

# Darlington Local Plan

2016-2036

Adopted February 2022



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

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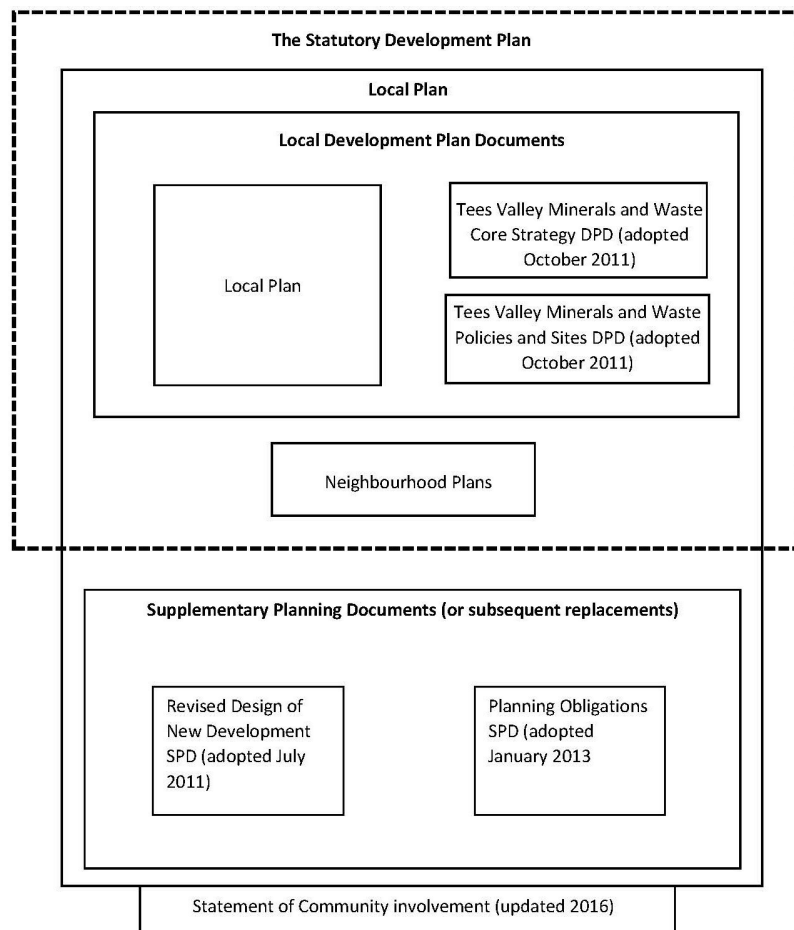
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## INTRODUCTION 1

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1** This document contains policies and proposals for using and developing land throughout the Borough of Darlington. This Local Plan replaces the Darlington Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (May 2011) and the saved policies of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan (1997, including adopted alterations 2001), and provides an up to date statutory development plan for the Borough. Appendix F sets out the specific local planning policies that have been superseded.
- 1.0.2** All applications for development must, by law, be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise. **Figure 1.1** shows the documents that make up the statutory development plan for Darlington.

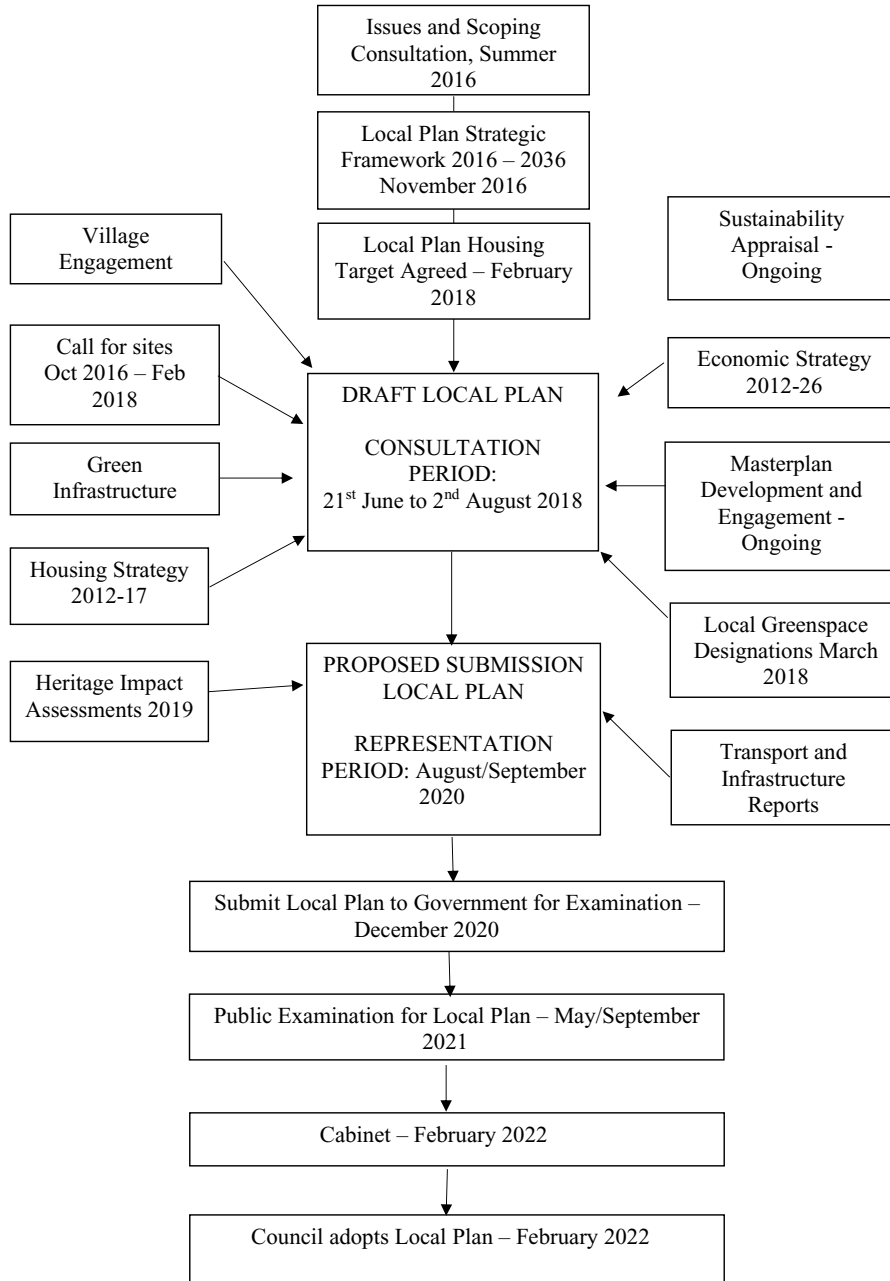
**Figure 1.1 Relationship of the Local Plan to other planning policy documents covering Darlington Borough**



- 1.0.3** All the policies, proposals and site allocations are designed to address a range of specific issues, problems or challenges. Successful implementation of the policies and proposals in this document will contribute towards economic growth in Darlington and achieving sustainable development. There have been a number of preparation stages leading up to this Local Plan and these are indicated in **Figure 1.2**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

**Figure 1.2 Stages of Preparation of of the Local Plan**



## INTRODUCTION 1

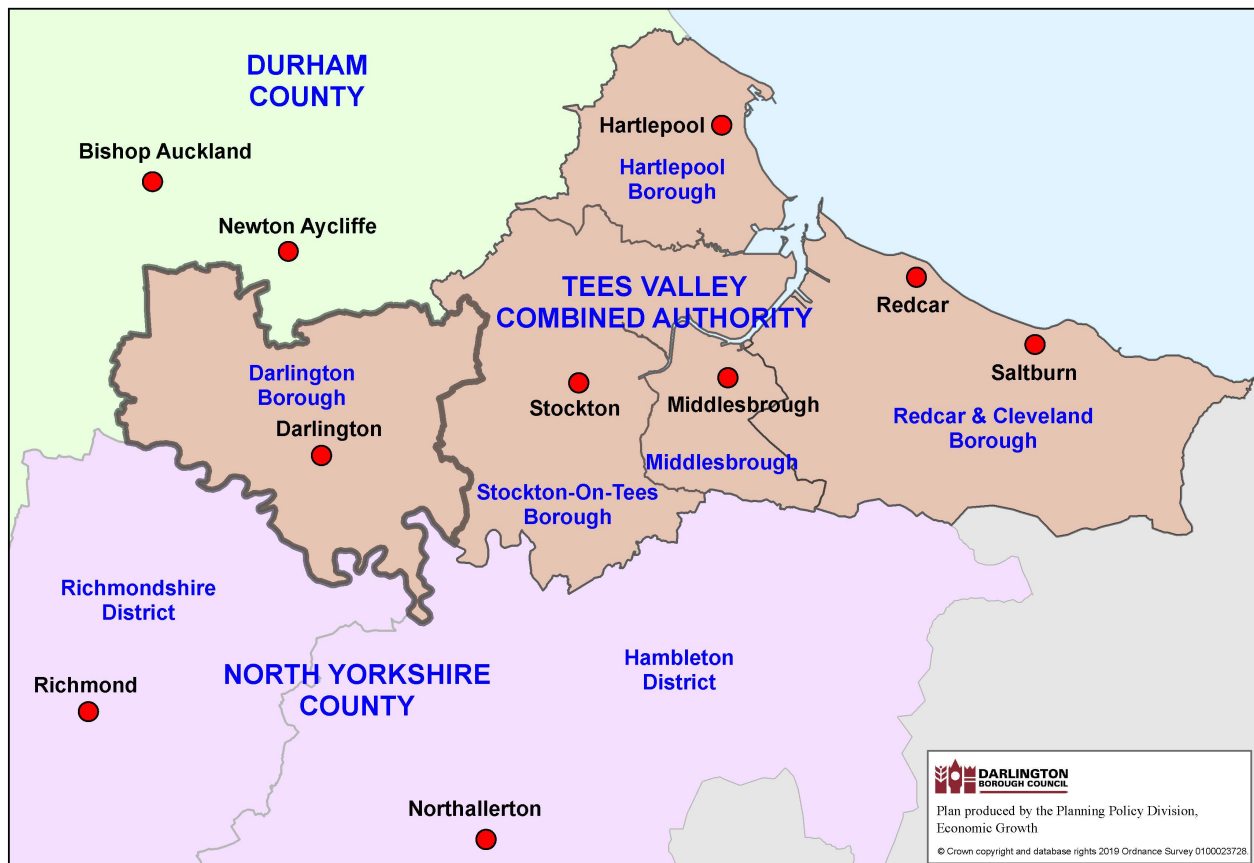
## Context

- 1.1.1** The policies and proposals in this document have been prepared with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and sub-regional and local strategies, including the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, the Darlington Economic Strategy and the Darlington Housing Strategy.
- 1.1.2** The Local Plan is a framework for growth and aims to ensure that Darlington becomes an even more sustainable location in which people increasingly choose to live, work and visit. Not only does it help to deliver the economic strategy through providing new housing to meet local needs; it supports the needs of our current and future workforce; and delivers other new developments with provision of key infrastructure.
- 1.1.3** The Localism Act 2011 introduced a 'duty to co-operate' requiring the Council to work with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and other key stakeholders on cross-boundary planning issues and matters of strategic concern. The Act also introduced the concept of neighbourhood planning and the implications of this have also been taken into account in the preparation of this document.

## Overview of Darlington Borough

- 1.2.1** Darlington Borough is a unitary local authority area that lies at the western extent of the Tees Valley, a Combined Authority area also comprising the unitary authorities of Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees. The Borough is regarded as the 'gateway' to the Tees Valley and the wider North East region.

Map 1.1





## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.2.2** Darlington is a historic market town, surrounded by open countryside with many attractive rural villages. The town's development has been closely associated with the railway age and manufacturing. This past industrial activity has left a legacy of unused and underused land, but it has also bestowed a wealth of buildings of architectural and historic interest dating from the railway age and the subsequent Victorian period, to complement buildings and urban layouts reflecting the town's Quaker community.
- 1.2.3** The Borough's range of cultural facilities, such as the Dolphin Centre, Hippodrome Theatre and the Head of Steam Railway Museum, contribute to a good quality of life, and help attract visitors. An abundance of street trees and open space within the urban area contribute to the town's distinctiveness and biodiversity, particularly the green corridors along the River Skerne, Cocker Beck and Baydale Beck. Outside the urban area, a magnesian limestone escarpment forms higher land and a rare ecosystem at the northern fringe of the Borough. An attractive, biodiverse and often wooded landscape has evolved along the River Tees corridor, complemented by more recent community woodland planting, especially at the urban fringe. The Borough hosts a variety of habitats and species, including some, like the black poplar and the great crested newt, that are rare and/or declining regionally or nationally.
- 1.2.4** The Borough has excellent national and international transport links by rail (East Coast Main Line), road (A1/M) and air (Teesside International Airport). The town centre provides employment, shops and services for large parts of North Yorkshire and south and west Durham and the western part of the Tees Valley.
- 1.2.5** The Borough's current population is approximately 106,300 (2017), made up of 50,500 households (2016). It has an ageing population, caused by declining birth rates over recent decades and by out-migration of young well educated adults seeking better employment opportunities elsewhere; approximately 20% of the population is over 65. There are also marked contrasts in the life opportunities of people in the Borough, according to where they live. The Borough has five wards that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country according to the Index of Mass Deprivation (IMD 2015). In contrast there are 2 wards which are amongst the 10% least deprived nationally. There is a near 15-year difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards, and unemployment varies from 8.7% for the urban Northgate ward (April 2018), to 0.8% in the suburban Hummersknott ward.
- 1.2.6** The Borough's economy has performed strongly over recent years shifting from its past reliance on manufacturing to one with a wider, more resilient base. Specialist engineering, the (now dominant) service sector (business and professional services) and public sector employment (public administration, healthcare and education) are the most significant employers, whilst a relatively high proportion of the local workforce (36.4%) are in professional, senior or managerial roles, or professional and technically skilled occupations (NOMIS 2016). The Borough has a projected 'increasing potential' workforce, with relatively high skills and higher education achievements, and has economic activity and overall employment rates consistently above sub-regional and regional levels.

### National Planning Policy Context

- 1.3.1** The Local Plan has been prepared so that it is consistent with the principles and policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021), including the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### Local Context

#### One Darlington: Perfectly Placed

- 1.4.1** The Sustainable Community Strategy (2014), 'owned' by Darlington Partnership is the overall vision for Darlington's future agreed by the Partnership members. Commonly known as One Darlington: Perfectly Placed (OD:PP), it sets out the 'outcomes' to be achieved through the strategy. All of them are about creating and maintaining a good quality of life by and for everyone in Darlington (One Darlington), and about making Darlington the best possible place to live and work (Perfectly Placed).

## INTRODUCTION 1

**1.4.2 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed - Key Outcomes**

We will improve quality of life for all and reduce inequality by ensuring we have:

- Children with the best start in life
- More businesses and more jobs
- A safe and caring community
- More people caring for our environment
- More people active and involved
- Enough support for people when needed
- More people healthy and independent
- A place designed to thrive

**1.4.3** The Local Plan identifies the Town Centre and the Town Centre Fringe as locations for regeneration in the Borough. The same locations, along with Greater Faverdale, Central Park, Ingenium Parc and Symmetry Park / Link 66 are also identified as strategic locations for employment development. New housing will be focused on the main urban area, but significant additional land is also needed at the North West Urban Fringe and Eastern Urban Fringe. Together these factors have been identified by the Council as Economic Growth Zones (Central, North Western and Eastern) and are aligned with the ambitions and actions supporting the local economic strategy.

**1.4.4** The Local Plan also recognises Darlington's distinctive landscapes and townscapes, along with the built, historic and natural environments, and seeks to safeguard and enhance their intrinsic integrity.

**Other Policies, Plans, Strategies and Studies**

**1.5.1** The preparation of this document has been informed by policies, plans, strategies and studies prepared by the Council and its partners. Recent examples include the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (2016-2026), the Darlington Economic Strategy (2016-2026), the Darlington Housing Strategy (2012-2017), One Darlington Community Strategy for Darlington (2016-2022), Darlington Local Transport Plan 3 (2017-2020), Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013-2026) and the Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (2011) which includes the Coal Authority's coal legacy and resources register.

**Duty to Co-operate**

**1.6.1** The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that co-operation should produce effective policies on cross-boundary strategic matters. The Council considers that the Duty to Co-operate affects Darlington in the following ways:

- Working with neighbouring authorities to identify and address strategic cross-boundary issues.
- Developing an evidence base to support the preparation of the Local Plan.
- Working with other public and private sector bodies, along with utility and infrastructure providers.

**1.6.2** The full list of bodies included within the Duty to Co-operate is specified in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012).

**1.6.3** A full statement of the actions taken by the Council under the Duty to Co-operate will be published in Statements of Common Ground alongside the Local Plan.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### Sustainable Economic Growth

- 1.7.1** The NPPF states that planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial premises, infrastructure and thriving local places. The Local Plan 2016-36 provides that focus with more detailed policies and site allocations, reflecting economic forecasts and priorities identified in the Darlington Economic Strategy (2016-2022) and Tees Valley Combined Authority - Strategic Economic Plan (2016).
- 1.7.2** The Local Plan 2016-36 recognises the contribution that housebuilding makes to the local economy. Land is allocated for approximately 5,764 homes with an additional 5,440 (approx.) already committed via existing planning permissions or completed over the first five years of the plan period. A range of previously developed land and greenfield sites provide choice both within and on the edge of the urban area and at the large service villages <sup>(1)</sup>.
- 1.7.3** In order to create Economic Growth through further employment options, sites have to be available and have to be able to be flexibly used for different ranges of sectors and commercial development. Opportunities for further investment in Darlington will be accommodated through a diverse portfolio of sites and locations. Our ambition to achieve 7000 net additional jobs between 2016-2036<sup>(2)</sup> requires suitable locations to grow the economy, which are identified through the Local Plan 2016-2036.
- 1.7.4** The significant contribution of Darlington Town Centre and retailing to the local economy is also recognised, as is the potential of railway heritage tourism. A Town Centre Action Plan (2012) and Town Centre Fringe Master Plan (2013) have informed allocations for retail, mixed use, leisure and commercial development, while the work of the Darlington Rail Heritage Group has informed proposals for the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) area, including North Road and the Railway museum, which will support the Bi-centennial celebration of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 2025.
- 1.7.5** New development needs to be supported by appropriate infrastructure and this document identifies key investment priorities including highway improvements, vital utility improvements and a new north-south green corridor through the Town Centre Fringe, focused on the River Skerne.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 1.8.1** There is an increasing body of evidence linking the quality of the built and natural environment with health and wellbeing outcomes. Access to greenspace, social infrastructure, active travel choices and the availability of local goods and services are all key determinants of both mental and physical health. The links between planning, the environment and health are being explored by a number of bodies including the NHS, Public Health England (PHE), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Local Nature Partnerships and voluntary and community organisations. Both the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) have been actively involved in developing guidance to inform Local Plans and decision making and there is a high degree of commonality between approaches. In the context of an ageing population and lifestyle related disease the importance of planning for health is clear, and the Darlington Local Plan seeks to integrate best practice approaches.
- 1.8.2** Since 2016 Darlington has been an NHS Healthy New Towns pilot site alongside nine others across England. This pilot allowed the sharing of best practice and access to research and development across a number of areas including green infrastructure, design, sustainable transport, placemaking and the public realm. The evidence bases and learning gained through this programme has informed policy development across the Plan. In addition to this, throughout 2017, many of the principles were tested with local stakeholders and developers to ensure that they were aspirational, realistic and deliverable.

