



**Cumberland
Council**

Carlisle's Nisi Prius (Eastern) Citadel

Carlisle City Centre

**Prime City Centre Developer/
Operator Opportunity**



cumberland.gov.uk

Introduction

Cumberland Council is seeking proposals to bring forward the reuse of the Nisi Prius, a Grade I listed building in the very heart of Carlisle City Centre.

The Nisi Prius building is currently vacant but provides a rare and unique regeneration opportunity in the heart of the city centre of Carlisle City Centre. The building is situated in a vibrant area that is undergoing extensive regeneration and transformation. Directly opposite over £78m in being invested to redevelop the former Woolworths Building to create a new city centre campus and HQ for the University of Cumbria.

The Nisi Prius building is owned by Cumberland Council who are focussed on securing a new purpose and use for this iconic building. Early feasibility work has been undertaken, and the Council is now progressing an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to secure the funding required to facilitate the repurposing of the building.

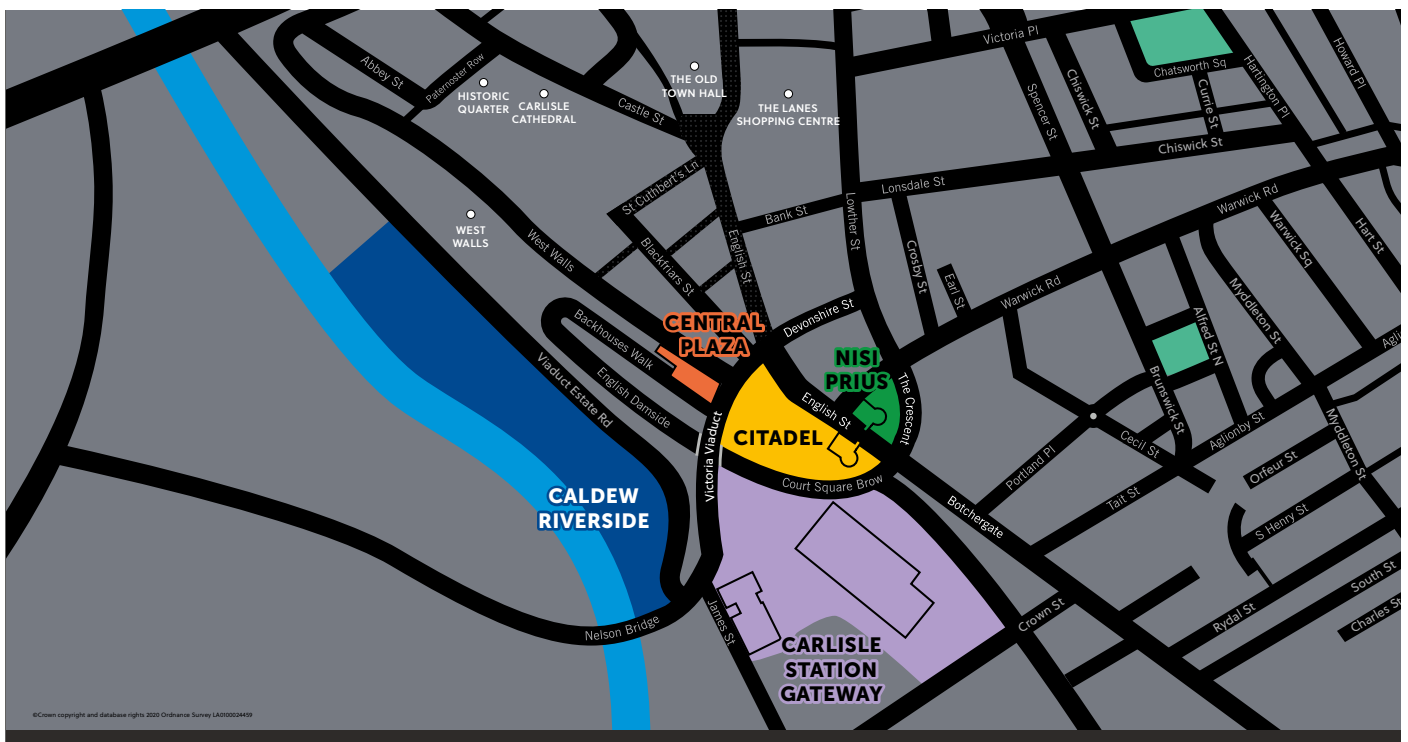
The Council is now seeking a developer / operator to work with on the development of this scheme; to develop the bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and secure a viable and sustainable long-term use for the building. It is anticipated that the appropriate developer and / or operator would be selected by the Council following consideration of any proposals / expressions of interest received.

