently completed or under-construction PBSA schemes that have made efficient use of constrained, central urban sites. These developments demonstrate how student accommodation can support the aims of Policy S1, delivering homes while reinforcing compact, low-carbon growth.
- 3.3 A small number of co-living schemes are also included, reflecting the diversification of shared living formats in the city.

Site name	Status	Application reference	Permitted date	Number of units	Development description
The Gorge, Gladstone Road (co-living units)	Complete	19/1417/FUL	20/05/2021	133 studio apartments	Redevelopment of the former ambulance station site to provide a purpose-built co-living development of 133 studio apartments plus communal space, together with associated accesses/egresses, landscaping, and other external works.
The Depot, Belgrave Road (PBSA)	Complete	16/0405/FUL	27/01/2017	578 bedrooms	Demolition of existing buildings. Redevelopment to provide student accommodation (Sui Generis), ancillary facilities, and ground floor uses in classes A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurants and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments), D1 (non-residential institutions) and D2 (assembly and leisure), with cycle parking provision and public realm improvements

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The Printworks, Summerland Street/Verney Street/Western Way (PBSA)	Complete	11/0140/FUL	31/08/2011	492 bedrooms	Redevelopment to provide student accommodation, access to highway, central open space and associated works
The Kingfisher, Verney Street (PBSA)	Complete	11/0959/FUL	29/10/2012	179 bedrooms	Redevelopment to provide student accommodation of 179 rooms, concierge studio, access to highway and associated works
Verney Street Studios, Verney Street	Complete	16/0894/FUL	21/10/2015	29 studios	Change of use from mixed use to sui generis (student studios). Partial demolition, alterations, and extensions with associated works.
Harlequins shopping centre (co-living)	Permitted	21/1104/FUL	24/01/2022	383 bedspaces (276 studios and 107 cluster flats)	Demolition of the existing Harlequins Shopping Centre and pedestrian bridge, with the construction of two co-living accommodation blocks. The development includes the change of use of upper floors of 21-22 Queen Street to co-living (Sui Generis), along with associated works such as parking, landscaping, amenity areas, public realm improvements, a new pedestrian bridge, and provision of a heritage interpretation kiosk.
One McLaren, Summerland Street (co-living)	Permitted	23/0490/FUL	14/04/2023	145 bedspaces	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of a 145 bed-space co-living development (up to 6 storeys in height) with associated works.

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Exeland House, Tudor Street (co-living)	Permitted	22/1548/FUL	04/11/2022	34 units	Renovation, conversion, and change of use of Exeland House to form a co-living scheme comprising thirty-four units, including communal facilities and a co-working office space, front extension with 4 floors, link building, public plaza on the existing car park, and renovation of existing bridge link to New Bridge Street.
Haven Banks Retail Park, (co-living and build to rent)	Resolution to grant subject to s106	22/1145/FUL	Pending	246 Build to Rent homes and 188 co-living homes	Comprehensive redevelopment to deliver a new, mixed use neighbourhood, comprising demolition of existing buildings and construction of four residential-led mixed-use buildings of 2 to 6 storeys, including retail, café/restaurant and flexible commercial units (Class E), residential (Class C3) and co-living (Sui Generis) accommodation, pedestrian square and public realm, amenity areas, landscaping, access, parking, servicing and associated works.
Water Lane South (mixed use development including up to 976 homes and 320 co-living units)	Resolution to grant subject to s107	23/1007/OUT	Pending	1,140 homes	Demolition of existing buildings and structures and residential-led mixed use development providing new dwellings, residential and work space, retail, café/restaurant, community and cultural/leisure/education/hotel uses and associated infrastructure, including vehicular access, servicing, mobility hub, energy plant; alteration of ground levels; drainage and public open space; landscaping and public realm works; including pedestrian and cycle routes, with all matters reserved for future considerations, with the exception of access

4. Apartments

4.1 These apartment developments demonstrate historic delivery of flats on brownfield sites as part of the housing mix.

Site name	Status	Application reference	Permitted date	Number of units	Development description
Princesshay	Complete	02/0300/FUL	09/05/2003	Mixed-use development	Redevelopment to provide buildings for mixed uses: retail - including department store (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2), food and drink (Class A3), business (Class B1); 112 residential units; Tourist Information Office; Heritage Centre and Shopmobility; public toilets and multi-storey car park (286 spaces); to include demolition, refurbishment, alterations and extensions, public spaces, highway works, landscaping and excavations to accommodate basement servicing and associated works.
Apartments at former garage on Goldsmith Street/Ladysmith Lane	Complete	13/3342/FUL	21/05/2013	6 dwellings	Detached three storey building comprising six flats, access, parking and associated works
Gilbert House, Red Lion Lane/Verney Street	Complete	04/2005/FUL	18/11/2004	67 dwellings	Redevelopment to provide 3/4 storey building comprising 67 flats, pedestrian access to highway and associated works
Shaulls Court, Verney Street/Red Lion Lane (flats)	Complete	03/0851/FUL	14/05/2003	32 dwellings	Redevelopment to provide 32 flats in 3/4 storey buildings, parking and associated works