1 Defined in Policy SH 1

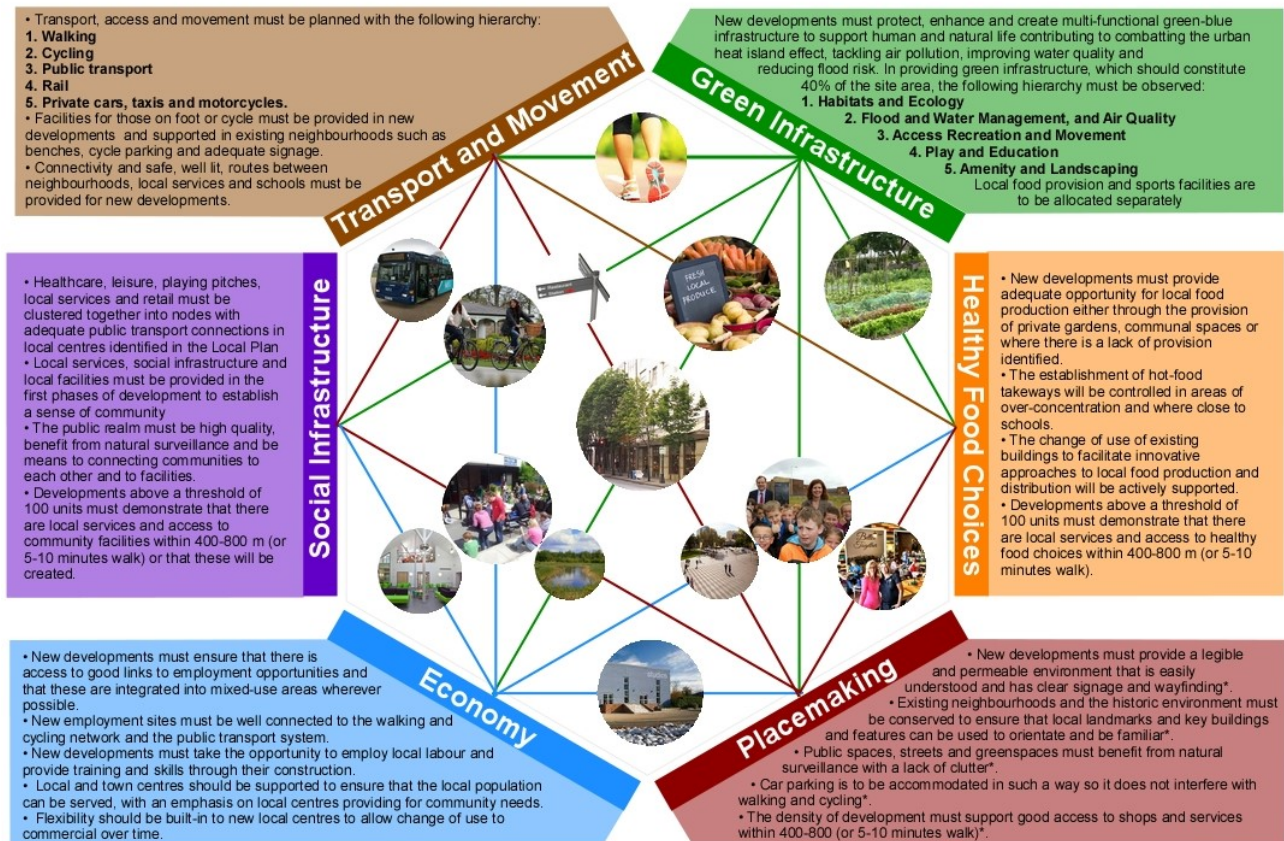
2 Based on net jobs from 56,000 jobs in Darlington Borough (Source : NOMIS – Official Labour Market Statistics from Office of National Statistics) in 2016 to 63,000 jobs by 2036.

INTRODUCTION 1

1.8.3 Within the Local Plan the six Darlington Healthy New Towns Design Principles (see Figure 1.3) have informed the suite of policies, with a particular emphasis on design, green infrastructure and the strategic allocations to meet the ambition to create a Local Plan that secures better health and wellbeing outcomes for all.

Figure 1.3

HEALTHY NEW TOWNS - DESIGN PRINCIPLES



\* Denotes measures that support a Dementia Friendly Environment



Neighbourhood Planning

1.9.1 The Localism Act 2011 gave local communities the power to help decide where development should go and the type and design of development, by preparing neighbourhood plans for their areas. They can be prepared by Town or Parish Councils, or in areas without a parish by Neighbourhood Forums. The Act requires the Borough Council to support work on neighbourhood plans.

1.9.2 Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with strategic policies included in the Local Plan, as detailed below;

- SD 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- SH 1 - Settlement Hierarchy
- DC 1 - Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change
- DC 2 - Flood Risk and Water Management
- H 1 - Housing Requirement
- H 2 - Housing Allocations
- H 3 - Development Limits
- H 5 - Affordable Housing
- H 6 - Rural Exceptions

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- H 7 - Residential Development in the Countryside
- H 10 - Skertingham Strategic Allocation
- H 11 - Greater Faverdale Strategic Site Allocation
- E 2 - Employment Allocations
- E 3 - Darlington Farmers Auction Mart Relocation
- E 4 - Economic Development in the Open Countryside
- ENV 1 - Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting Darlington's Historic Environment
- ENV 2 - Stockton and Darlington Railway
- ENV 3 - Local Landscape Character
- ENV 4 - Green and Blue Infrastructure
- ENV 7 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity and Development
- IN 1 - Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network
- IN 2 - Improving Access and Accessibility
- IN 6 - Utilities Infrastructure
- IN 9 - Renewable and Energy Efficient Infrastructure
- IN 10 - Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure

**1.9.3** Once made, Neighbourhood Plans become part of the statutory development plan. Currently there is one made Neighbourhood Plan in the Borough the Low Coniscliffe & Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan. Further plans may be made in due course and become part of the Development Plan for Darlington.

### Viability and Deliverability

**1.10.1** Nationally, planning policy highlights the importance of ensuring plans are deliverable. It states that policies, planning conditions and obligations should not put implementation of the Local Plan at risk<sup>(3)</sup>. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>(4)</sup> also states that: "where up to date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable". Viability assessments should be undertaken at plan making stage and should reflect the recommended national approach set by the National Planning Practice Guidance (2019). It will be up to applicants to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. If so this should be based upon, and refer back to, the Local Plan Viability Assessment and will be made publicly available.

**1.10.2** National policy highlights the need for local authorities to take account of changes in market conditions over time and notes there is a degree of flexibility required within the planning policy framework, to prevent planned development being stalled.

**1.10.3** In negotiating planning conditions early, the overall sustainability of schemes is paramount and conditions should be kept to a minimum as outlined in national policy<sup>(5)</sup>. These established considerations of conditions will have to inform any negotiations on planning obligations.

### Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

**1.11.1** The Local Plan must be subject to ongoing Sustainability Appraisal (SA) throughout its preparation, including specific consideration of environmental, health, equalities and rural impacts. This seeks to identify the likely impacts and how they might be addressed to ensure the effectiveness of this document in achieving economic, social and environmental goals. The SA has been used in a proactive way to help shape emerging themes, objectives and actions. A Draft SA report was published alongside the Draft Local Plan in June 2018, with an updated SA produced to accompany the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

3 NPPF, July 2021, para 35.

4 NPPF, July 2021, para 58

5 NPPF, July 2021, para 56.

## INTRODUCTION 1

- 1.11.2** Alongside the SA a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report has been prepared. The purpose of the HRA is to identify whether the proposed policies set out within the Local Plan, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, are likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 Sites. The requirement to carry out this assessment is set out within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. The HRA Screening Report concludes that the emerging Local Plan is not likely to give rise to any negative impacts on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the adoption of the document in the Borough of Darlington and therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## 2 VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 2 VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### Local Plan Vision

**2.1.1** The Vision for the Local Plan, set out below, reflects comments made during the Strategic Issues and Scoping consultation process and sets out what the Plan is seeking to achieve.

***'In 2036, Darlington Borough will have maintained its identity as a cohesive historic market town situated amongst countryside and villages, whilst developing its reputation for ingenuity and its status as an economic driver in the Tees Valley. Its coherent community, natural and historic environment will be enhanced and continue to be cherished protected and celebrated. The opportunities available in Darlington and its links with other centres will make the Borough an attractive place for both residential and commercial investment, with the Borough's needs for housing, jobs and other development being met, supported by new and improved built and green infrastructure and community facilities. Together with excellent national and regional connectivity and accessibility, these characteristics will mean Darlington continues to thrive and be a great place to live, work and invest.'***

**2.1.2** The following Aims and Objectives will provide the link between the Vision and the spatial strategy. They represent a translation of the Vision into specific themes and what this will mean for place making in the Darlington context if it is to be successful.

#### Overarching Aims

- Deliver sustainable development to meet the Borough's needs through a cohesive plan which makes the best use of land and resources.
- Protect and enhance the quality of Darlington's built, natural and historic environment, and to use it positively to create great places.
- Deliver new development that is capable of facilitating local or strategic infrastructure.
- Contribute to the satisfaction, fulfilment, health and wellbeing of the population of the Borough.

#### Specific Aims and Objectives

**1. Facilitating Economic Growth – facilitate sustainable economic growth of 7,000 new jobs within the Borough.**

To achieve this Aim, our Objectives are:

- a. Create the conditions to attract and retain investment, with a range and continuous supply of employment development opportunities in sustainable locations.
- b. Provide a choice and range of sites capable of delivering this growth. These will include established areas of existing economic development but will also be flexible enough to be responsive to accommodate growth industries or the changing needs of established sectors.
- c. Support clusters of economic activity in the context of the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan and the Council's Economic Strategy.
- d. Promote Darlington Town Centre as the main location for shopping, leisure, culture and employment and strengthen its role as a regional centre for such activities.

## VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 2

- e. Diversify the rural economy to support businesses and existing communities whilst also protecting the Borough's valued open countryside.
- f. Facilitate the delivery of strategic infrastructure that supports economic growth, including the supply of appropriate housing.

### **2. Meeting Housing Needs – enable the development of 9,840 new homes in order to meet the housing needs and aspirations of those living and working in the Borough.**

To achieve this Aim, our Objectives are:

- a. Maintain a supply of land for new housing developments that meets the needs of the growing number of households in Urban and Rural areas of the Borough.
- b. Achieve and maintain a 5 year supply of housing land.
- c. Provide a range of housing products providing types and tenures of homes suitable for all people, including people who are unable to access housing on the open market and for the Borough's ageing population.
- d. To have a portfolio of sites of different sizes, different housing products and delivery rates for the short, medium and long term.

### **3. A Well Connected Borough – to capitalise on Darlington's excellent existing connections to the national strategic transport network and seek improvements to regional connectivity across the Borough. New development that supports delivery of key infrastructure and a sustainable pattern for growth will be supported.**

In order to deliver this Aim we have the following Objectives:

- a. Ensure that new development is in places where it will be reasonably accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.
- b. Maintain and improve transport links between communities within the Borough and further afield.
- c. Support development that enhances regionally and nationally important transport links including those offered by Darlington Station, Teesside International Airport, Teesport and the Strategic Road Network.
- d. To improve the local highway network by managing out strategic highway demands.
- e. Delivery of communication infrastructure, including broadband, to enhance business and social interaction.

### **4. Create Cohesive, Proud & Healthy Communities – create and support cohesive communities through good place-making to achieve lively, well located and distinctive places with an increased sense of civic pride.**

To achieve this Aim, our Objectives are;

- a. Protect, maintain and enhance Darlington's historic environment and identity as a historic market town, set amongst countryside and surrounding villages with strong links to Railway, Quaker and Industrial heritage.



## 2 VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- b. Maintain a vibrant, attractive and safe market town centre that embraces its historic character whilst functioning as a modern centre offering retail, culture, leisure, tourism and employment opportunities.
- c. Secure provision of necessary infrastructure to support growth including improvements to existing services.
- d. Ensure convenient access to local goods and services.
- e. Ensure residents have reasonable access to education facilities within the Borough and where necessary developers should contribute to the provision of education facilities in sustainable locations.
- f. Improve access to green spaces for leisure and recreation.
- g. To build healthier homes and environments that support independence at all stages of life.
- h. Tackle unhealthy environments by creating walkable neighbourhoods, delivering improved infrastructure for safe, active travel and more accessible public transport.
- i. Create connected neighbourhoods, with local social infrastructure and inclusive public spaces that enable people of all ages and abilities from all backgrounds to develop strong communities.
- j. Create healthy workplaces, schools and leisure facilities that make the most of opportunities to encourage physical activity, healthy eating and positive mental health and wellbeing.

### **5. Protect and Enhance the Countryside and Natural Environment – maintain and enhance the biodiversity, character and appearance of the countryside and wildlife habitats.**

In order to achieve this Aim, our Objectives are;

- a. Development within and around existing urban areas will be expected to protect, and add to, the Borough's rich and accessible existing Green Infrastructure network.
- b. Improve the amount of quality accessible greenspace where deficiencies in provision are identified.
- c. Protect and enhance biodiversity across the Borough.
- d. Mitigate flood risks through environmental and ecological improvement of the River Skerne and River Tees.

### **6. Responding to Climate Change and Reducing Energy Consumption – support the national commitment for net zero carbon and greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 through the continued move towards a net zero carbon community by encouraging efficient use of resources, good design and well located development, whilst increasing resilience to impacts from climate change.**

In order to achieve this Aim, our Objectives are:

- a. Manage flood risk from all sources.
- b. Maximise opportunities to generate and use renewable energy in all developments.

## VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 2

- c. Actively encourage energy and water efficient design in all new and existing housing, industrial and commercial developments.
- d. Locate development in areas not susceptible to flooding and encourage flood resilient design where necessary.

## 3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### 3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 3.1.1** The NPPF requires policies in local plans to follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay.
- 3.1.2** Policy SD 1 will help to ensure that decisions are made in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

#### Policy SD 1

##### Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (Strategic Policy)

A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Darlington Borough.

Planning applications that accord with policies in the development plan<sup>(6)</sup> will be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, the Council will grant planning permission unless the application of policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

This policy will be implemented and monitored by making and reviewing decisions on planning applications.

<sup>6</sup> the Darlington Borough development plan consists of the Local Plan, Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Policies and Sites DPD and made neighbourhood plans.

## THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY 4

## 4 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

- 4.0.1** There is a need to make clear 'spatial' choices for the distribution of new development across the Local Plan area, thereby reflecting and supporting the specific roles and functions of different communities, helping “place-shaping” and ensuring that they are linked by sustainable patterns of transport. Failure to respect the scale and function of places can lead to inappropriate development and result in unsustainable patterns of transportation, loss of environmental quality and local character, reduced economic prosperity and be a barrier to social inclusion and the creation of balanced communities.

## Policy SH 1

**Settlement Hierarchy (Strategic Policy)**

The broad distribution of development in the Local Plan area will be shaped by the role and function of places, based on the following hierarchy of settlements:

1. **Darlington Urban Area** - will remain the focus of future development within the Borough. As a single urban centre within the Borough it will aim to maintain its role as a leading sub-regional centre for transport connectivity, services, employment and retail and leisure. Sustainable and accessible locations will be selected to enable further development;
2. **Service Villages (Heighington, Hurworth and Middleton St George)** - will be maintained as villages that offer a range of facilities and services, where a level of development will meet local needs and facilitate the economic diversification of rural areas. Development should safeguard and reinforce the distinctive character of each settlement and not detract from their landscape setting;
3. **Rural Villages (Bishopton, Brafferton, High Coniscliffe, Low Coniscliffe, Merrybent, Neasham, Piercebridge, Sadberge)** - The character of the Rural Villages, including their relationship to and setting within the surrounding countryside, will be protected and where possible enhanced. Development in these villages will make efficient and sustainable use of existing buildings and infill opportunities. On the edges of Rural Villages, housing development will meet clearly identified local needs, recognising that an element of open market housing may be required to deliver essential affordable units.

