

investing

in Nottinghamshire
Programme

Investment at Top Wighay



Utilising our property and land assets
to transform the way we work whilst driving
economic regeneration in our local communities



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Background

Nottinghamshire County Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC), Managing Independence Service (MIS), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and partners are currently located across two large leased buildings in Sherwood Business Park, Mercury House and The Piazza (Annesley, NG15 0DR). These services were designed to be and initially co-located in Mercury House, but outgrew Mercury House in 2016, making it necessary to relocate the MASH and MIS to The Piazza in 2016.

However, the benefits in the co-location of these services, in addition to the Business Services Centre (BSC) currently located at Trent Bridge House, have long been recognised, and there is an aspiration to consolidate these services into a single office base.

Status: Mercury House and The Piazza are occupied on leases expiring February 2026, although there are break clauses allowing termination in February 2021.

Services:

Teams	Full-time equivalents (FTEs)
Chief Executive's	249.677
Partners	16
Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)	60.5
Children and Families Service (CFS)	77.5
TOTAL	403.677

Stakeholder engagement: Key stakeholders from services have been part of ongoing feasibility work, including regular stakeholder engagement meetings and determination of service requirements.

Service requirements:

- **Customer Service Centre:** large screen-based visual aids; space for ad-hoc team briefings and meetings; training facility with ICT facilities; innovation space
- **Schools and Families Support Services:** ground floor location to enable access by service users; storage for equipment and materials
- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub:** open-plan office design to enable collaboration; private meeting room; access to data from external networks (to enable partner working) and ICT infrastructure; local catering facilities; large screen-based visual aids
- **Adult Access Service:** dedicated clinic assessment space; ground floor location near building entrance; storage for equipment
- **Integrated Community Equipment Loan Service:** storage for working documents; storage for equipment
- **Business Service Centre:** discrete and secure area to manage Disclosure & Barring activities and the BACS bureau; large screen-based visual aids; safe; general storage (including at least one fire-proof storage cupboard); working area for small equipment (such as cheque scanners and microfiche).

Space Utilisation Study

A Space Utilisation Study (SUS) was undertaken at Mercury House and The Piazza over ten working days between 25 November and 6 December 2019, a time when staff annual leave is known to be low.

The SUS has provided:

- a measure of how efficiently office accommodation space is being utilised by occupying services;
- identification of low utilisation times and opportunities for office space to be used more effectively;
- information on use and occupancy levels of desks, meeting rooms and alternative workspaces.

Mercury House		The Piazza
143	Desks	154
134 (103 FTE)	Staff	124 (105 FTE) + 18 staff from partner agencies
61% Tuesday AM 88 occupied / 55 vacant	Highest point of desk usage	75% Wednesday PM 115 occupied / 39 vacant
47% average 67 occupied / 75 unoccupied (8.10am and 5.10pm discounted due to low usage)	Average desk usage	64% average 99 occupied / 55 unoccupied (8.10am and 5.10pm discounted due to low usage)
6 meeting rooms /9 alternative settings 67% highest level of usage on Wednesday AM 14% average meeting room usage	Meeting rooms and alternative spaces	5 meeting rooms /3 alternative settings 80% highest level of usage on Tuesday AM 34% average meeting room usage

Recommendations

These recommendations have informed the strategic brief for the new-build office on the **Top Wighay** site:

- Corporate flexible working desk ratios should be applied to all services, excluding partners;
- Clear desk policies should apply across all teams;
- As the requirement for large meeting rooms was infrequent (aside from CSC training) and the majority of meetings were between 2-6 people, consideration should be given to provision of more flexible meeting spaces;
- Support should be offered to services to review business processes and available technology that could help to further support flexible working.

Proposal

Proposal: The Council Plan (2017 – 2021) and Place Strategy (2019 – 2021) set out as a key activity to 'begin the development of Top Wighay, including new County Council offices as anchor tenant of the employment space alongside new housing infrastructure'. Additionally, Policy Committee on 15 January 2020 approved the submission of an application for outline planning permission for a mixed-use development at the Top Wighay site, including 805 residential units, a local retail centre, a primary school and land for employment uses.

It is therefore proposed to vacate Mercury House and The Piazza and construct new purpose-built office accommodation at the Top Wighay site as a single consolidated office base for services currently based at Sherwood Business Park, alongside other Council services who will benefit from co-location. The land is currently leased as farmland but is wholly owned by Nottinghamshire County Council and is located under three miles from the majority of the services' existing accommodation at Sherwood Business Park.

This has been deemed the optimal solution by stakeholders and board. Arc Partnership have been engaged on the project and a client brief has been produced, and NCC have secured £5.8 million grant funding from Homes England for infrastructure to facilitate housing and employment opportunities on the site. Following the approvals granted by Policy Committee (March 2019) detailed designs and costing for the new build are being concluded with a fully designed scheme being available for further consideration by summer 2020.



**Estimated
investment
at Top Wighay
£14,700,000**



Mercury House

Benefits to be achieved (non-financial):

- **Deliver better public services with improved outcomes by enabling joined up access to services:** Co-locating staff in a central hub will enable close contact between internal teams with adjacencies (such as the Business Services Centre and Customer Services Centre, which are currently located in West Bridgford and Annesley respectively) and continued partnership working with external agencies, including police and probation services.
- **To increase productivity of our workforce through improved ways of working and a modern office environment:** The new build at the Top Wighay site would provide a modern working environment, improving staff morale and productivity, and can be designed to Smarter Working principles (e.g. as a flexible shared workspace offering a choice of work environments, supported by excellent ICT).
- **Reduce energy usage and incorporate renewable energy sources into new builds at Top Wighay and County Hall:** The new build would be designed to higher environmental standards, in accordance with the Nottinghamshire County Council Corporate Environment Strategy & Policy (currently under development), and set a new benchmark for NCC properties in terms of environmental sustainability.



Land at Top Wighay

WELCOME

Nottinghamshire County Council is proposing to create a real sense of community by integrating 805 new homes, together with employment land, a new primary school, and areas of communal open space, landscaping and children's play.

BACKGROUND

Land has been identified at Top Wighay as a strategic location for growth, and as such the land is allocated for residential and employment development in the Local Plan adopted by Gedling Borough Council in September 2014.

The Part 1 Local Plan sets out the long term vision and objectives for the Greater Nottingham area, including Gedling Borough, for the period up to 2028.



ABOUT OUR PROPOSALS

Our proposals have evolved through initial survey and assessment work undertaken to understand the site and the surrounding area, as well as through discussions with officers at Gedling Borough Council and community engagement.

The masterplan shows how the site could be developed and proposes the following:

- 805 new homes, including affordable homes;
- Around 6.4ha of land for employment purposes;
- A new primary school;
- A local centre;
- New areas of multi-purpose green space;
- An extensive landscaping scheme.

NEXT STEPS

An application for Outline Planning Permission will be submitted to Gedling Borough Council.

When the application has been validated all the technical details of the application will be available on the Gedling Borough Council website.

Programme Principles

TW

	Maximise strategic impact	
	Productivity and effectiveness	
	Operational need	
	Local communities	
	Embeds Smarter Working principles	
	Value for money	
	Council asset	
	Less overall travel (staff and service users)	
	Efficient facilities management	
	Environmental impact	



Principle Met



Principle Not Met



No Change