The Council is willing to consider all proposals for the redevelopment and reuse of the building, subject to planning and listed building consent. The process will be split into 2 stages with the first stage inviting expressions of interest and the second stage inviting more formal proposals. Detail is provided later on within the brochure.



Development Opportunity Summary

- Prime city centre opportunity site with excellent potential.
- Immediate proximity to University of Cumbria's new £78m Campus & £40m Citadel Railway Station Redevelopment.
- Additional city centre developments underway including new 104 bedroom Premier Inn hotel.
- Considered suitable for a range of cultural, commercial or community uses subject to listed building consent and planning.
- Proposals are sought to bring forward repurposing of the site (Subject to Contract).



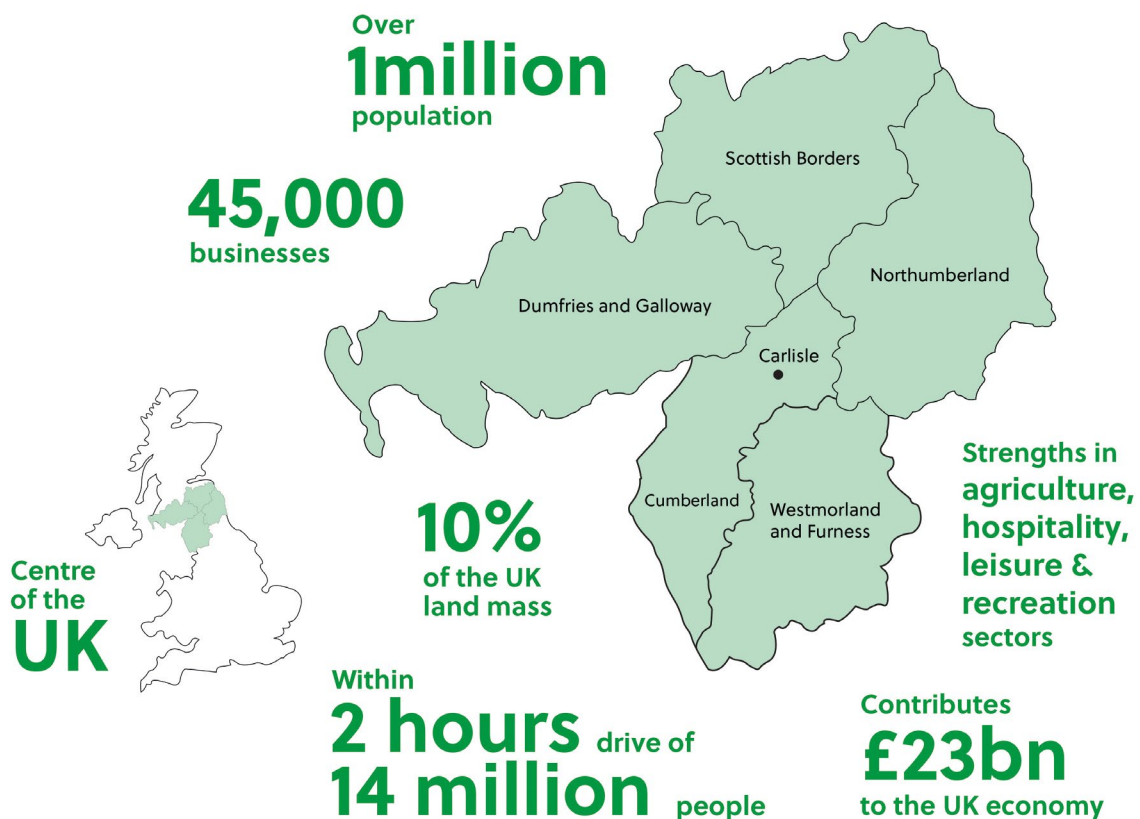
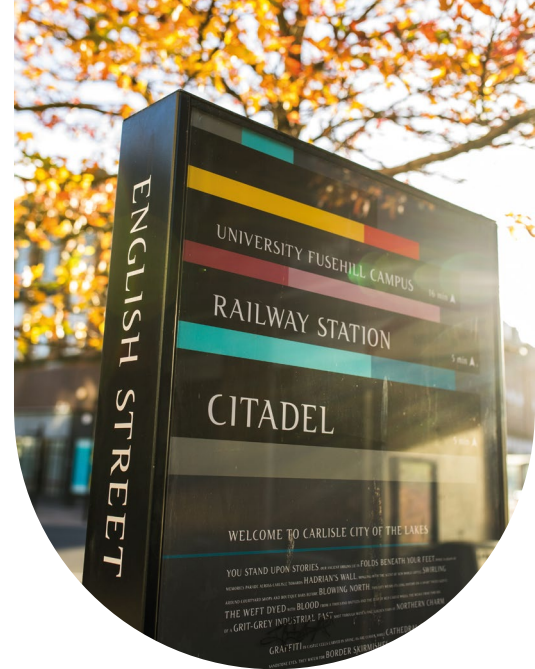
Welcome To Carlisle