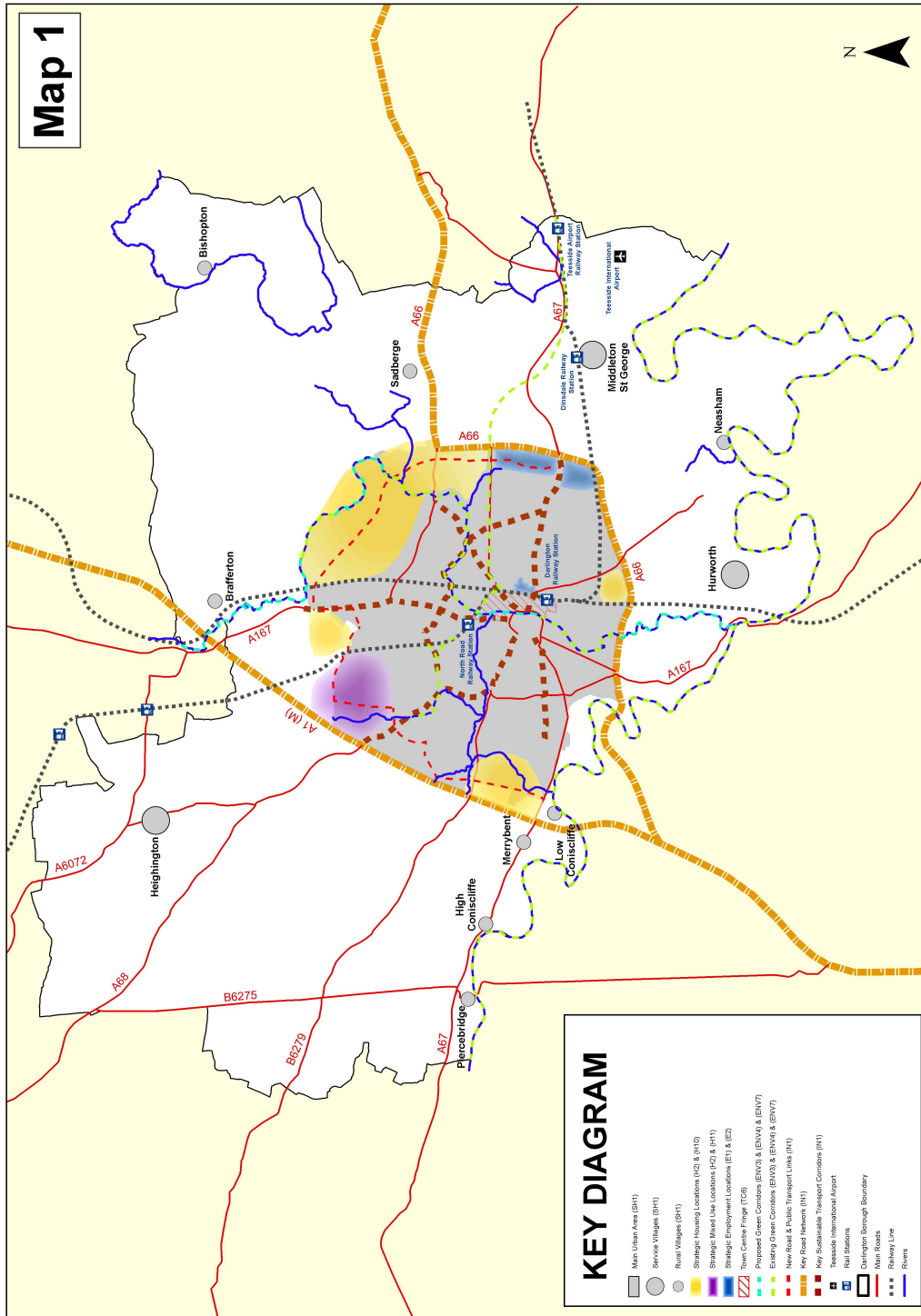
In meeting the objectives for each level of the settlement hierarchy, development should not compromise the ability to meet the objectives for other tiers in the hierarchy.

Only those places with defined Development Limits are classified as settlements for the purposes of this Policy. All areas outside the Development Limits are to be regarded as ‘countryside’ unless specifically identified for other uses in the plan (including Policies E 1, E 2 and E 3). The Development Limits are defined on the Policies Map.

- 4.0.2** The Key Diagram shown overleaf identifies the key strategic locations for development.

# 4 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Map 4.1 Key Diagram



## THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY 4

### Urban Area

- 4.0.3** Darlington has excellent national and international transport links, by rail (East Coast Main Line), road (A1M) and air (Teesside International Airport). Its 'gateway' location, accessibility and attractive environment make it perfectly placed within North East England and the Tees Valley to attract investment and economic activity that might not otherwise come to the region or sub-region. It is a key centre within the Tees Valley City Region, with potential to contribute significantly to regional economic growth across a range of sectors.
- 4.0.4** Darlington is an important location for employment development, a subregional centre for retail and leisure uses, and a strategic public transport hub. The town centre provides employment, shops and services for large parts of North Yorkshire and South and West Durham and the western part of the Tees Valley, and is rated third in North East England in terms of shopping venue quality<sup>(7)</sup>. The Borough provides housing to meet the needs of local people and many of those who work in the town, and also helps to meet some of the housing needs of a wider area, particularly those arising from those on higher incomes working across the Tees Valley.
- 4.0.5** New land will be required for the employment, services, infrastructure and new housing associated with population and economic growth. Priority will be given to land and buildings in accessible and sustainable locations, where these can accommodate the specific needs of the developments proposed, and where this does not prejudice heritage or nature conservation, or impinge on land protected for recreational purposes.
- 4.0.6** The town centre will continue to be the primary retail centre in the Borough. It will be enhanced and safeguarded as such, and will be expected to accommodate additional retailing for much of the plan period. The Council accepts that the face of retailing is changing and the roles of town centres need to change to reflect that, with a more flexible approach to uses within the high street including encouraging people to live in town centres. The town centre will also continue to be a key location and first priority for office development and other town centre uses, including an office-led scheme on previously developed land in the Beaumont Street/Feethams area.
- 4.0.7** New development and regeneration in the Town Centre Fringe will be key to delivering the vision for Darlington over the medium to longer term. The area is critical to improving links between the town centre, Central Park and the main railway station, which are all close by. It provides opportunities for new employment, leisure/cultural, recreation and housing in a highly accessible location, and for local pockets of deprivation, poor housing and environmental quality to be tackled comprehensively. Development will have to take into account constraints (such as flood risk) which will shape the eventual pattern of redevelopment there.
- 4.0.8** In selecting the broad locations for new housing development, the urban fringe has been identified as the most sustainable, suitable, available and developable, provided that appropriate community infrastructure and sustainable transport provision is made and potential adverse impacts of development there are mitigated.

### Outside the Urban Area

- 4.0.9** The Borough's villages and countryside are an integral part of what makes Darlington an attractive place to live. Their vitality and viability need to be safeguarded and strengthened, whether it be by retaining services or supporting new development, such as affordable housing, that help to maintain sustainable communities. The larger villages Heighington, Hurworth/Hurworth Place and Middleton St George have a range of services which means they are well placed to accommodate some development which would also assist in providing for a range of sites within the Borough.
- 4.0.10** Service Villages are those that provide a core set of essential services for local communities. They must contain a school, village/community hall, and convenience store. It is also essential that they are well connected to higher service centres (towns) by public transport.

7 Venuescore 2016.

## 4 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

- 4.0.11** Given that the Service Villages are shown to contain essential facilities and services, they are considered to be locations where development opportunities may be acceptable. As centres for activity in the rural area, Service Villages can also play a role in providing small-scale employment opportunities outside of the traditional rural industries. Developments that enhance this role should be supported.
- 4.0.12** The Rural Villages are generally of a very small scale and offer limited, and in some cases, no service provision. Sustainable development opportunities within the defined Development Limits of these villages will be supported, including infill development and the conversion of existing buildings. New housing development on the edge of Rural Villages (outside the defined Development Limits) will be required to meet local and other functional needs, i.e. through the delivery of 'exception(s) sites' (affordable housing schemes), allowing for an element of open market housing where this helps the viability and deliverability of an exception(s) site as a whole. Housing development that meets a functional need includes that which provides essential accommodation for those involved in land management or other countryside activities. The development of new services will be supported, however, the growth of Rural Villages as a sole means of generating additional demand for services will not be supported where such growth would have an adverse impact on the character of the village, or on the viability of a service in a nearby village.

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

**5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION****Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change**

- 5.1.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”. One of the overarching aims of this Local Plan is to ‘create great places’ in which to live, work and invest - the key to achieving this is through promoting good design principles. New buildings and public spaces should reflect these principles and seek to enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the area, whilst also reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions. Development proposals should have regard to the principles in the National Design Guide and Darlington Design of New Development SPD in considering design. The Darlington Design of New Development SPD is to be updated in early 2022 to reflect latest national standards, until such time latest national guidance should take precedence.

**Policy DC 1****Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change (Strategic Policy)**

Good design is required to create attractive and desirable places where people want to live, work and invest. Good design will help to reduce carbon emissions and increase the resilience of developments to the effects of climate change. All development will be required to have regard to the design principles in the Darlington Design of New Development SPD<sup>(8)</sup> and National Design Guide (or successors) by demonstrating that:

- a. An analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site and the function of development has informed the principles of design, including;
  - i. that the proposal reflects the local environment and creates an individual sense of place with distinctive character;
  - ii. that the detailed design responds positively to the local context, in terms of its scale, form, height, layout, materials, colouring, fenestration and architectural detailing;
  - iii. that the proposal has taken account of the need to safeguard or enhance important views and vistas; and
  - iv. the layout of the development maximises opportunities for natural surveillance.
- b. The layout, orientation and design of buildings (where these factors are not otherwise constrained) helps to reduce the need for energy consumption, how buildings have been made energy efficient and how measures have been implemented to reduce carbon emissions from development;
- c. Energy efficiency measures and low carbon technologies will be supported, where this does not result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset;
- d. Non-residential buildings of 1,000 sqm floorspace or more will be required to meet BREEAM 'Very Good' standard;
- e. The proposal provides suitable and safe vehicular access and suitable servicing and parking arrangements in accordance with Policy IN 4;

8 Revised Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document, Darlington Borough Council, July 2011 (or subsequent replacement).



## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

- f. The layout of the proposal, associated green infrastructure, and landscaping has been developed to complement and enhance both the ecological function of the local area and character of the built environment, retaining existing features of interest;
- g. Any associated landscaping scheme has been developed to enhance both the natural and built environment, retaining existing features of interest;
- h. Proposals for development on land affected by contamination will be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that the site is suitable for the proposed use and development will not result in unacceptable risks to human health or the environment.

### Design Fundamentals

- 5.1.2** Design is not just about the architecture or style of a building. It is also about the spaces in and around the development, the quality of the relationships between the development and surrounding areas and the appropriateness of the function of the building in its context. Darlington is experiencing ongoing change and good design will help to maintain a 'sense of place'. In turn this improves the quality of the built environment, its public spaces, its heritage and local distinctiveness, which all contribute to the community's quality of life.
- 5.1.3** Developers will be required to carry out contextual site surveys, which should be used to inform the design concept. Applicants should be able to demonstrate how good design principles and adopted design policy have been applied in terms of influencing the function, scale, detailing and character of development in addition to the materials used in construction and the quality of the public realm. This should include consideration of the Revised Design of New Development SPD<sup>(9)</sup>. Innovative design solutions will be encouraged where appropriate within the context of the other policy provisions within this plan.
- 5.1.4** Housing developments have in recent decades been criticised for their uniform and standardised appearance. In order to avoid creating homogeneous and sterile neighbourhoods, developers will be required to incorporate a mix of property types of a varying scale, utilising a range of complementary materials wherever possible. Similarly, the layout of development should encourage integration with surrounding areas and not be inward facing.
- 5.1.5** Proposals for the extension or alteration of existing buildings should respect the character and scale of the original building, drawing reference from the materials and detailing used in the original building and ensuring that the original building remains the principal feature of development. However, it is recognised that the use of alternative materials and detailing in extensions and alterations can, in some cases, enhance the character of an existing building and / or the surrounding area. The Local Planning Authority will encourage contemporary and innovative design solutions that enhance local character. For extensions and alterations to residential properties, proposals will be required to accord with the appropriate design guidance.
- 5.1.6** Access and parking are dealt with elsewhere in the plan in Policy IN 2 and Policy IN 4, however they also have design considerations so these policies should be considered in tandem.
- 5.1.7** Physical Infrastructure, such as utilities and telecommunications including broadband provision, also need to be included in the design for new developments and are covered in the plan under the physical infrastructure section.

9 Revised Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document, Darlington Borough Council, July 2011 (or subsequent replacement).

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

### Energy Efficient Design and Climate Change

- 5.1.8** Minimising the impact of and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change is an objective of the Local Plan in order to contribute towards the achievement of the national commitment of net zero carbon and greenhouse gas emissions (100% reduction relative to 1990 levels) by 2050. Mitigating climate change is about ensuring that the design and construction of new development (external fabric and structure) and the layout of internal and outdoor space minimises carbon emissions. Whereas, increasing resilience to climate change is about ensuring that buildings can still function effectively in the future when the climate is expected to be different. Mitigation and resilience measures are complementary, they should be integrated into the design of new development.
- 5.1.9** The layout, orientation and design of buildings can reduce the need for energy consumption by maximising the potential to secure the benefits energy provides, e.g. heating, lighting and cooling, through alternative means. Design features such as south facing windows can allow for heat and light from the sun to be captured passively, whilst roof overhangs can provide natural shading, thereby reducing the need for cooling systems. Where layout, orientation and design is not constrained or dictated by other factors, i.e. by the character of the surrounding area or the juxtaposition of adjacent buildings, applicants will be required to demonstrate how the design of the development has reduced the need for energy consumption.
- 5.1.10** A significant reduction in carbon emissions can be achieved by ensuring that buildings use energy more efficiently. By incorporating higher standards of insulation and using combined heat and power systems in buildings, occupiers can get more out of each unit of fuel that they use. Energy efficiency is currently promoted by, and measured against, Part L of the Building Regulations. The regulations were amended in 2010 to reflect improved standards for carbon emission reduction that were then set within the Code for Sustainable Homes. Although the Code has been phased out as part of the Government's wider review of housing standards, and while the national target of 'net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions' from 2016 has been scrapped, energy efficiency standards will continue to be promoted through Building Regulations. These standards will be updated over the coming years to further improve the energy efficiency of new homes on an ongoing basis.

### Public Realm

- 5.1.11** 'Public realm' refers to the publicly accessible areas between buildings; the streets, paths, squares and parks that people use and move through on a day-to-day basis. Ensuring a high-quality, safe and accessible public realm is an essential part of creating environments that people want to live, work and invest in.
- 5.1.12** Developers will be required to demonstrate a clear and understandable relationship between the design of the public realm and the surrounding built and natural environment, building upon local character and distinctiveness and reinforcing the sense of place.
- 5.1.13** The public realm should be accessible to all members of the community and maximise opportunities for pedestrians and cycling within, to and from development. Within larger developments the public realm should also be considered as a wider network of publicly accessible spaces, which should be linked together in order to create sustainable and accessible neighbourhoods.
- 5.1.14** The design of the public realm can help to promote safe communities by limiting the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour to take place. To this end, where appropriate, new development proposals will be required to demonstrate the application of 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' and 'Secured by Design' principles, which look at the following aspects of development as a means of creating safe environments:
- environmental quality;
  - natural surveillance;
  - access and footpaths;
  - green infrastructure provision; and
  - lighting.

## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

- 5.1.15** This policy will be implemented and monitored by making and reviewing decisions on planning applications taking into consideration the Local Authorities obligations as set out in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

### Development on Brownfield sites and land which may be affected by contamination

- 5.1.16** Brownfield sites selected for redevelopment may be contaminated as a result of previous uses. It is desirable that such sites which are otherwise suitable for development are brought back into productive use, but it is essential that the health and wellbeing of construction workers or the end users of any development are not put at unacceptable risk. Therefore, proposals for development on land which is likely to be affected by contamination will be permitted only if the applicant can demonstrate that the site is or will be made safe for the proposed development and surroundings.
- 5.1.17** The Council will have regard to Government and other appropriate regional guidance when assessing land contamination reports submitted as part of the planning process. In considering outline applications, sufficient information will be required to enable the Council to be satisfied that the development can be carried out and used safely, and that any outstanding problems are capable of solution and can be dealt with as matters of detail.

## Flood Risk and Water Management

### Policy DC 2

#### Flood Risk & Water Management (Strategic Policy)

New development will be focused in areas of low flood risk (Flood Zone 1) as identified by the Borough's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019) or most recent assessment. In considering development on sites in higher flood risk areas, the Sequential and Exception Tests must be passed and the sequential approach applied on site. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required in accordance with national policy.

All development proposals will be expected to be designed to mitigate and adapt to climate change. They will be designed to ensure:

- a. They will be safe over the lifetime of the development;
- b. Flood risk is not increased elsewhere and will, where possible, reduce flood risk overall;
- c. Opportunities are taken to mitigate flooding elsewhere;
- d. Full separation of foul and surface water flows;
- e. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are prioritised; and
- f. SuDS have regard to the Tees Valley Authorities Local Standards for Sustainable Drainage (2015) and national standards.
- g. Opportunities for rainwater harvesting are utilised.

Where required, the incorporation of SuDS must be integral to the design process and integrated with green infrastructure. Priority should be given to natural drainage features. Where SuDS are provided arrangements must be made for their whole life management and maintenance.

Surface water run-off must be discharged to one or more of the following, listed in order of priority:

1. Discharged into the ground (infiltration); or where not reasonably practicable;
2. Discharged to a surface water body; or where not reasonably practicable;

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

3. Discharged to a surface water sewer, highway drain or another drainage system; or where not reasonably practicable;
4. Discharged to a combined sewer.

Disposal to combined sewers should be the last resort once all other methods have been investigated.

To ensure that growth can be accommodated sustainably by the sewerage infrastructure, this policy requires that in all locations surface water should be separated, with any surface water runoff entering the sewerage system being minimised and controlled. The priority is to avoid using public sewers wherever possible for the disposal of surface water. If a connection to the public sewerage network is the only option, there is a need for onsite attenuation to minimise and control the flows leaving the site.

For development proposals on previously developed land, the peak runoff rate from the development to any drain, sewer or surface water body for the 1-in-1 year rainfall event and the 1-in-100 year rainfall event should be as close as reasonably practicable to the greenfield runoff rate from the development for the same rainfall event, but should never exceed the rate of discharge from the development prior to redevelopment for that event. For developments on greenfield land, the peak runoff rate from the development to any highway drain, sewer or surface water body for the 1-in-1 year rainfall event and the 1-in-100 year rainfall event should never exceed the peak greenfield runoff rate for the same event.

Developers will be required to submit drainage details for consideration by the Council, in consultation with the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water Ltd, to ensure adequate management of foul and surface water flows. Major developments (development of 10 or more dwellings and other developments with a floor space of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more) will be required to incorporate SuDS unless it can be demonstrated that it would be inappropriate.

The drainage system must be designed and constructed so surface water discharged does not adversely impact the water quality of receiving water bodies, both during construction and when operational. New development should seek to improve water quality where possible, as well as maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity and habitat of watercourses.