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Acland House, Verney Street (flats)	Complete	04/2005/FUL	20/12/2006	67 dwellings	Redevelopment to provide 3/4 storey building comprising 67 flats, pedestrian access to highway and associated works
Vue cinema, car park and residential building, Belgrave Road.	Complete	02/0340/FUL	20/03/2002	24 dwellings	Residential - Redevelopment including demolition of existing buildings to provide buildings (22,435 sq.m.) for postal sorting office (Class B8) associated offices and yard, 24 residential units, retail (Class A1), food and drink (Class A3), leisure and assembly
Cornerstone House, Western Way/Coombe Street	Complete	05/0540/FUL	17/01/2006	12 dwellings	Redevelopment to provide three storey building to include retail unit (Class A1) on ground floor and 12 self contained flats on ground, first and second floor, access to highway, parking and associated works.
17-19 Water Lane Exeter EX2 8BY	Complete	15/0459/FUL	14/09/2015	9 dwellings	Proposed demolition of three properties to construct a new apartment building consisting of nine apartments with associated access, parking and amenity space.
Buckerell Lodge, Topsham Road	Under construction	22/0770/FUL	30/05/2023	62 retirement apartments	Construction of 62 Retirement Apartments (Category II Type Sheltered Housing) with communal facilities and car parking.
The Old Coal Yard, Exmouth Junction (phase 3), Mount Pleasant Road	Under construction	21/1495/FUL	24/09/2021	92 apartments	Construction of a 4 and 5 storey building of 92 apartments with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure works.
Paternoster House, Fore Street	Complete	24/1244/VOC	28/03/2025	28 dwellings	Creation of 28 apartments (including 4 existing apartments) at first floor to roof levels, extensions and installation of solar

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					panels and terrace at fifth floor (main roof) level, installation of air source heat pumps at ground floor level, and part change of use from retail to residential at basement and ground floor levels for installation of bike store, bin store, staircase and entrance lobby. (Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 23/0326/FUL to allow additional loft space for Flat 23 with a flat roof replacing the pitched roof, changes to the internal courtyard for Apartment 27, and revisions to the floor layouts and elevations.)
Concord House, South street/Combe Street	Pending consideration	24/1135/FUL	Pending	7 dwellings	Creation of 7 new dwellings on the lower car park (Coombe Street) and changes to the lower ground floor main entrance at Concord House, including the bin store, cycle storage, and main entrance reception.
Northcott Warehouse, Haven Road	Complete	01/0665/FUL	25/01/2002	16 dwellings	Redevelopment of site to provide 16 flats on three floors and retail (Class A1) on ground floor, parking spaces, vehicular and pedestrian accesses to highway and associated works.

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 This report provides robust evidence that Exeter has a well-established and proven track record of delivering housing and mixed-use development on brownfield land. From small infill schemes to large-scale regeneration projects, the city has consistently demonstrated its capacity to reuse underutilised and previously developed land to create vibrant, sustainable communities.
- 4.2 Key findings from the report include:
- Broad Spectrum of development types: Exeter has delivered a diverse mix of housing, including affordable homes, apartments, student accommodation, and co-living developments. This mix demonstrates that brownfield sites can meet a wide range of housing needs while maintaining design quality and community integration.
 - Evidence of ongoing and future delivery: Various schemes are currently under construction or have been recently permitted, illustrating that brownfield development is expanding part of the city's development strategy.
 - Alignment with Policy S1: These developments strongly support Policy S1 of the Exeter Plan by demonstrating that housing, infrastructure, and community needs can be provided on brownfield land. They affirm that the city's approach is deliverable.
- 4.3 The city's success in regenerating brownfield land lays a strong foundation for future development. The examples highlighted in this report provide confidence that Exeter can continue to meet its housing requirements with brownfield land providing a key part of the sites mix. By continuing to pursue brownfield opportunities, the City Council will be well-positioned to provide for housing needs, achieve net-zero development ambitions, support inclusive growth, and deliver resilient, high-quality neighbourhoods.