Carlisle is the regional capital of Cumbria and the Borderlands region. It is the economic capital of an area expanding into south west Scotland, encompassing 500,000 people. Carlisle is a vibrant historic city; the urban focus of Cumbria's population; a key economic driver; a sub-regional retail, leisure and cultural destination; and home to the University of Cumbria.

Many of Carlisle's strengths are closely linked to its location, its physical infrastructure and the quality of its urban and rural environments. The city enjoys excellent north-south road connectivity via the M6 and is similarly advantaged by west to east road and rail links.

With a principal train station on the West Coast Main Line, London is under three and a half hours by direct services to the south, with Glasgow and Edinburgh an hour to the north. Carlisle Lake District Airport continues to be developed as a potential regional gateway for passengers.

Carlisle has a prosperous economy which is already home to many international and successful brands. The city's advantageous location and skilled workforce have helped to power thriving engineering, manufacturing and logistics industries with the presence of Nestle, Pirelli, McVities and the legendary Eddie Stobart haulage brand being testament to this.



Find out more about Carlisle - the Growing City
www.cumberland.gov.uk/Invest-in-Cumberland

The Citadels

The Nisi Prius occupies a historically important place within the southern extent of Carlisle City Centre and is one of two iconic structures known as the Citadels along with associated heritage assets. Originally constructed in 1541 by the military engineer Stefan von Haschenberg for Henry VIII, the Citadels were later remodelled as court houses by Thomas Telford and Sir Robert Smirke.

The Nisi Prius dominates the southern entrance to the city centre and is a prominent and iconic building. It stands just outside the railway station and is considered as a gateway location. The proximity to the rail station and bus stops on English Street also makes the building highly accessible by public transport. A short distance away is the pedestrianised shopping area and Lanes Shopping Centre, to the east is Lowther Street and Devonshire Street, which are focal points for Carlisle's leisure and night time economy.

The repurposing of the Nisi Prius building is a key priority for Cumberland Council and considered to be a vital component in the ongoing regeneration of the city centre.