Within critical drainage areas or other areas identified as having particular flood risk issues the Council may:

- h. Support reduced runoff rates.
- i. Seek contributions, where appropriate, towards off-site enhancements directly related to flow paths from the development, to provide increased flood risk benefits to the site and surrounding areas.

New developments should make an assessment of and address via mitigation measures where required, any risks from the construction and proposed use of the site to underlying groundwater, watercourses and other surface waters, in order to protect these resources and prevent contamination.

- 5.2.1** The NPPF outlines that the planning system plays a key role in the mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including the management of water and flood risk. It goes on to state that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at high risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Reducing and mitigating flood risk is an important issue for planning particularly as the effects of climate change are being realised. When addressing flood risk it is important to consider all sources of flooding which include fluvial, surface water, sewer and groundwater flooding.
- 5.2.2** As required by national policy, Local Plans should apply a sequential approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development

## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

in areas with a lower probability of flooding. Any proposal that involves development within an area of risk would require the exception test to be applied and passed if appropriate. The proposal would have to demonstrate wider sustainability benefits which outweigh the flood risk and also demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

- 5.2.3** The Local Plan has been informed by the Darlington Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019) which is the basis for the sequential test and identifies areas at risk of flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking into account the impacts of climate change. This assessment has informed the allocation of sites in the Local Plan and should be taken into account when considering future development proposals, along with catchment flood management plans, surface water management plans and related flood defence plans and strategies.
- 5.2.4** Policy DC 2 seeks to direct new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding in accordance with the sequential test. If it is not possible to direct development to low risk areas, then the exception test must be applied as outlined.
- 5.2.5** Flooding from surface water occurs during extreme rainfall, storms and when heavy snow melts, when the ground or rivers cannot absorb all the surface water or when rainwater rapidly flows into the public sewerage and drainage system, causing overloading and back-up of water to the surface. It is more of a risk in the older built up parts of the Borough with traditional drainage, such as the Town Centre Fringe, and low lying parts of the Borough.
- 5.2.6** Climate change and the significant amount of new development envisaged in the Local Plan could increase the risk, if the increase in impermeable surfaces is not adequately mitigated.
- 5.2.7** Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are now the preferred approach to managing surface water runoff from hard surfaces. The primary purpose of SuDS is to control surface water runoff close to where it falls and mimic the natural drainage of the site prior to development. They use a number of techniques generally based on natural drainage features to collect, treat, store and then release storm water slowly to the environment. There are many different SuDS features available to suit the constraints of a site. SuDS schemes provide many benefits beyond just reducing flood risk, such as assisting in improving water quality, creating new habitats for wildlife and providing a valuable amenity asset. Further information and technical guidance can be found in the Tees Valley Authorities Local Standards for Sustainable Drainage (2015) and national non-statutory standards.
- 5.2.8** The Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority is responsible for preparing a local flood risk management strategy and maintaining a register of flood risk assets. The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was published in May 2016. The Strategy sets out how the Council will manage flood risk from surface water runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses for which the Borough Council has a responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority, and other types of flooding where local agents can play a supporting role to lead agencies. The strategy identifies opportunities to reduce and mitigate flood risk; information which can be utilised in the development management process.
- 5.2.9** Part 2 of the 2010 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identified the Town Centre Fringe (area to the east of the river Skerne) as a Critical Drainage Area (CDA). CDAs are those areas identified from historical flood events and/or modelled data as having a significant risk from surface water flooding or subject to potential large changes in runoff due to development. In these areas and other areas with flood risk issues it may be beneficial to restrict runoff rates to a level to provide flood risk benefits. The Council may also seek contributions towards off-site enhancements directly related to flow paths from the development, to provide increased flood risk benefits to the site and surrounding areas.
- 5.2.10** Water resources are a particularly vulnerable aspect of the environment and it is important that groundwater, watercourses and other surface waters are protected from contamination. Darlington lies across a principal aquifer, Magnesian Limestone, a highly sensitive environmental receptor and an important source of water for a large number of public, private and industrial supplies. Pollutants can easily permeate soils and contaminate groundwater and development can also affect the hydrology

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

of the area. Once contaminated, it is very difficult and costly, if not impossible, to clean ground water. In taking a precautionary approach to groundwater protection, the Environment Agency have advised that they may object to SUDs proposals which seek to include direct pathways to groundwater.

- 5.2.11** Where risks to controlled waters are identified as part of a development, appropriate remediation and the implementation of mitigation measures will be required to prevent contamination and to protect resources. If potentially polluting materials are to be used/stored either during construction works or as part of the new land use, sufficient prevention and maintenance measures should be incorporated into the development proposals. Gypsum, which is readily dissolved by flowing underground water, underlies parts of the Darlington area. Developers will need to satisfy themselves and the Local Planning Authority that their proposals for development will not be affected by this geological feature.

### Health and Wellbeing

- 5.3.1** Helping to reduce health inequalities is a key local policy objective and providing accessible local healthcare facilities can improve the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the Borough. Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy<sup>(10)</sup> has two key aims directly relating to health and wellbeing. Firstly, to encourage people to be more physically active to improve health; and encouraging people to feel part of their community. Secondly there is an aim to help older people to stay independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.
- 5.3.2** Darlington has a network of primary and community care facilities, such as GP surgeries and dentists, as well as mental health and acute hospital facilities at West Park and Darlington Memorial Hospital respectively; both of these latter two are expected to continue to offer accessible healthcare from their existing sites. There is also a private hospital at Morton Park, and a private mental health facility at the Teesside International Airport site.
- 5.3.3** Many factors influence our health, including the lifestyles we lead, the environment we live in and the opportunities we have to exercise and access health facilities. A wider sense of wellbeing is influenced by a variety of factors such as opportunities for work and recreation, attractive environments, personal relationships and feelings of safety and community.
- 5.3.4** The link between planning and health has been set out in the NPPF and NPPG. The government's public health strategy 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People',<sup>(11)</sup> explicitly recognises that "*health considerations are an important part of planning policy*". Health and wellbeing is a cross-cutting theme, policies on inclusive design, green space, transport and housing in other chapters will play a key role in reducing health inequalities and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.
- 5.3.5** Healthy New Towns is an NHS England sponsored programme which is about building healthy communities. Darlington is one of 10 sites selected nationally to take part in this programme. Darlington's Healthy New Towns project has focused on an area including Red Hall, Burdon Hill and Lingfield Point - collectively known as the Eastern Growth Zone. It includes some new development and some refurbishment of existing homes.
- 5.3.6** The Eastern Growth Zone in Darlington was chosen due to the economic and housing development opportunities the area presented but along with some significant challenges in terms of health inequalities compared to the rest of Darlington. These include:
- High premature mortality rates;
  - Higher worklessness than other areas of Darlington;
  - Significantly high emergency hospital admissions;
  - A significantly high number of residents with a life-limiting condition.

10 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed Community Strategy 2008 - 2026, Revised May 2014.

11 Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England, Department of Health and Social Care, 2010.

## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

**5.3.7** There are a number of cross-cutting aims from the Healthy New Towns project that would be supported through development during the plan period including:

- Building of homes that assist citizens to stay informed, live healthily and maintain independence;
- Use the built environment & public realm as a health improvement tool that:
  - encourages healthier lifestyle choices and exercise;
  - aids connections within and between communities, social cohesion and sense of community;
  - harnesses natural benefits of green and blue space;
  - improves access to employment opportunities and employability.

### Policy DC 3

#### Health and Wellbeing

Development that supports improvements to health and wellbeing in Darlington will be supported. In order to achieve this the council will:

- a. Work with the NHS to reduce health inequalities in the areas with poorest health;
- b. Protect existing facilities, where possible, and support the provision of new or improved health facilities in sustainable locations;
- c. Support the integration of community facilities and services, i.e. health, education, cultural and leisure in multi-purpose buildings;
- d. Ensuring that new developments:
  - i. are age friendly, inclusive, safe and attractive, and easily accessible on foot or by bicycle. Where appropriate this should integrate dementia friendly design principles;
  - ii. have a strong sense of place which encourages social interaction;
  - iii. are designed to promote active travel and other physical activity through the arrangement of buildings and uses, access to open space and landscaping;
  - iv. through the arrangement of buildings and uses, promote access to open space and landscaping, and the provision of facilities to support walking.
- e. Promote improvements and enhance accessibility to the Borough's green spaces and green infrastructure corridors;
- f. All new development that may cause groundwater, surface water, air (including odour), noise or light pollution, either individually or cumulatively, will be required to incorporate measures to prevent and reduce their pollution so as not to cause unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of all existing and potential future occupants of land and buildings, the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the landscape;

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

- g. Require, in the case of development of 150 or more homes and all other non-residential 'major' development, the submission of a Health Impact Assessment as part of the application to explain how health considerations have informed the design. Assessments should be proportionate to the scale of development proposed and undertaken in line with current government guidance.<sup>(12)</sup>

Comprehensive planning of land for development at strategic development sites of Skerningham, Greater Faverdale and Coniscliffe Park will be required to include for the possibility of new primary care as appropriate (see Policies H 10 and H 11).

- 5.3.8** Applicants will be expected to set out within their Design and Access Statement how the proposals have been designed to take account of the requirements of this policy. Applicants are also encouraged to utilise the design principles set out within Sport England's 'Active Design' guide<sup>(13)</sup> when preparing a development scheme in order to promote active, healthy and stronger communities.
- 5.3.9** Population growth and an ageing population are placing pressure on primary healthcare facilities in Darlington. Population projections indicate an overall population increase of around 12,000 people between 2016 and 2036<sup>(14)</sup>, which is around 3000 extra patients in every five year period. However the over 65 population, which places a higher demand on services, is projected to increase from 21,000 in 2016 to 31,000 by 2026.
- 5.3.10** Types and levels of health issues vary considerably across Darlington and spatial planning has a role in meeting health needs throughout the Borough. The reasons for these variations are complex and are likely to include both disparities in health need and demand for health services. Health inequalities in Darlington are apparent with the most deprived areas tending to experience the poorest health.
- 5.3.11** Darlington Borough Council and Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) work together to identify the key priorities of the borough's residents through Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)<sup>(15)</sup>. The JSNA data highlights the health needs and current trends in the Borough in order to further understand and address the existing inequalities. Darlington CCG and its partners recognise the challenges facing the Borough in terms of addressing health inequalities and improving health outcomes.
- 5.3.12** The focus of future land and facility requirements will be on ensuring there is adequate primary care provision in the Borough to meet local needs. The council will support the provision of additional health facilities and will work with Darlington CCG and other service providers to ensure the Borough has a necessary supply and distribution of accessible premises to meet health care needs. Further information on health infrastructure will be set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 5.3.13** During the plan period a significant proportion of new housing is proposed in north, west and eastern fringes of Darlington. This development would generate additional needs for primary health care. Some GP practices near to these areas are already experiencing pressure on patient lists. Most general practices in Darlington encompass the entire township within their practice boundary and therefore patient choice will play a part in determining which practices have increases in patient numbers. Any additional capacity which is created in general practice will need to reflect patterns of patient choice.
- 5.3.14** Strategic sites include a requirement for land of appropriate configuration to accommodate community infrastructure to be reserved in a masterplan. These requirements will facilitate the delivery of additional health care provision, in accessible locations within housing growth areas, if funding is made available within the Plan period.

12 Public Health England, Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning , October 2020 (or subsequent replacement) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/929230/HIA\\_in\\_Planning\\_Guide\\_Sept2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929230/HIA_in_Planning_Guide_Sept2020.pdf)

13 Active Design - Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity, Sport England, October 2015.

14 Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017.

15 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2008, Darlington Borough Council and NHS Darlington.



## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

### Safeguarding Amenity

- 5.4.1** A core function of planning is to ensure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of all types of land and buildings, particularly residential properties. Without appropriate controls, new development could result in unacceptable living environments for its occupants, reduce the quality of life for the occupants of neighbouring buildings, and result in poor quality neighbourhoods overall. It is also an overarching aim of the Local Plan to improve the quality of life for those living in the Borough (Section 2 - Visions, Aims and Objectives), and to ensure that employment sites remain attractive, by not being unduly constrained by neighbouring uses.

#### Policy DC 4

##### Safeguarding Amenity

New development should be sited, designed and laid out to protect the amenity of existing users of neighbouring land and buildings and the amenity of the intended users of the new development. New development will be supported where it is suitably located and is acceptable in terms of:

##### Form of built development

- a. Privacy and overlooking;
- b. Access to sunlight and daylight;
- c. Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- d. The relationship of proposed and existing habitable rooms, windows and outdoor living spaces . Guidance on separation distances between residential developments is provided in the adopted Design of New Development SPD.

##### Use of land and buildings, including traffic movements and hours of operation

- e. Noise and disturbance;
- f. Artificial lighting;
- g. Vibration;
- h. Emissions from odour, fumes, smoke, dust, etc; and
- i. Commercial waste.

Where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to control such changes.

- 5.4.2** The Local Plan aims to deliver significant new development, mostly within the existing urban area of Darlington. The mix, density and concentration of uses needs to be planned well at the detailed level to avoid conflicts between uses, where segregation is not provided by land allocations.

- 5.4.3** The aspects of amenity taken into consideration through the planning process are:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;

## DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION 5

- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Noise and disturbance (including that caused by traffic);
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Emissions of odour, fumes, smoke, dust, etc., and
- Commercial waste.

- 5.4.4** Conflicts between neighbouring developments can often be avoided by careful design, siting and orientation of buildings and spaces, paying particular attention to those aspects which are most likely to cause issues, e.g. roads and railways, bin stores and noisy equipment, plant and operations, and which are most sensitive to their effects, e.g. recreational areas, outdoor amenity spaces or habitable rooms. Planning conditions can also be used to mitigate and reduce to a minimum adverse impacts and to control, for example, hours of operation and delivery times, as well as to secure any required mitigation or preventing a development from changing its character in a detrimental way.
- 5.4.5** The visual impact and sustainability of any mitigation measures, for example, acoustic barriers should be considered by developers and applicants.
- 5.4.6** In terms of new housing developments affected by noise, justification of how the development has been designed to minimise noise intrusion from environmental sources should be provided, as should details of how required internal and external noise levels will be achieved.
- 5.4.7** This policy applies equally to amenity levels within new and existing residential developments. For instance, proposals should avoid locating living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens next to, above, or below neighbouring bedrooms of attached properties or any proposed.
- 5.4.8** Other policies in this document deal specifically with uses which often have particular amenity impacts including; new employment uses (Policy E 2), new housing (Policy H 2), rural employment (Policy E 4) and the Town Centre (Policy TC 1) and these should be read in conjunction with this policy where they apply.
- 5.4.9** Certain development is permitted under national 'permitted development' rights' with the exception of prior approval. In such circumstances, impact on amenity is not a consideration as development of this scale is deemed to be minor in scale. Where there is clear justification to do so, permitted development rights may be removed to protect local amenity and minimise impacts on health and quality of life.
- 5.4.10** In assessing impacts on health and quality of life and in looking to ensure a good standard of amenity the Council will have regard to Government and other appropriate guidance on the assessment of matters which are material planning considerations.

## 5 DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSTRUCTION

### Employment and Training

#### Policy DC 5

##### Skills and Training

The Borough Council will encourage all local employers to participate in skills and employment training initiatives to increase access to employment for those who live within the area. Where development proposals would generate a significant number of construction and operational phase jobs, the Borough Council will seek to secure appropriate commitments and targets for employment skills and training, including apprenticeships appropriate to the development proposed.

- 5.5.1** 9.4 percent<sup>(16)</sup> of the Borough's residents (aged between 16 and 64) have no qualifications. This compares with 7.7 percent in Great Britain. This highlights the overall gap between the skills needs of the area and the existing skills pool available.
- 5.5.2** It is therefore important to ensure that current and future residents within the Borough have access to the employment and business opportunities that will emerge over the life of this Local Plan and that these opportunities are available across the range of employment opportunities that are forecast to emerge. This includes encouraging relationships between businesses operating within the Local Plan area and local schools and colleges, to raise aspirations and help prepare young people to have the right information, motivation and aptitude to compete with the best across the region to be part of the future workforce.
- 5.5.3** A key element of achieving this will be through continued working with the Borough Council and other partners to promote utilisation of jobs, skills and employment training, and where appropriate undertaking negotiations through the planning application process to secure targets and commitments via agreement in relation to associated job and training opportunities, both for construction-related employment and training that will increase access to employment. Where firms already run existing training programmes/apprenticeships this policy would not apply provided they can demonstrate these will include residents of the Borough. Any targets or commitments will be defined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the size and nature of the scheme proposed and, where relevant, scheme viability. Where feasible and relevant, the Borough Council will support the delivery of commitments made or targets set through any of its own related programmes or projects that are operational at the time.

16 National Online Manpower Information System.

## 6 HOUSING

- 6.0.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Local Planning Authorities to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing. It is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. Strategic policies should set out the minimum number of homes required. The size, type, and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should also be assessed and reflected in the planning policies. Many factors have an impact on housing demand including population growth, decreasing household size, an ageing population, migration, economic growth and residents unable to afford homes in the area. These issues, in combination, result in a significant need for new homes of an appropriate mix and type.
- 6.0.2** The NPPF also requires Local Planning Authorities to identify and update annually a five year supply of deliverable housing sites against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of 5% or 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the last three years.
- 6.0.3** It is important to note that the need to deliver a mix of new homes across the Borough is not considered in isolation and the Local Plan also considers and plans for issues such as the provision of new community facilities and infrastructure. It is a combination of these elements which are required to deliver sustainable communities and these issues are addressed in other relevant chapters and within the supporting infrastructure plan which has been published with the Local Plan.
- 6.0.4** This chapter sets out the housing requirement for the Borough, housing allocations and policies on the mix of housing, affordable housing, limits to development, exceptions, residential development in rural areas, housing intensification and accommodating travelling groups.

### Overall Housing Requirement

#### Darlington Housing Market Area

- 6.1.1** The housing market area covering Darlington Borough has links with North Yorkshire, Stockton-on-Tees and County Durham. Data and evidence, however, indicates that the Borough is generally a self-contained housing market area as outlined in the Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>(17)</sup>. This is the geographical area within which a substantial majority of the employed population both live and work, and where those moving house choose to stay. It is for this area which the Local Plan will address the housing needs.

#### Policy H 1

##### Housing Requirement (Strategic Policy)

Housing will be delivered to meet a minimum requirement of 492 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036. This results in a total net minimum requirement of 9,840 dwellings.

It is anticipated that the sites will be delivered in accordance with the housing trajectory in APPENDIX A which indicates that a continuous five-year supply of housing will be maintained throughout the plan period. The trajectory is an approximation of delivery and does not place any phasing restrictions on the sites.

## 6 HOUSING

At any point in the Local Plan period where there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five year land requirement, housing sites located beyond development limits that would make both a positive contribution to the five year supply of housing land and be well related to the built form of the main urban area or service villages (as defined in Policy SH 1) will be supported. Such proposals should be consistent with relevant national and Local Plan policies.

The NPPF states that strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. The table below outlines the minimum housing requirement for the neighbourhood areas in the Borough, following the above approach.

**Table 6.1 Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements**

Low Coniscliffe & Merrybent	962
Blackwell	45
Hurworth	816
Middleton St George	860
Sadberge	71

- 6.1.2** The amount of housing to be planned for is one of the most important issues within the Local Plan. The NPPF was re-issued with a number of changes in July 2018, one of which was the introduction of the standard method for calculating housing need. The Framework states, to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.
- 6.1.3** To calculate the minimum annual local housing need figure the standard method uses national household growth projections (2014-based household projections) for the area of the local authority to set a baseline. It then adjusts the average growth figure based on the areas affordability in order to address past under supply (using most recent median workplace-based affordability ratios). This generates a local housing need figure of 177 dwellings per annum for Darlington.
- 6.1.4** National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) outlines circumstances where it might be appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure than the standard method indicates. For example in areas where growth strategies are in place, strategic infrastructure improvements are planned or where an authority agrees to take on unmet need from a neighbouring authority. It also highlights that there may also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery or previous assessments of need (such as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the standard method.
- 6.1.5** The Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update (2017)<sup>(18)</sup> identified fundamental flaws in national statistics for population and household growth in Darlington Borough. It is this data which is utilised in the standard method. The 2014 based population projections and mid-year population estimates identified very little growth between 2011 and 2016 whilst local administrative data (NHS patient register, school census and records of those receiving state pension) contradicted this and show significantly higher levels of growth. This data justifies the need for an adjustment to household growth projections and the standard method figure as a baseline of housing need.

18 Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update, ORS, 2017.

## HOUSING 6

- 6.1.6** Modelling work was undertaken in the SHMA Update (2017) on a range of scenarios to derive a more reliable and appropriate demographic projection. The chosen scenario utilised recent local administrative data and long term migration trends. This work informed the housing requirement in the above policy. The methodology and modelling used for quantifying housing need is complex but it considered the following information:
- Population statistics from the Census 2001 and 2011;
  - Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 2014 based household projections;
  - Population projections;
  - Local administrative data;
  - Demographic trends; and
  - Economic forecasts.
- 6.1.7** The calculation of housing need in the SHMA Update (2017) also had to make a number of assumptions in relation to the working age population, unemployment rates, commuting patterns, economic activity rates and part time working trends etc. This list is not exhaustive but all factors and assumptions will have an impact on the required level of housing. The Council is also committed to supporting the economic growth of the Borough and the authority is active in attracting new businesses and industries to the area. This support is reflected through the housing requirement which accounts for projected employment growth and accommodating additional workers required.
- 6.1.8** The relationship between housing and economic growth also works in the other direction. If we do not deliver sufficient housing, of the right type and in the right areas, there is a risk that the working age population seek new homes in neighbouring authorities. Failure to plan for the homes we need could lead to detrimental economic and social impacts on the Borough.
- 6.1.9** Further information and details on how the housing requirement was derived can be found in the SHMA Update (2017).
- 6.1.10** With regards to the neighbourhood area housing requirements, the Council has followed policy and guidance in the NPPF and NPPG in setting the figures. The requirements are based on the number of dwellings that are expected to be built on housing allocations and commitments in that neighbourhood area between 2021 and 2036. This approach follows the guidance in reflecting the plan's spatial strategy and supporting evidence base (e.g. HELAA and SA). The neighbourhood planning body does not have to make specific provision for housing or seek to allocate sites to accommodate the requirement. The requirements are met through the allocations in policy H 2 and the housing commitments set out in table 6.7. If monitoring indicated that the committed and allocated sites were not delivering the number of homes set out in table 6.1, there should not be an automatic expectation that development will be allowed on non-allocated sites within the neighbourhood area. Monitoring of housing completions is undertaken yearly and if such a situation was to occur it would be addressed through a review of the Local Plan.
- 6.1.11** The scope of neighbourhood plans is up to the neighbourhood planning body. Groups are not required to plan for housing. If they wish to do so a neighbourhood plan can allocate additional sites to those in a local plan where this is supported by evidence to demonstrate need above that identified in the Local Plan. Consequently, it is important to note that the neighbourhood area housing requirements are not a restrictive maximum figure. Groups can plan for additional sites if they wish and other suitable windfall sites can be brought forward by developers. Early engagement with the Council is encouraged, where groups wish to exceed their housing requirement figures, to assess whether the scale of additional housing numbers is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies.

## 6 HOUSING

### Housing Land Supply

**6.2.1** The identified housing requirement will be met in full through the delivery of housing from a variety of sources. This will include; sites which are already being developed within the plan period (completions), sites which have planning permission (commitments), known housing sources (sites which are currently under consideration by the local planning authority or awaiting a legal agreement) and new site allocations. A housing trajectory has been included in APPENDIX A, which demonstrates that there is a range of sites that are capable of meeting the housing requirement and ensuring a continuous five year supply of deliverable housing land throughout the plan period. The table below outlines the amount of dwellings expected to be delivered in the five year periods of the Local Plan. It is however important to note that the housing trajectory does not place any phasing restrictions on the sites and they may come forward sooner than indicated.

**Table 6.2 Expected Housing Delivery**

Period	Number of Dwellings
2021/22 - 2025/26	2920
2026/27 - 2030/31	3547
2031/32 - 2035/36	2791

**6.2.2** There is the need to allocate sufficient land to accommodate a minimum of 9,840 dwellings within the plan period. The allocations which will contribute to achieving this are set out in Policy H 2. In combination with existing commitments and taking into account housing delivery since the start of the plan period (2016) there is sufficient land to surpass the housing target. The allocations and existing commitments have the potential to deliver approximately 8,883 homes up to 2036. The build out of a number of the strategic sites will also extend beyond 2036. Taking this into consideration the plan has sufficient land for approximately 14,836 homes.

**6.2.3** Further flexibility has been incorporated into the plan as contributions from windfall sites and brownfield regeneration schemes within the urban area have not been included in the allocations / housing trajectory. With regards to the regeneration sites, these have not been included due to site constraints and questions over deliverability. The Council will however be supportive of these sites coming forward providing they are in suitable and sustainable locations. A small sites windfall allowance of 25 dpa has been included within the housing supply and is set out within the housing trajectory (Appendix A).

**6.2.4** The housing requirement is a 'net' figure and must take into account any dwellings that are lost during that period through demolition or change of use. However, the loss of housing through demolition and change of use has been relatively low in Darlington Borough and there are no planned demolition or regeneration schemes identified.

### Five Year Supply

**6.2.5** There is a requirement to continually monitor delivery and the supply of housing sites to ensure a rolling five year supply throughout the plan period. The Local Planning Authority will produce a housing position statement at the beginning of each financial year to set out the current five year housing land supply. The five year requirement on 1 April 2021 based on the target of delivering 9,840 net additional dwellings between 2016 and 2036 (492 dwellings per year) was 546 dwellings per annum which includes a 5% buffer. Table 6.3. below sets out how the figure was arrived at.

**Table 6.3 Five year requirement on 1st April 2021**

Local Plan Housing Requirement	9,840 (492 dwellings per annum)
Requirement 2016/17 - 2020/21	2,460 (492 x 5)

## HOUSING 6

Net Completions 2016/17 - 2020/21	2,321
Shortfall 2016/17 - 2020/21	139 (2,460 - 2,321)
Requirement 2021/22 - 2025/26	2,599 (2,460 + 139)
Requirement 2021/22 - 2025/26 plus 5% buffer	2,729 (2,599 x 1.05)
Annual requirement plus 5% buffer	546

**6.2.6** The five year housing land supply on 1st April 2021 was 2920 dwellings. Table 6.4. below provides a break down of the categories of sites in the five year supply. At this point in time the Council could demonstrate a 5.3 year housing land supply, based on the type of evidence relating to deliverable sites required by national policy.

**Table 6.4 Summary of five year housing land supply on 1st April 2021**

	Total expected completions: 2021/22 - 2025/26
A. Sites of <10 dwellings with outline or full planning permission	0
B. Sites of 10 or more dwellings with detailed planning permission	910
C. Sites of 10 or more dwellings with outline planning permission	760
D. Sites with a grant of planning permission in principle	0
E. Allocations without planning permission	1125
F. Small sites allowance	125
Total	2920

**6.2.7** If the situation arose where the Local Planning Authority were unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a fall-back position within Policy H 1. The policy states, in this situation sites which are not allocated, are located beyond development limits but are well related to the built form of the main urban area or service villages will be supported. This is providing they are consistent with relevant national and Local Plan policies.

**6.2.8** In the above circumstance, proposals will not be required to accord with Policy H 7 Residential Development in the Countryside but will have to demonstrate that they will be deliverable in the short term, therefore contributing to the five year supply. The Local Planning Authority may reduce implementation or submission of reserved matters timescales to ensure delivery takes place within the five year period and to ensure the site makes a positive contribution to the five year supply. It is important to note that small sites can makes a positive contribution to the housing land supply. If an application is granted under this situation and subsequently expires, it will not necessarily be renewed automatically if permission is sought again.

**6.2.9** If monitoring indicates that there is persistent and prolonged under delivery of housing, a review of this housing chapter and the housing allocations will be undertaken in order to resolve the situation.



## 6 HOUSING

### Spatial Distribution of New Housing

- 6.2.10** Development opportunities for housing should be primarily focused in those areas that provide (or will be able to provide) the level of services, facilities and employment opportunities that are required to support communities and an increase in the population.
- 6.2.11** The distribution of sites has followed the existing settlement hierarchy. A large proportion have been focused on the main urban core of Darlington Borough via sites within the main urban area and urban extensions. Strategic urban extensions are focused to the north east and west of the main urban area. Smaller scale extensions are also proposed around the urban fringe. The strategic urban extensions would take some time to deliver due to infrastructure requirements, consequently it was considered necessary to look to the service villages for sites which could be delivered in the short and medium term.
- 6.2.12** Only the service villages are considered to be suitable for housing development in the Local Plan. The smaller more rural villages as defined in the settlement hierarchy are generally considered to be less favourable locations for housing development as they meet limited sustainability criteria. They are considered to be unsuitable due to their remote locations and lack of facilities / services. As a consequence no housing allocations have been proposed in these areas.

### Policy H 2

#### Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy)

The following sites are allocated for housing development and are identified on the Policies Map. The allocations are required to meet the housing requirement as set out in Policy H 1, taking into account existing commitments (extant planning permissions) and completions since April 2016.

The allocations will assist to meet the Boroughs quantitative and qualitative need for housing over the plan period. They will provide an appropriate mix of residential developments in accordance with the objectives set out in Policy H 4 and will support the sustainable development of the Borough in accordance with the locational strategy.

The sites will provide a supply of housing land sufficient to evidence a deliverable five year rolling housing supply in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The yield identified is for indicative purposes only and the final number of homes to be delivered on site will be determined by the planning application process. Development proposals on the allocated sites listed below will be permitted providing the scheme is in accordance with other relevant policies set out in the Local Plan and national policy. Schemes should satisfactorily address any issues or requirements as set out in APPENDIX B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS.

**Table 6.5 Housing Allocations**

Location	Site ref	Site name	Site area (ha)	Indicative site yield (by 2036)	Indicative site yield (after 2036)
Urban Extension	20	Great Burdon	88.39	500	750
	41	Coniscliffe Park South	28.32	420	115
	100	Hall Farm, Branksome	21.89	270	180
	185	Greater Faverdale	178.48	750	1250
	249	Coniscliffe Park North	50.08	516	469

## HOUSING 6

Location	Site ref	Site name	Site area (ha)	Indicative site yield (by 2036)	Indicative site yield (after 2036)
	251	Skerningham	492.19	1650	2850
	392	Elm Tree Farm	7.10	150	
	410	Snipe Lane, Hurworth Moor	34.47	700	
Urban Area	11	Cattle Mart	2.16	76	
	355	Lingfield Point	33.6	331	
	403	Blackwell Grange East	5.26	72	
	411	Chesnut Street Car Park	1.37	34	
	412	12 - 18 Skinnergate	0.22	15	
Villages	95	Beech Crescent East, Heighington	1.53	20	
	99	Maxgate Farm, MSG	13.71	260	
Total				<b>5764</b>	5614

**6.2.13** The policy above indicates that the allocations are capable of accommodating around 5,764 homes in the Borough throughout the plan period. The housing requirement will also be met by existing commitments on major sites (table 6.7), some of which are currently being built out, net completions since 1st April 2016 and a small sites allowance of 25 dwellings per annum. The table below provides a summary of the overall housing supply expected in the period 2016 to 2036, highlighting that the total supply ensures that the housing requirement will be met and exceeded. The figure of 3,119 homes on commitments is the total capacity of those sites based on planning permissions as at 1st April 2021 (with the exception of site 68 West Park Garden Village, the development of which is assumed to continue after 2036). Historically lapse rates in the Borough have been around 14% and if a similar lapse rate were applied to existing commitments this would reduce the overall supply summarised in table 6.6 by around 400 dwellings. It is important to note that extra capacity exists on a number of sites and they are assumed to be delivered after 2036. This includes site 68 West Park Garden Village a housing commitment and six of the housing allocations, which total 5,614 beyond 2036. Furthermore, no allowance is made for windfalls over one hectare, and the small site allowance of 25 dwellings a year is below the historic average of 37 dwellings per year on such sites.

**Table 6.6 Overall housing supply 2016 - 36**

Net Completions 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2021	<u>2321</u>
Commitments (major sites) 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2036	3119
Allocations 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2036	5764
Small sites windfall allowance 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2036	375 <sup>(19)</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11579</b>

19 Remaining 15 years multiplied by small sites allowance of 25 dwellings per annum (15x25=375).

## 6 HOUSING

**6.2.14** The indicative yields have been calculated using density multipliers and average developable areas for particular site sizes. Where on-site constraints have restricted the developable area this has been reflected in the yields. Also in cases where more detailed information has been available, for example via a developer proposal in a current planning application, this has been reflected in the yield.

**6.2.15** The allocations have been selected taking into account sustainability principles and the following criteria:

- Directing development to within the urban area, as urban extensions and to the service villages, in accordance with the locational strategy;
- Selecting sites in sustainable locations with good access to public transport, services, shops, employment locations and community facilities;
- Including brownfield sites where possible, taking into account site constraints and economic viability;
- Avoiding areas which have significant physical constraints and avoiding environmentally sensitive locations;
- Selecting a mix of sites in terms of size and location, which can meet both the quantitative and qualitative housing needs over the plan period.
- Selecting sites which have a reasonable prospect of being delivered within the twenty year plan period.

**6.2.16** APPENDIX B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS provides guidance for each housing allocation, outlining site specific requirements, constraints or relevant information. It should be noted that this guidance is not exhaustive and further issues may need to be addressed via a planning application. The statements will also give guidance in some cases on the type of schemes and densities which the Council would be supportive of. Generic issues such as affordable housing requirements will not be set out in the statements as they will apply to most sites. Specific infrastructure requirements will also be dealt with at the planning application stage unless there is a need for on-site provision. This will mainly apply to the strategic urban extensions.

**Table 6.7 Housing Commitments**

Site ref	Site name	Size (ha)	Total number of dwellings	Remaining dwellings at April 2021 (to be completed pre 2036)
3	South of Burtree Lane	17.02	380	380
8	Berrymead Farm	21.42	370	370
10	Blackwell Grange, West.	9.75	59	45
16	Lancaster House, DTVA	1.88	55	24
25	Former Arts Centre, Vane Terrace	0.47	38	4
28	Springfield School	2.93	80	15
45	High Stell	8.49	198	186
51	Mowden Hall	1.98	30	11

## HOUSING 6

Site ref	Site name	Size (ha)	Total number of dwellings	Remaining dwellings at April 2021 (to be completed pre 2036)
52	Central Park	4.47	359	85
60	North West of Heron Drive	1.34	35	24
63	School Aycliffe West	3.97	101	10
65	Land between Middleton Lane and Neasham Road	2.49	27	19
68	West Park Garden Village	79.32	1200	840
73	West Park (remainder)	4.78	164	48
78	East of Middleton Road, Sadberge	0.75	25	25
89	Land west of Oak Tree, MSG	2.66	61	61
91	Walworth Road, Heighington	3.34	75	15
103	East of Roundhill Road (phase 1)	5.79	95	47
146	Land South of Railway, MSG	14.8	330	330
228	Northgate House, Town Centre	0.14	96	96
241	St Clares Abbey, Carmel Road North	2.49	10	10
318	North of Allington Way	3.37	85	55
333	East of Roundhill Road (phase 2)	5.17	100	65
340	East of Gate Lane, Low Coniscliffe	3.38	37	26
386	Land between Yarm Road and railway line, East, MSG	0.64	20	4
391	Chancery House, 4 - 6 Horsemarket	0.04	11	11
394	Lakeside, The Old Brickworks, Neasham Road	5.59	118	79
395	Dr Piper House, King Street.	0.13	30	30
406	Northern Echo Building	0.15	52	52
420	Former Nu-Interiors, Leadenhall Street	0.1	30	30
421	Elegant House, Whessoe Road	0.18	22	22
422	Reservoir (Disused) Darlington Road, Sadberge	2.8	46	46
423	213 - 217 Haughton Road	0.2	12	12
424	182 Northgate	0.1	24	24
425	Former Rise Carr Club, Eldon Place	0.05	18	18

## 6 HOUSING

Site ref	Site name	Size (ha)	Total number of dwellings	Remaining dwellings at April 2021 (to be completed pre 2036)
	<b>Total</b>			3119

### Development Limits

#### Policy H 3

##### Development Limits (Strategic Policy)

Development within the limits identified on the Policies Map will be acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other relevant national and local policies.