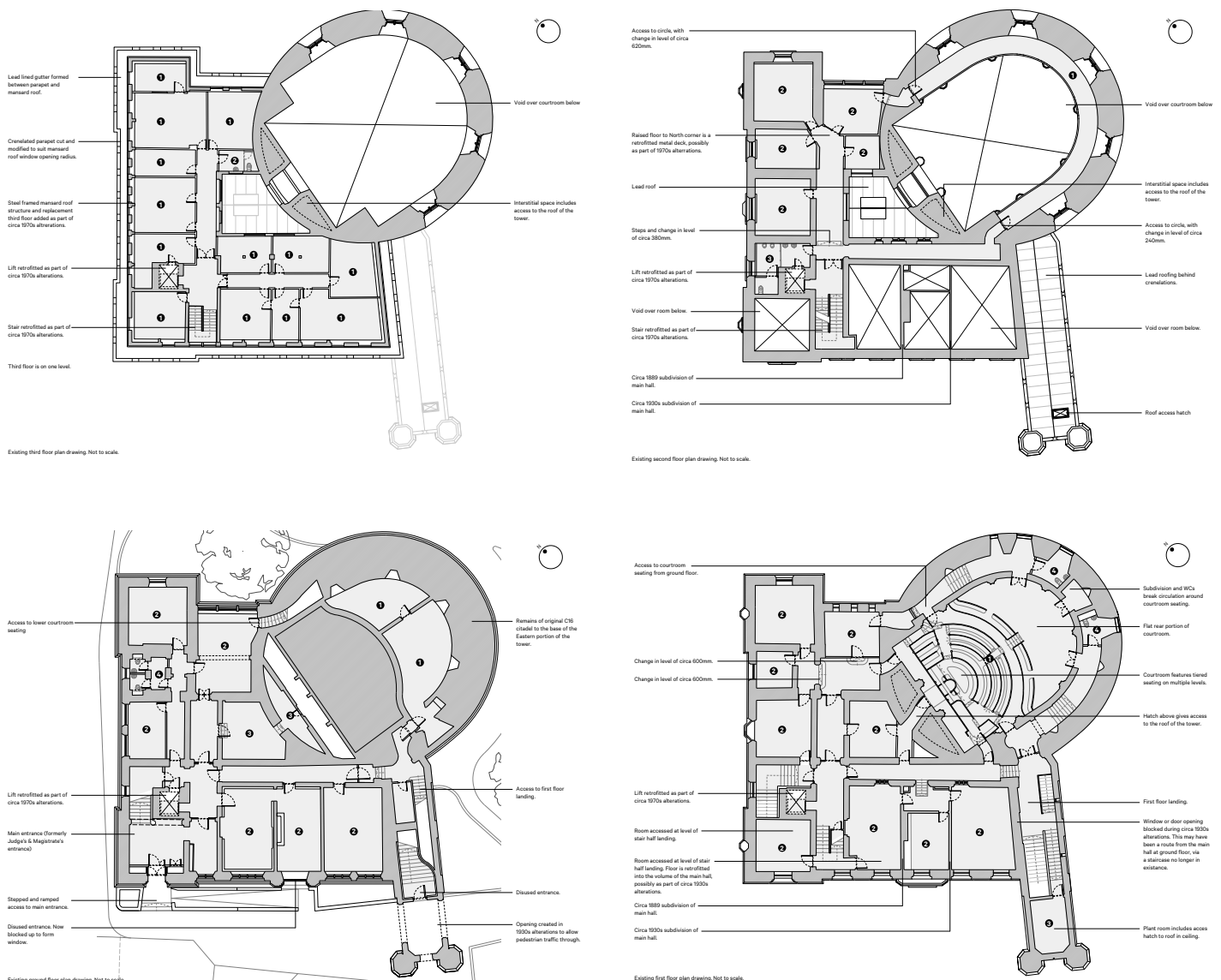
Development Options

The Council has explored some potential options for reuse of the building that include a events venue (e.g. wedding venue) or multipurpose space that could incorporate food and beverage, business and community uses.

There is potential for:

- A restaurant accessible from English Street.
- Exhibition and events space, including a bar.
- The use of the former court room to host seminars and film screenings in a unique setting and film screenings.
- On the first floor and second floors, a range of multi-purpose spaces for community or commercial letting.

The removal of the modern third floor addition and replacement with a smaller pavilion and terraces on the roof that would enable views of both the tower and city beyond.



City Centre Regeneration

University of Cumbria Campus

A new flagship campus for the University of Cumbria will be delivered immediately opposite the Nisi Prius. Planning permission was granted in August 2022.

The project will provide digitally enabled state-of-the-art teaching facilities together with support areas including Student Services and new library facilities. The scheme also includes the Carlisle Business Exchange centre that will provide modern, digital-enabled facilities for business networking, events, and collaboration with the university.



Station Gateway

Within a 2 minute walk of the site, Carlisle's main line rail station is benefitting from over £40m of funding to support passenger growth and grow the regional role of the station. The Council is working with Network Rail to deliver the project that will further improve the excellent existing connectivity of the site and Carlisle's hub for leisure, retail, employment and education.

The station already accommodates more than two million passengers every year and acts as a major interchange for the entire Borderlands region providing access to branch-line services from the West Coast Mainline to the Cumbrian Coast, Tyne Valley, Settle to Carlisle, Glasgow, Edinburgh and South Western lines.



Citadel View Development

A regeneration site close to the Nisi Prius building has been recently acquired by Whitbread PLC for the development of a 104 bedroom Premier Inn hotel. This project was also a regeneration priority for the Council and has been supported with investment from the Future High Street programme.

The Council has worked closely with Whitbread to develop a financially and commercially viable scheme. Planning permission for the development was granted in March 2026.



Caldew Riverside Housing Development

Within 10 minute walk from the Nisi Prius building lies the 2.2 hectare Caldew Riverside site. The Council is working with One Public Estate and Homes England to remediate the site ready for redevelopment and delivery of a city centre living residential scheme.

The delivery of more residential development and growing the resident population forms a key part of the Council's long-term regeneration strategy for the city centre.

A masterplan has been produced for the site, which indicates that approximately 220 units could be delivered on the site, comprising a mix of apartments and townhouses. The Council is now progressing an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the site.