- 6.3.1** Development limits are a planning policy tool in the Local Plan, to help to achieve the locational strategy for new development. The Local Plan's aims and objectives set out that development will be expected to be in sustainable locations, within and around existing urban areas in order to protect the Borough's green infrastructure network. The development limits help preserve the distinctive identities of existing settlements, protect the open countryside between settlements and preserve the countryside's intrinsic character and beauty. There are a number of other non housing allocations beyond development limits that are considered appropriate locations for their identified use (Policies E1, E2 and E3).
- 6.3.2** The limits, defined through the Policy H 3, will provide more certainty as to where development will or will not generally be permitted.
- 6.3.3** Work to identify where the edge of the built up area ends and the countryside begins has been undertaken in the preparation of these limits to development. This has taken into account factors such as the nature of the land use or building and whether it would be typically located within the urban area or the countryside. The limits follow clearly defined permanent features, such as walls, fences or roads wherever possible.
- 6.3.4** The development limits have been drawn to include areas identified for future planned growth of housing and employment adjoining the urban area, such as Skertingham, Greater Faverdale, West Park Garden Village and Great Burdon. In addition to the main urban area a similar exercise has been undertaken for the Borough's villages. It should be noted that not all of the Borough's villages have development limits. In these areas policies relating to development in the countryside will apply.

### Housing Mix

#### Policy H 4

##### Housing Mix

Proposals for housing development will be encouraged to provide an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures which have regard to local needs as identified within the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment or other relevant evidence. A suitable housing mix should also give consideration to a site's location, physical constraints, character and surrounding context.

## HOUSING 6

The Council will support proposals for specialised housing for both older people and those with disabilities to meet identified needs outlined within most recent evidence. Proposed sites for such schemes will be expected to be in sustainable locations close to essential services and facilities and well served public transport routes.

To ensure that new homes provide quality living environments for residents both now and in the future, the following standards from Building Regulations Approved Document M: Volume 1 (Access to and use of dwellings) will apply to new dwellings, subject to consideration of site suitability and site viability:

- a. 45% of all new dwellings will meet category 2 requirements (accessible and adaptable dwellings).
- b. 9% of all new dwellings will meet category 3 requirements (a) or (b) (wheelchair user dwellings). Where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling, homes should meet building regulation M4 (3) (2) (b). When providing for wheelchair user housing, early discussion with the Council is required to obtain the most up to date information on specific need in the local area. Where there is no specific need identified, then M4 (3) (a) will apply, to allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the future needs of wheelchair users.

To increase housing options, the Council will encourage and support the delivery of custom and self-build housing. The Council will monitor the demand for this type of housing and will assist in the delivery of sites.

- 6.4.1** The NPPF requires the Council to plan for a mix of housing to meet the needs of communities. This includes but is not limited to, families with children, older people and people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes. The overall objective is to widen the choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable inclusive and mixed communities. Policy H 4 sets out the Council's approach to meeting these needs.
- 6.4.2** The Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Dec 2020<sup>(20)</sup> provides the most up to date evidence of housing need of specific types in the Borough. The assessment provides a comparison of Darlington Borough with England regarding age profile, household tenure, property type and property size. The comparison does not highlight any particular issues or challenges that make the housing market area significantly different.
- 6.4.3** The assessment goes on to consider other specific housing needs for parts of the local community. The evidence indicates that there will be an increasing demand in the future for specialist housing to meet the needs of the elderly and those with physical or learning disabilities. The SHMA quantifies the likely needs of these groups. An ageing population is a national issue and the assessment highlights the importance of meeting the needs of the elderly population when planning for new housing. It is acknowledged that this is not necessarily solely through specialist provision as housing solutions for older people can also be found from general housing and many older people may not want or need specialist accommodation or care. Provision may come in the form of bungalows or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in needs.
- 6.4.4** Government policy is focused on supporting older people and those with a disability to live independently at home. Supporting independent living can help to reduce the costs to health and social services and providing more housing options for older people can free up homes which are under occupied. Meeting these needs is a challenge, however providing more accessible and easily adaptable homes will help people to maintain independence for longer. This is recognised in Policy H 4 with the requirements for standards relating to accessible and adaptable homes. These standards are governed by the Building Regulations and are set out in the 2015 edition of Approved Document M: Volume 1 (Access to and use of dwellings) (2016 amendments)<sup>(21)</sup>. These standards are part of the optional technical requirements which exceed the minimum standards required by the Building

20 Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment, ORS, Dec 2020.

21 Approved Document M: Volume 1 Access to and use of dwellings, HM Government, 2016 amendments.

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Regulations in respect of access. The Government's intention is that Local Planning Authorities should not apply any additional local standards on requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings. The optional technical standards help to stream line standards nationally.

- 6.4.5** Category 1 requirements are mandatory within the Building Regulations and are classed as a visitable dwelling. Reasonable provision should be made for people to gain access to and use the dwelling and its facilities. A category 2 dwelling is classed as accessible and adaptable and is optional in the Building Regulations. Provision must be sufficient to meet the needs of occupants with differing needs including some older and disabled people and to allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of the occupant over time. A category 3 dwelling is classed as wheelchair user and is optional in the Building Regulations. The provision made must be sufficient to allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs. The standards will be applied to outline or full applications. They will not be applied retrospectively to previous permissions.
- 6.4.6** The evidence to support the percentage requirements for accessible and adaptable homes is set out in the SHMA 2020. Modelling work was undertaken in the assessment which utilised national and local data on housing, long term illness and disability, to estimate the number of households likely to require adaptations or needing to move to a more suitable home in the housing market area. The assessment indicated that at least 4,948 households will require adapted homes by 2036. This represents 54% of the overall housing need for Darlington between 2016 and 2036. More detailed analysis of the data also revealed that at least 790 wheelchair adapted homes will be required over the plan period which results in 9% of overall housing in Darlington needing to be M4(3) standard. Subsequently this implies a need for 45% of all new homes to be M4(2) standard (54% minus 9%).
- 6.4.7** With regards to other specific needs, the SHMA outlines that within Darlington Borough there are few students. Most students are either under 18 or are mature students who live in their own home. Local colleges do not provide specialist accommodation for its students. Teesside University has part of the campus in Darlington but this does not provide accommodation. As such, there is limited student impact on the working of the local housing market.
- 6.4.8** The numbers of service personnel living in Darlington is relatively low compared to the overall population of the housing market area. A large base is located 15 miles away at Catterick and could impact on Darlington if the Borough were ever expected to meet some of the bases housing need. The nations armed forces have been reduced in size over previous years, however there are plans for the base at Catterick to be increased in size in the near future. The Council believes that this growth is to be dealt with in the Catterick Garrison area and Richmondshire District Council have not asked Darlington Borough Council to accommodate any of this growth in the draft Local Plan.
- 6.4.9** There has been a rise in the relative size of the private rented sector and a decline in owner occupation both in Darlington and across England between 2001 and 2011. The evidence supports continuing demand for and growth in private rented sector homes in Darlington.
- 6.4.10** Custom and self-build is the process by which an individual or association purchases a plot of land and then builds their own home. The process can vary from the individual undertaking the whole process or commissioning architects or builders to assist. The evidence in the SHMA and on the authorities Custom and Self-build Register suggests that there is limited demand for self-build. The Council are however keen to widen opportunities for people to build their own homes as this is an important element of boosting housing supply and meeting housing aspirations.

## Affordable Housing

### Policy H 5

#### Affordable Housing (Strategic Policy)

In order to meet the needs of people who are not able to access the general housing market, the provision of affordable housing will be expected in residential development schemes of 10 or more dwellings. Exemptions include residential institutions, student accommodation, live work units where the main use is predominantly employment, gypsy and traveller accommodation and non residential development.

The level and type of affordable housing required in residential developments is as follows:

**Table 6.8 Affordable Housing Requirement**

Location (wards)	Affordable Requirement	Tenure Split of the Affordable Requirement
Bank Top and Lascelles, Northgate, Park East, Stephenson.	10%	100% affordable home ownership
Brinkburn and Faverdale, Cockerton, College, Eastbourne, Harrowgate Hill, Haughton and Springfield, Heighington and Coniscliffe, North Road, Pierremont, Red Hall and Lingfield, Sadberge and Middleton St George and Whinfield,	20%	50% affordable rent and 50% affordable home ownership
Hummersknott, Hurworth, Mowden and Park West.	30%	65% affordable rent and 35% affordable home ownership

A map of these areas can be found in APPENDIX E.

Developments of less than 10 dwellings will not generally be required to make an affordable housing contribution, unless they form part of a rural exceptions site.

The tenure split to be provided on site is set out within table 6.8 and differs across the three requirement areas. In determining the type and size of affordable housing to be provided, the Council will also have regard to the evidence in the most recent SHMA.

Affordable housing will normally be provided on-site alongside market housing to create balanced communities. As such, the affordable housing should be distributed across sites in small clusters of dwellings. Exceptions to the requirement for on-site provision will be:

- a. Schemes which involve the conversion of a building which is not able to physically accommodate units of the size and type of affordable housing which is required within that locality;
- b. Specialist accommodation where the management of the building(s) would make it difficult to provide affordable housing on-site (such as sheltered accommodation); and
- c. Any other circumstances where the Council considers off-site provision to be preferable to on-site provision; for example where a contribution would result in the delivery of more affordable homes off-site or in a more suitable location when compared to the the policy requirement for on-site provision. Such an approach would be required to contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.



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In the above circumstances, the requirement should be provided off-site on developer owned land or a financial contribution by way of a commuted sum will be expected, which will be used by the Council to meet affordable housing needs within the Borough. The sum shall be equal to the difference between the open market valuation of the affordable units which would have been provided on-site and the purchase price that the Registered Provider would have been willing to pay for these units.

Where an applicant considers that the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of this policy would make a scheme unviable, they must submit a detailed viability assessment to demonstrate that this is the case and to show the maximum level of affordable housing that could be delivered on the site. The applicant will be expected to deliver the maximum level of affordable housing achievable.

**6.5.1** Affordable housing provides opportunities for people who are unable to access the housing market. It provides suitable housing for people who cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market and also for those people who work in different aspects of the economy. It also assists in reducing homelessness and overcrowding. Currently affordable housing is delivered within the Borough by Registered Providers and the Council. The Council's stock comprises of approximately 4,000 social rent units and 800 affordable rent units. The Council are aware of the need for affordable homes in the Borough and therefore are very much active in delivery. Delivery is currently focused largely on affordable rent schemes due to a lack of government subsidies for social rent. The different types of affordable housing are outlined below. Dwellings that do not meet the definitions of affordable housing will not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

- **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

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- 6.5.2** Darlington Borough does have a substantial need for affordable homes and detailed evidence is provided in the SHMA (2020). The assessment provides an analysis of the social, economic, housing and demographic situation across the Borough and identifies a need of 233 affordable dwellings per annum over the plan period, a total of 4,646. This would equate to approximately 47.2% of the housing requirement figure (492 dwellings per annum as outlined in Policy H 1). The affordable need is broken down into 3,252 dwellings for households unable to afford (163 dwellings per annum) and 1,394 dwellings for households aspiring to homeownership (70 dwellings per annum). Given the level of affordable housing need identified, it is important to maximise the amount of affordable housing that can be delivered through market housing led developments. Key to this is the economic viability of such developments.
- 6.5.3** Policy H 5 will assist in achieving delivery of affordable homes via market led housing schemes. It sets out the affordable housing requirement for schemes of 10 or more dwellings within particular areas of the Borough. The Local Plan Viability Assessment, which is published alongside the Local Plan, examines the impact of various levels of affordable housing on the viability of housing development across the Borough and demonstrates that the requirements within H 5 are viable. The requirement has been set so as to not stifle overall development and to contribute to affordable need. It is acknowledged that in some individual cases these proposed levels of affordable housing may not be viable due to other site specific issues. In such circumstances applicants will be expected to submit evidence to substantiate this consisting of a viability assessment. Where the evidence is considered to be satisfactory, lower levels of affordable housing provision will be explored.
- 6.5.4** Affordable housing includes different tenures and products. The NPPF (July 2021) sets out a requirement that 10% of major housing development is available for affordable home ownership. The policy therefore sets out the required split which has been derived utilising evidence relating to need from the SHMA and the Local Plan Viability Assessment but also ensures the NPPF requirement is met.

## Exception Sites

### Policy H 6

#### Exception Sites (Strategic Policy)

##### Rural Exception Sites

Affordable housing schemes closely related to the identified development limits of the service villages and rural villages will be permitted providing:

- a. Affordable housing need in the local area has been demonstrated;
- b. Local need cannot be met on sites within the settlement limits;
- c. The type and size of housing provided reflects identified local need;
- d. Arrangements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable in perpetuity; and
- e. The site is well-related to the settlement and local services and does not conflict with other policies in the Local Plan.

In exceptional circumstances, a small proportion of market or self/custom build housing may be provided, if it can be demonstrated via a detailed viability assessment that a 100% affordable scheme would be unviable and the market homes would support delivery.

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### Entry-Level Exception Sites

Entry-Level affordable housing schemes closely related to the identified development limits of the Darlington urban area, services villages and rural villages will be permitted providing:

- a. It is demonstrated, through an up to date housing needs assessment, that the need for the housing proposed is not already being met in the Borough by existing commitments or policies and allocations in this Plan;
- b. It consists of one or more types of affordable housing types suitable for first time buyers and first time renters;
- c. The site is not already allocated for housing and is not larger than 1 hectare in size or is for more than 5% of the number of existing homes in the settlement;
- d. It does not conflict with other policies in the Local Plan.

### Rural Exception Sites

- 6.6.1** The housing market can be stronger in rural areas with prices generally higher than similar properties in urban areas and suburbs. This can make it difficult for people who want to live close to their families in such areas or for those whose employment is based in the rural area. It can also result in younger people moving out of village areas subsequently resulting in an imbalance in the age structure of the rural population.
- 6.6.2** In the SHMA (2020) there is limited spatial evidence for the distribution of additional affordable housing needed. As such, there is no evidence of specific unmet needs for additional affordable housing in the service villages or any of the other villages / hamlets in the Borough. If it can be demonstrated by a local needs survey that there is a need for additional affordable homes in these areas, Policy H 6 allows for the provision of affordable dwellings on the edges of villages. The survey would normally be carried out by a parish council or Registered Provider and would have to satisfy the Borough Council. Where supported by a detailed viability assessment, a small proportion of market housing may be provided if it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to deliver the affordable dwellings.

### Entry-level Exception Sites

- 6.6.3** National policy requires the Council to support the development of entry-level exception sites. Such sites are expected to help meet the affordable housing needs of first time buyers, or those looking to rent their first home, where this need is not being provided for through existing or planned development. As such proposals for entry-level sites will be expected to provide information that details the need is for affordable housing that meets the needs of first time buyers and first time renters and the extent to which allocations in the development plan and sites with extant planning permission will meet that need.
- 6.6.4** The type of homes proposed will be based on evidence from an up to date needs assessment. It is expected that entry-level schemes will consist of more than one type of affordable housing. From the SHMA (2020) it is considered likely that the types to be included will be shared equity and social rented as these types are considered to best meet the needs of first time buyers and first time renters respectively.
- 6.6.5** In line with national policy, entry-level scheme should be limited either to sites of 1 hectare or less in size or to consist of no more than 5% of the total number of homes in the settlement, based on the latest available data. In relation to this, proposals will be expected to not be in conflict with other policies in the plan and be designed taking account of the requirements of policy DC1: Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change.

## Residential Development in the Countryside

### Policy H 7

#### Residential Development in the Countryside (Strategic Policy)

New isolated dwellings in the countryside will be avoided. New permanent dwellings will only be permitted where they meet criteria set in national policy (Para. 80, NPPF July 2021). Proposals for rural workers dwellings will need to demonstrate:

- i. an essential need to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; and;
- ii. provide evidence as to why the need for on-site accommodation cannot be dealt with by other means, such as CCTV surveillance, or met in another way through alternative accommodation in the existing local housing stock within a reasonable distance; and;
- iii. the location of the proposed residential accommodation has been carefully considered to minimise visual impact on the countryside and any neighbouring land uses.

The replacement of residential buildings in the open countryside will only be permitted providing;

- a. There is no detrimental effect on the character, appearance, historical context and amenities of the site and surroundings;
- b. The existing dwelling has a lawful use, has not been abandoned, and is not a caravan, mobile home or other temporary structure;
- c. The size of the new replacement dwelling is not significantly larger than the original house volume or footprint;
- d. The number of new dwellings is no more than the number of dwellings to be demolished and replaced; and
- e. They are positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless a more appropriate location is identified for landscape, highway safety, neighbouring residential amenity, or other environmental reasons.

Extensions to existing residential dwellings in the countryside, which require planning permission, will be permitted providing there is no significant detrimental impact on the character of the dwelling or its setting.

Where planning permission is required for the conversion or change of use of buildings in the countryside to residential use (defined by being outside development limits) proposals will be permitted where it has been demonstrated that they are no longer required for their original purpose and there is no potential for conversion to non-residential use.

Proposals for conversion and change of use to residential uses will be expected to meet the following criteria:

- f. The building is of permanent construction and capable of conversion without major reconstruction or rebuilding as demonstrated by a structural survey;
- g. The proposal is largely accommodated within the existing building(s). Any extensions that are required must be subordinate in scale and proportion and of a suitable design to ensure that they are in keeping with to the original dwelling;
- h. The proposed use does not detract from its setting in the immediate landscape;
- i. Conversion is capable without prejudicing any viable agricultural operations on an active farm unit;

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- j. The conversion in itself will not generate a need for future building in the countryside;
- k. The access to the site and approach roads are suitable for the levels and type of traffic likely to be generated; and
- l. The development would not result in unacceptable amenity levels arising from nearby operations or conflicting uses.