No of Units	223	
Townhouse	33	15%
2-bed Townhouse	7	22%
3-bed Townhouse	16	48%
4-bed Townhouse	10	30%
Apartment	190	85%
1-bed Apartment	91	48%
2-bed Apartment	87	46%
3-bed Apartment	12	6%

Marketing & Proposal Procedure

The expression of interest will be via a two-stage informal tender.

Stage 1 - Expressions Of Interest

Expressions should set out initial due diligence undertaken, the anticipated use of the Nisi Prius and any advice taken to date.

There should be a specific focus on delivery confidence and expected funding source/s. As such, the track record of interested parties will be an important element - including examples of other developments delivered to date and ESG credentials.

The Expression of Interest Form, a copy of which will be available on www.cumberland.gov.uk/Invest-in-Cumberland, will specifically set out all information required by the Council. The Form will include requests to indicate proposed uses; indication of funding source/s for final fix; indication of high-level delivery timeline; development track record; development operator / tenant engagement; professional advisors; ESG credentials; requirement for National Lottery Heritage Funding; and any other initial due diligence.

- Parties will be able to submit further information and documents to support their Expression of Interest.
- The Council will be seeking parties who are good employers. Proposals that demonstrate having or working toward Real Living Wage accreditation, Employee Owned Businesses or other related schemes will be welcomed.
- The Expressions will be assessed both in terms of quality (including social value, local economic impact and sustainability) & deliverability.
- Bidders will need to indicate how their proposed development / use fits into the wider city centre and with other developments / uses.

Parties could be asked to submit further information to support their Expression.

Details of the dates for submission will be provided on the Invest in Cumberland web address.

Submissions are to be made via Regeneration@cumberland.gov.uk
Steven Robinson is the contact name.

Parties will be invited to participate in Stage 2 upon satisfying pass criteria of Stage 1. Full details are provided in the Expression of Interest Form.

To aid parties during Stage 1, the following can be provided on request:

- Nisi Prius Prospectus – Arkle Boyce
- Viewings can be arranged.

Further details available on the invest in Cumberland web address.

Stage 2 - Final Written Proposal Letters

Regard will be given to all circumstances and conditions with a focus on ensuring appropriate redevelopment and new economic use of the site with its strategic city centre location.

The Council would welcome a collaborative approach to development of the proposals.

Details will be shared with the National Lottery Heritage Fund in an application for grant funding to refurbish the building to a first fix.

The information and deadline required for submitting final written proposal letters for Stage 2 will be determined by the Council as soon as possible after Stage 1.

Reservations

No information contained in this document or any other written or oral information made available to any interested party or its advisers shall form the basis for any warranty, representation or term of any contract by Cumberland Council with any third party.

This informal officer guidance provides general for prospective developer and or operators. It is informal advice & is given without prejudice to any decision made in formal determination of a planning application.

The Council reserves the right not to follow up this invitation in any way and/or withdraw from the selection process at any stage & no expense incurred by any person in responding to the invitation & preparing an expression of interest will be reimbursed.

Misrepresentation Act 1967

Cumberland Council gives notice that:

1. These particulars do not constitute any part of an offer or a contract.
2. Statements contained in these particulars as to this property are made without responsibility on the part of the Council.
3. None of the statements contained in these particulars as to this property are to be relied on as statements or representation of fact.
4. Any lessees or tenants must satisfy themselves by inspection or otherwise as to the correctness of each of the statements contained in these particulars.
5. Cumberland Council does not make or give nor does any person in its employment have any authority to make or give any representation or warranty in relation to this property.

Particulars prepared August 2025

Viewings

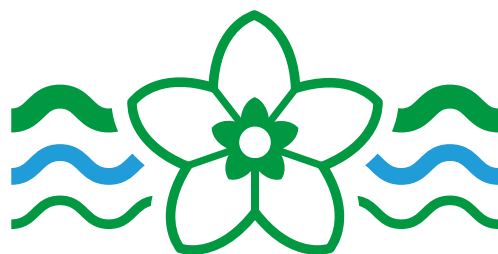
The site will be available for viewings via appointment on selected open days.

Please note that access cannot be granted without prior registration. Interested parties are required to register in advance via contact confirming all attendees & requested date.

Contact

For further information please contact:

Steven Robinsons, Service Manager for Regeneration and Delivery
regeneration@cumberland.gov.uk



**Cumberland
Council**

Images courtesy of: Arkle Boyce, BDP, Day Architects, Tom Biddle Photography