- 6.7.1** National planning policy states that isolated new dwellings in the countryside should be avoided. They will only be permitted in the circumstances as outlined in paragraph 80 of the NPPF (July 2021), for example if it can be demonstrated there is a specific need for a rural worker(s) or are of exceptional design quality.
- 6.7.2** Replacement dwellings and extensions to existing dwellings can have a significant adverse impact on the character of the surroundings and/or on the existing property itself. Such proposals should meet the criteria in Policy H 7 above. The replacement of rural dwellings will be carefully controlled to avoid the loss of buildings that are worthy of retention, (e.g. those identified as non-designated heritage assets and/or making a positive contribution to the character of the area). Where buildings are worthy of retention, applicants will have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that they are not capable of renovation.
- 6.7.3** Not all changes of use or conversions to residential require planning consent. Rights to convert existing buildings are set out in the General Permitted Development Order regulations. Advice can be sought on these regulations either on the government's Planning Portal website or by contacting the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.7.4** The re-use of agricultural buildings for purposes that benefit the rural economy are the preferred option to promote and enable growth of the rural economy. This accords with the NPPF as it outlines that isolated dwellings in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances.
- 6.7.5** Policy H 7 will also be used in the consideration of the conversion or change of use of non-agricultural buildings in rural areas and can include buildings such as public houses and petrol filling stations. Where such a building is considered appropriate for conversion but is already in some form of economic use it will be necessary to demonstrate that the existing (or most recent) use is no longer required or viable. It is acknowledged that the re-use of such buildings is not always viable. Subsequently conversion to residential use may be suitable providing the criteria in Policy H 7 is met.
- 6.7.6** Where the conversion of the property to residential is to be considered, the building must be capable of conversion without substantial alteration and extension. To demonstrate the building is sound, any proposal must, through the submission of a professionally prepared structural report, confirm that the building is free from major defects and can be converted without significant alterations or substantial demolition and rebuild. Where a building is beyond repair or restoration or requires major reconstruction any proposal for replacement or rebuild should be considered against Policy H 7.
- 6.7.7** In addition, the loss of a building in the countryside to a dwelling should not result in the demand for further building in the rural area. For example, the loss of a barn to a dwelling should not result in the farm holding requiring the construction of a further barn or building for a similar function.

## Housing Intensification

### Policy H 8

#### Housing Intensification

##### A) Subdivision of dwellings to HMO's and self contained flats

In circumstances where planning permission is required for self contained flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), permission will normally be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant impact on the following:

- i. Privacy of existing homes and gardens of neighbours - must be maintained and ensured for new occupiers;
- ii. Vehicular access or car parking – both in terms of highway safety or visual, noise or light impact on neighbours;
- iii. Service provision – there should be sufficient space to accommodate adequate bin storage and accommodate other ancillary functions for the increased number of residents;
- iv. Housing stock – to protect the existing small family housing stock, and to allow for adequate residential space standards in the proposed subdivided dwelling, the subdivision of existing properties of less than 4 bedrooms will not be permitted.

Applicants will be expected to submit evidence to demonstrate that there will be no significant impact on the criteria outlined above.

##### B) Back land or garden development

The development of a rear residential garden for a new dwelling will not normally be permitted. A limited scale of backland garden development may be acceptable providing it does not have a significant adverse impact upon the following:

- i. Rear garden land which contributes either individually or as part of a larger swathe of green space to amenity of residents or provides wildlife habitats;
- ii. The privacy of existing homes and gardens of neighbours or occupiers of the new development;
- iii. Vehicular access or car parking – both in terms of highway safety or visual, noise or light impact on neighbours;
- iv. Existing trees, shrubs and other wildlife habitats.

All development proposals should have regard to the Design of New Development SPD (2011), or most recent version.

- 6.8.1** National planning policy allows Councils to set out policies to resist inappropriate development, to set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances, and requires consideration to be given to a policy controlling inappropriate development of residential gardens. Because these issues are often locally contentious, a policy is considered appropriate, to provide more clarity for applicants and decision makers alike.

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### Sub-division of Existing Housing Stock including HMOs and Self-contained Flats

- 6.8.2** High concentrations of sub-divided housing stock or other forms of Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) can cause problems within a local community if not properly managed. Changes to permitted development regulations have made it easier for such properties to be created, and they can form a vital part of the overall housing mix. However when concentrations get too high, problems can arise, to the detriment of the amenity of existing residents.
- 6.8.3** The creation of HMOs and self-contained flats has increased in recent years, in response to the increasing number of smaller households and the need for more affordable, low cost housing. Needs are expected to increase further in response to changes to housing benefit payments. HMOs of three to six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities in a single property (Use Class C4) do not require consent under the General Permitted Development Order so local authorities have less control than previously over the establishment of such properties.
- 6.8.4** New HMOs and self-contained flats have generally been achieved by building new properties and converting large houses or commercial properties. In some instances, their provision can be detrimental to the amenity of existing residential areas. A concentration of these properties can lead to problems such as a shortage of on street parking, increased noise and disturbance and inadequate bin storage areas, whilst short term lets and low levels of owner occupation can be associated with lower standards of maintenance and environmental decline. The conversion of existing larger homes can also reduce the proportion of family homes in an area, and result in an unbalanced community. As such, this could prejudice the plan's environmental improvement and regeneration objectives.
- 6.8.5** Whether a residential property is considered acceptable for conversion will depend on size, unsuitability for continued family occupation or long established use. Acceptable areas for conversion are likely to be close to town centres or services and facilities, or within mixed use areas providing there is no risk of flooding.

### Back Land or Garden Development

- 6.8.6** National policy excludes private residential gardens from the definition of previously developed land, consequently there is no presumption that garden land is suitable for new housing. In general the Council will not support proposals for new dwellings within the garden areas to the rear of existing homes as this type of relationship between properties can result in poor levels of amenity and issues with vehicle access. Proposals for development of back land sites in other uses will be considered subject to the criteria in Policy H 8 above and other relevant policies.
- 6.8.7** In order to safeguard a range and choice of housing, including properties with larger than average gardens at the upper end of the property market, and to maintain local character, biodiversity and amenity space, the Council will resist proposals for developments on garden land.

### Accommodating Travelling Groups

- 6.9.1** Darlington has a long association with Gypsies and other Travelling groups with people from these groups accommodated on dedicated sites and within general housing. The Darlington Local Plan 2016-36 makes provision for travelling groups at the existing larger council owned sites together with other smaller, often private, sites within the Borough to accommodate for Gypsies and Travelling groups. It also indicates that additional accommodation to meet needs over the plan period should be allocated in accordance with a set of criteria, such criteria also being the basis for making decisions on windfall sites.
- 6.9.2** The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is established through national guidance contained in the DCLG's August 2015 Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (PPTS).

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**Existing Sites and Commitments**

- 6.9.3** To provide a robust evidence base for the pitch and plot targets set out in this policy, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2017) has been carried out. This has been supplemented with information by the Council's Annual Caravan Count July 2017. Table 6.9 shows existing pitches in Darlington in 2017<sup>(22)</sup>.

**Table 6.9 Existing Gypsy and Traveller Pitches**

Pitches	Transit Pitches	Total
138	24	162

- 6.9.4** Two new sites which are owned by the Council have been provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA now Homes England) through the Traveller Pitch Fund (2011-2015) / Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) (2015-2018) funding. One site, Rowan East, has 16 pitches with amenity blocks and 4 chalet pitches and was completed in March 2015. A further site, formerly known as Neasham Road, was completely regenerated and upgraded in 2017 to a size of 22 pitches, all with enlarged amenity blocks. The standard of accommodation is of the highest standard and have been used as a 'quality of design demonstrator project' by the HCA in England for Gypsy and Travellers Sites based on the new caravan licence standard from 2014.

**Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) 2017**

- 6.9.5** The most recent Gypsy and Traveller Site Needs Assessment (GTAA 2017)<sup>(23)</sup> came to the conclusion that Darlington Borough is well catered for in terms of supply for Gypsy and Traveller pitches. An annual need of 1 pitch per 5 years was identified from 2017-2022.
- 6.9.6** Further need arises for residential pitches in the period of 2022-2037 which has been calculated on a projection basis of 46 pitches, an annualised need of 3 pitches. A need for 6-8 plots for Travelling Showpeople has been identified in the Local Plan Period until 2037.
- 6.9.7** A need for 6-8 plots for Travelling Showpeople has been identified in the Local Plan Period until 2037.

**Policy H 9****Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation**

The council will seek to address the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs over the Plan period, as identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment by:

- a. Safeguarding of existing larger Gypsy and Travellers Sites (20 pitches plus);
- b. Safeguarding of private dedicated smaller Gypsy and Travellers sites, and;
- c. The extension to existing Council sites at Honeypot Lane (8 anticipated pitches) and an extension to the Rowan West / East complex site (25 anticipated pitches) off Neasham Road, and;
- d. Allowing new sites to provide accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and/or Travelling Showpeople where:
  - i. the site is clearly demarcated with pitch boundaries using appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the surrounding area;
  - ii. the site allows satisfactory access to local schools and other amenities;

22 GTAA September 2017 / DBC Annual Caravan Count July 2017.

23 By RRR Consultants September 2017.



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- iii. the site design takes account of the needs of residents, and provides an appropriate pitch layout and adequate facilities for parking, storage, play and, if required, grazing space for livestock;
- iv. there is safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, including for turning and parking, vehicles towing caravans, emergency services and servicing requirements, including waste collection;
- v. all necessary utilities can be provided on the site including mains water, electricity supply, drainage, sanitation and provision for the screened storage and collection of refuse, including recyclable materials; and
- vi. the proposal would avoid any unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity, health or living conditions of neighbouring residents or any other neighbouring uses, including as a result of flood risk, excessive noise, dust, odour, lighting, traffic generation, the keeping of livestock or other activities.

**6.9.8** The three existing larger council owned sites at Honeypot Lane and Rowan East & West will continue to be safeguarded to provide for accommodation needs. A range of existing private dedicated smaller sites will complement these and be safeguarded for use as Gypsy and Traveller sites, for up to the number of pitches currently authorised and licensed.

**6.9.9** In addition, there are a significant number of unimplemented planning permissions for Gypsy and Traveller sites within the Borough, all on private land, providing for small family units. These are anticipated to meet some of the need for additional pitches and for the five year supply of pitches. These pitches are spread throughout the Borough, with some concentrations in the Hurworth Moor and North of Brafferton area. Together, they make a considerable contribution to a particular need of some Gypsies and Travellers, to own their own site. As some of these planning permissions are not for specific families, there is a potential that some will be let to families who wish to live on a smaller site, but who cannot afford to buy their own site.

**6.9.10** National policy indicates that Local Planning Authorities can make an allowance for windfall sites in the five year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Local evidence over the last 18 years supports making an allowance for 4 pitches per year coming forward as windfalls.

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**Skerningham Allocation**

- 6.10.1** The Skerningham allocation is a 487 hectare site bordered by the Skerne River and Barmpton village to the north, the A167 to the west, Darlington's urban edge and the A66 to the south and agricultural land to the east, and is bisected by the East Coast mainline. Most of the site is situated within the Sadberge and Middleton St George Ward, with the remainder located in the wards of Harrogate Hill and Whinfield. The majority of the site is currently in agricultural use, but the site also includes Darlington Golf Club, areas of recreational open space, Skerningham Community Woodland and a network of formal and permissive Public Rights of Way.

**Policy H 10****Skerningham - Site Allocation (Strategic Policy)**

An allocation is identified on the North side of Darlington at Skerningham (Site Reference: 251) to secure the delivery of up to 4,500 dwellings. During the plan period to 2036 this site is expected to deliver approximately 1,650 dwellings of which 600 dwellings are to be delivered on land adjacent to the A167 and west of the East Coast Mainline on the western part of the allocation; and 1,050 dwellings to be delivered on land to the east of the east coast mainline on the eastern part of the allocation with initial phases located on land adjoining Barmpton Lane.

Development at Skerningham will be permitted in accordance with the principles set out below and other relevant policies in the Local Plan.

A comprehensive masterplan including an infrastructure phasing plan shall be prepared in consultation with the community prior to the submission of any planning application relating to this site, that informs the mix of uses, layout, scale, design, provision of local and strategic infrastructure including social and community facilities and phasing of the proposed development. The masterplan shall be led by the applicant(s) and should be based on the design approach and principles established in the Council's Design Code, a strong understanding of the characteristics of the site and its surrounds and incorporate the key principles for the development as set out in points a to i below. To ensure that a cohesive development is delivered at Skerningham, the Council will only approve planning applications that adhere with the comprehensive masterplan and the Council's design code and deliver the necessary local and strategic infrastructure including social and community facilities at the appropriate phase of the development identified in the infrastructure phasing plan to support the coordinated provision of infrastructure and housing development.

The key principles for development of the Skerningham site are shown on the illustrative Masterplan Framework (Figure 6.1), including broad locations for land uses and facilities. The site will provide:

- a. A mix of housing types, tenures and sizes, including 20% affordable housing and self/custom build housing, informed by up-to-date evidence of the housing needs of the Borough and Policies H 4 and H 5, with higher densities being incorporated close to public transport routes and neighbourhood centres;
- b. A centrally located and well connected neighbourhood centre providing local community facilities including a health hub for GPs and Dentists, clustered with other facilities and services to meet the day to day needs of residents, education, employment opportunities, retail and food and drink (excluding hot food takeaways) facilities. These facilities should be of a scale and type proportionate to the nature of the development and shall be delivered in accordance with the infrastructure phasing plan. Policies TC1, TC4 and TC5 will not apply to proposals in accordance with these requirements;
- c. Other local community facilities to serve residential areas as required, closely related to public transport, walking and cycling facilities, and shall be delivered in accordance with the infrastructure phasing plan;

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- d. Two primary schools, associated nursery provision (a total of 5.6 hectares) and a reserved space for a secondary school (5 hectares), with the first primary school being delivered on land to the east of the East Coast Mainline before the occupation of the 450th dwelling on land to the east of the East Coast Mainline subject to available capacity within existing or other newly created local schools (see Policy IN 10) and the phasing requirements established in the infrastructure phasing plan. The timescales for the delivery of the additional primary school and secondary school would be identified in the infrastructure phasing plan and/or through the review of infrastructure requirements prior to the occupation of the 1,650<sup>th</sup> dwelling where the education requirements and capacity levels will be considered;
- e. An integrated transport network focused on sustainable transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling with strong links to adjoining communities, employment locations and Darlington town centre, shall be delivered in accordance with the infrastructure phasing plan;
- f. Principal vehicular access points from the A167, A1150 and Barmpton Lane and include appropriate measures to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. The phased implementation of the highways works and improvements will be linked to appropriate phases of development within the plan period. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following schemes from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, exact details to be identified as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future planning applications for the site:
- i. A66/Little Burdon Circulatory Upgrade
  - ii. A1150/ Thompson Street East Roundabout Improvements
  - iii. A167/Burtree Lane Junction Improvements
  - iv. Barmpton Lane upgrade works including its junction with Whinbush Way
- g. A local distributor road between the A167 and A1150, close to the Little Burdon roundabout, which is to include a crossing of the East Coast Mainline and junction on the A1150. This will be achieved through the following;
- i. Prior to the occupation of the first dwelling on land on the western part of the allocation (between the A167 and the East Coast Mainline) the section of the local distributor road between the A167 and the primary development access point shall be delivered.
  - ii. Prior to the completion of the development on the western part of the allocation (between the A167 and East Coast Mainline) the remaining section of the local distributor road to the East Coast Mainline shall be delivered.
  - iii. Development of the initial phases of development on the eastern part of the allocation will be accessed via Barmpton Lane and/or Bishopton Lane. Prior to the occupation of between the 200th and 450th dwelling on the eastern part of the allocation the section of the local distributor road between Barmpton Lane and Bishopton Lane shall be delivered.
  - iv. Prior to the occupation of between the 900th and 1500th dwelling the local distributor road between the A167 and the A1150 (including the bridge crossing of the East Coast Mainline) shall be completed in its entirety.
- Precise details of the road and development access points, together with a timetable for its implementation, shall be agreed with the Council as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future planning applications for the site;
- h. Other necessary infrastructure as required by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and identified at the time of submitting a planning application;
- i. A network of green and blue infrastructure, the phasing of which is to be agreed with the Council as part of the infrastructure phasing plan, that:
- i. retains and enhances the network of safe, attractive and accessible public rights of way, footpaths and cycle routes across the site;

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- ii. protects and enhances the River Skerne, its valley setting (see Policy ENV 7), and the green corridors (see Policy ENV3). Where infrastructure crosses these corridors mitigation measures should be provided;
- iii. delivers a net gain in the area of publicly accessible community woodland on the site;
- iv. provides a pattern of well-integrated and inter-connected green spaces (along with provision for their long-term maintenance) across the site providing for the green infrastructure needs of the local community, including wildlife friendly natural spaces, sport and recreation facilities and allotments in accordance with Policies ENV 4, ENV 5 and ENV 9;
- v. protects the amenity of existing residential properties (see Policy DC 3);
- vi. wherever possible retains and enhances hedgerows and trees that contribute to landscape character;
- vii. provides for the potential relocation of Darlington Golf Club to a suitable location within the allocation boundary;
- viii. mitigates the impact on biodiversity (see Policy ENV 7);
- ix. incorporates sustainable drainage systems; and
- x. retains the openness and separation of the rural gaps between Darlington and the villages of Great Burdon and Barmpton (see Policy ENV3).

Proposals will be required to conserve, and where appropriate enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets within and in the vicinity of the site including their setting in accordance with policy ENV1. The design and layout should be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Darlington Local Plan Heritage Impact Assessment (2019) to avoid and minimise harm and provide opportunities for enhancement where appropriate.

Development should be located outside of areas of flood risk, and should be planned sequentially (Policy DC2), placing the most vulnerable development in the lowest areas of flood risk, and proposals should be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment.

As the development is expected to extend beyond the plan period, in line with national policy and guidance, infrastructure requirements and the infrastructure phasing plan will be kept under review. Any proposal in advance of a plan review or preparation of a subsequent plan, which exceeds 1650 dwellings, would need to carry out a review of all associated infrastructure requirements. If significant additional infrastructure is required, the Council will seek to update the policy as part of any subsequent review of the plan.

**6.10.2** The Skertingham area to the North East of Darlington, was identified as having potential for housing development as part of the Local Plan Issues and Scoping consultation held in August 2016. In November 2016, the Council's Cabinet agreed to engage with the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS), now part of Homes England, to investigate how this part of the Borough could contribute to meeting the Borough's housing needs in a planned, sustainable way.

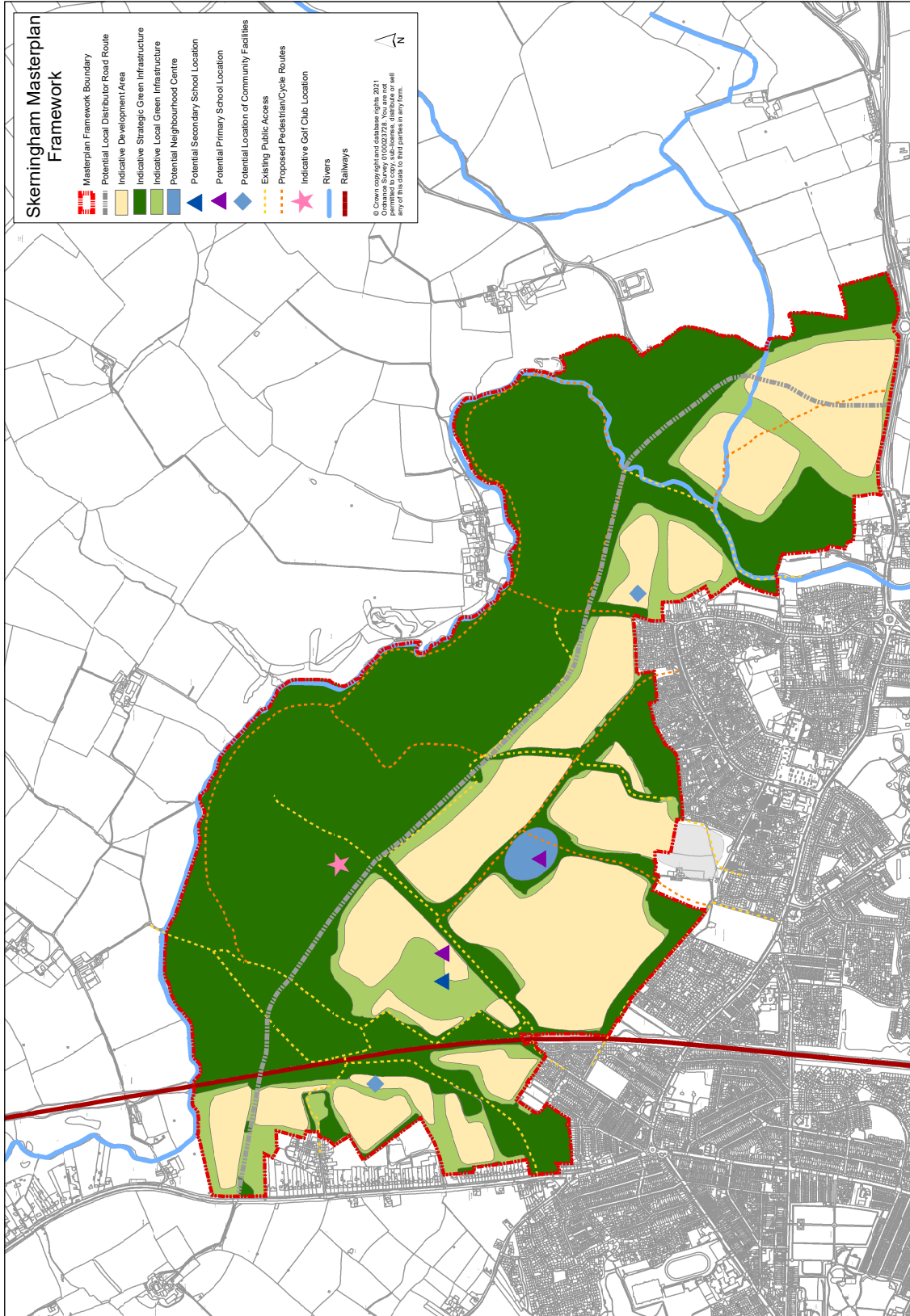
**6.10.3** Working with the Council, the sites promoters and major landowners started a masterplanning exercise for the site in 2017. The emerging masterplan is being prepared with a focus on the landscape and biodiversity context of the site, its heritage assets, and its relationship with existing communities, adopting the Healthy New Town principles to its layout and design (see Policy DC 3). The masterplanning process has been informed by a number of studies to identify the opportunities and constraints of the area including landscape, ecology, ground conditions, historic assets, transportation and accessibility as well as establishing the infrastructure and community facilities that will be required to support a

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sustainable community, integrated with the existing urban area. A draft masterplan was also the subject of public consultation organised by the sites promoters during the Autumn of 2017. This work, along with the feedback from consultation, has in turn informed the illustrative Masterplan Framework and draft policy requirements for the strategic allocation. The finalised comprehensive masterplan including infrastructure phasing plan is to be prepared by the applicant(s) in consultation with the community and is to be agreed with the Council in advance of any planning application being submitted for the Skertingham allocation site, either as a whole or in part. The infrastructure phasing plan is required to set out in further detail the appropriate phases of the development that the infrastructure requirements set out in parts a-i of Policy H10 will be provided. This includes community and social facilities including neighbourhood centre, health hub, schools and other community facilities; green infrastructure and transport network including sustainable transport. A design code will be developed for the site in consultation with the community, within around six months of the Local Plan being adopted. The Council will adopt the design code as a Supplementary Planning Document and expect the comprehensive masterplan and planning applications to have regard to it.

- 6.10.4** The following Masterplan Framework illustrates the key principles for development of the Skertingham site emerging from the masterplan process and reflected in the policy, should the golf club be relocated.

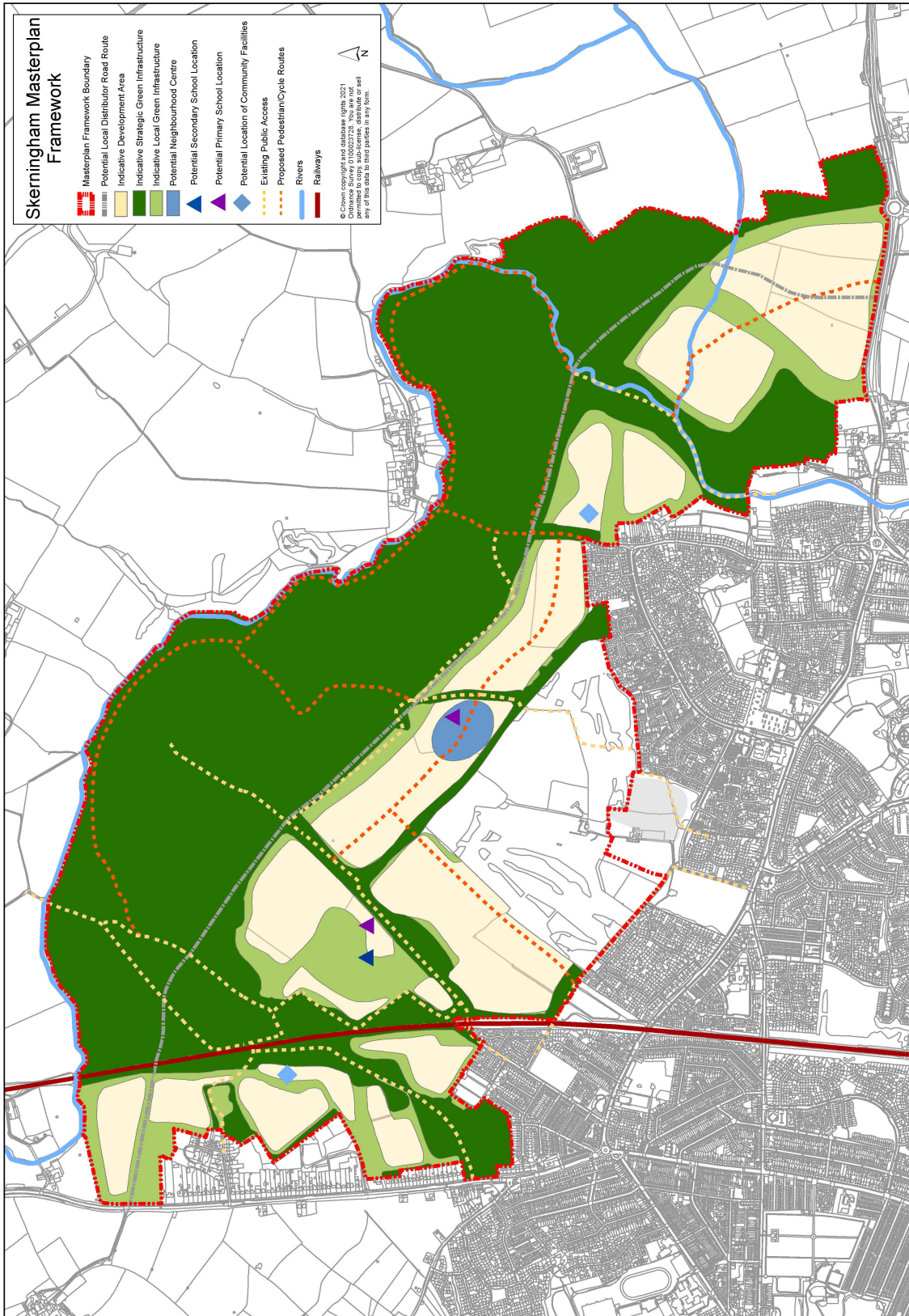
Figure 6.1 Skertingham Masterplan Framework



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- 6.10.5** The preferred approach for the development of the Skertingham site is for the golf club to be relocated. However, should it be demonstrated that this is not possible, the following alternative masterplan framework illustrates how the key principles for the development of the Skertingham site can still be achieved.

Figure 6.2 Skertingham Masterplan Framework with Darlington Golf Club Remaining Insitu





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- 6.10.6** The Skertingham site will deliver a high quality, sustainable development of up to 4,500 new homes on the north side of Darlington. Due to the scale and complexity of this site, and the level of supporting community and physical infrastructure required to support the development, in the order of 1,650 homes are expected to be delivered on this site during the plan period (as set out in the Housing Trajectory at APPENDIX A). This is not regarded as the maximum number of homes that the site could deliver during the plan period, additional homes could be provided subject to a review being undertaken by the Council and developers of all associated infrastructure requirements to ensure the delivery and appropriate phasing of required supporting infrastructure (see Policy H 2). The site has been allocated as a whole to ensure that it is planned as a single cohesive sustainable development, fully supported by necessary infrastructure provision and with appropriate mitigation measures, as required, delivered in a coordinated phased manner alongside development. It is expected that 600 homes delivered during the plan period will be located on the land adjacent to the A167 and west of the East Coast Mainline with the remaining 1,050 homes delivered during the plan period on the eastern part of the allocation with initial phases located on land adjoining Barmpton Lane.
- 6.10.7** The Masterplan Frameworks shows the potential location of a new neighbourhood centre to serve both new and existing communities in the area through the co-location of community services, local scale retail, food and drink (excluding hot food takeaways) and employment facilities, schools and a health hub for GPs and Dentists. The neighbourhood centre is to be located to coincide with sustainable transport routes and the green infrastructure network. A number of smaller centres providing local community facilities to meet the needs of residential areas will also be provided where required, located along walking, cycling and public transport routes.
- 6.10.8** An assessment of the likely education requirements for this site by the Council has indicated that the site should make provision for land to accommodate two 525 place primary schools, each with a 52 place nursery school, a combined total land requirement of 5.6 hectares. This level of provision would allow sufficient flexibility for future demand. It will also be necessary to reserve 5 hectares of land for a 600 place secondary school. The first primary school is expected to be delivered on land to the east of the East Coast Mainline before the occupation of the 450th dwelling on land to the east of the East Coast Mainline subject to available capacity within existing or other newly created local schools and any further phasing requirements established through the infrastructure phasing plan at the comprehensive masterplanning stage. The timescales for the phasing of the remaining education provision will be established through the infrastructure phasing plan and/or the review of infrastructure requirements prior to the occupation of the 1,650th dwelling.
- 6.10.9** The site promoters have indicated that the site has the potential to provide between 15-30 hectares of employment land on the south eastern corner of the site close to the A66 Little Burdon roundabout. However, this land was not assessed as part of the most recent Employment Land Review process and the Plan already makes sufficient provision for the employment needs of the borough over the Plan period on existing employment sites and new allocations, such as Central Park, Ingenium Parc and Greater Faverdale. The need to release this part of the Skertingham site for employment uses will be considered when the Local Plan is next reviewed, and as part of any future update/review of the Council's employment land evidence base.
- 6.10.10** Development should seek to reduce the use of car based travel through thoughtful layout, including the provision of a network of convenient, safe and attractive walking and cycling routes, integrated into and aligned with the green infrastructure network and existing Public Rights of Way, with links to adjacent residential areas and community facilities both on and off the site. The development should also fully explore the potential to extend existing bus services into the site, or provide a new service to serve the site, routed through the proposed neighbourhood centre. Appropriate primary and secondary vehicular access points and routes should be provided that are suitable to accommodate evidence based traffic flows to, from and through the site.
- 6.10.11** The site will require the delivery of a new local distributor road between the A167 north of Beaumont Hill and the A1150 close to the Little Burdon roundabout. The specification of this road will be determined by the Transport Assessment submitted with a planning application for the site. Whilst the precise details and timetable for implementation of the local distributor road are to be agreed with

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the Council through the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and planning applications stages it is expected, based on the modelling undertaken to date that the internal distributor road will need to be fully operational prior to the occupation of between the 900th and 1500th dwelling.

- 6.10.12** The masterplan must deliver a high quality, landscape led design that responds to, respects, and enhances its landscape and biodiversity context and builds upon the existing local green infrastructure assets in the area providing an attractive green edge to the town. Around 45% of the site area is expected to be retained and enhanced as accessible green infrastructure, managed agricultural land and/or the relocated golf club, as part of a wide green corridor on the south side of the River Skerne forming the river valley, and along the East Coast Mainline. In addition, further green space will be provided within the remainder of the site, creating an extensive network of green infrastructure connecting residential areas and community facilities, delivered in line with Policy ENV 4. Should the golf club remain in situ around 55% of the site area is expected to be retained and enhanced as accessible green infrastructure, managed agricultural land and the existing golf club.
- 6.10.13** The River Skerne that runs along the northern boundary of the Skertingham site is identified in Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy as part of an existing and proposed strategic green corridor. Development will be expected to improve the value and ecological mix of the River Skerne corridor in line with the measures set out in Policy ENV 7, and must follow the sequence of actions laid out in Policy ENV 8 to identify how impacts of development on biodiversity can be avoided, or failing that adequately mitigated. The River Skerne must be protected and enhanced, with the provision of habitat buffers as part of any development alongside the river to the north east and west. The site is expected to deliver an increase in the area of woodland adjacent to the river, to offset any loss resulting from the potential relocation of Darlington Golf Course, and to help meet the sites wider green infrastructure needs. This will take the form of non-farmed areas incorporating habitat creation measures at least 50 metres in depth in order to create viable ecological corridors, providing movement corridors for wildlife within the landscape.
- 6.10.14** The site contains the Grade II Listed Skertingham Farmhouse, which was the home of the noted cattle breeder Charles Colling, and Low Skertingham cottage and stable. The site is adjacent to the Ketton Bridge Scheduled Monument, and close to heritage assets in and around the villages of Great Burdon and Barmpton. It is therefore necessary that the design and layout of development on the site conserves and enhances the significance of these assets and the contribution their rural settings makes to their significance in line with Policy ENV 1 and national policy. Also present on the site is the potential location of the deserted medieval village of Skertingham (indicated on Figure C.1: Area of High Archaeological Potential) and a burial site. Historic field boundaries should also, wherever possible, be maintained.
- 6.10.15** Development should retain and incorporate the World War II pillbox in the southwest area of the site, as well as preserve some, if not all, of its original intended views within the landscape. Improving interpretation and accessibility to this historic asset could increase its overall communal value and significance.
- 6.10.16** Under the provisions of Policy ENV 1, development proposals on the Skertingham Strategic Allocation must be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation report. Development proposals will need to consider an appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation, in particular around the site of the posited Skertingham Deserted Medieval Village, previously demolished historic buildings, and other earthworks as identified in the Historic Environment Record.

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### Greater Faverdale Allocation

- 6.11.1** Greater Faverdale is a 177.8 hectare site (Site Reference: 185) in the North West of Darlington in the Brinkburn and Faverdale Ward and the Heighington and Coniscliffe Ward. The site is currently in agricultural use and is bordered to the west by the A1(M) and the A68 in the south by Rotary Way, to the north by Burtree Lane and the east by the operational Bishop Line of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The western part of the site (120 hectares) was allocated in the 1997 Local Plan as an Employment Reserve site.

#### Policy H 11

##### Greater Faverdale - Site Allocation (Strategic Policy)

A site allocation is identified at Greater Faverdale (Site Reference: 185) to support a development of approximately 2,000 homes and approximately 200,000 square metres of employment space on a 177.8 hectare site in North West Darlington.

Development at Greater Faverdale will be permitted in accordance with the principles set out below and other relevant policies in the Local Plan.

A comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure phasing plan that informs the mix of uses, layout, scale, design, provision of local and strategic infrastructure including social and community facilities and phasing of the proposed development, and which incorporates the key principles for the development as set out in points a-j below, shall be prepared prior to the submission of any planning application relating to this site. The masterplan shall be led by the applicant(s), informed by community consultation and should be based on a strong understanding of the characteristics of the site and its surrounds. It should also have regard to the strategic design requirements established in the Greater Faverdale Design Code.

To ensure that a cohesive development is delivered at Greater Faverdale, the Council will only approve planning applications that adhere to the comprehensive masterplan or any updated masterplan agreed with the Council and deliver the necessary local and strategic infrastructure identified in points a-j below including social and community facilities at the appropriate phase of the development identified in the infrastructure phasing plan to support the coordinated provision of infrastructure and development.

The key principles for development of the Greater Faverdale site are shown on the illustrative Masterplan Framework (Figure 6.2), including broad locations for land uses and facilities. The site will provide:

- a. A mix of housing types, tenures and sizes, including 20% affordable housing and self/custom build housing, informed by up-to-date evidence of the housing needs of the Borough and Policies H 4 and H 5, with higher densities being incorporated close to public transport routes and the neighbourhood centre;
- b. Approximately 70 hectares (gross) / 49 hectares (net) of employment land for E(g), B2 and B8 use classes;
- c. Space for a well located and connected neighbourhood centre providing community facilities, including the potential for a health hub, primary school and local retail and food and drink facilities of a scale and type proportionate to the nature and scale of the development and should be provided at appropriate phases of the development identified in the infrastructure phasing plan. Policies TC1, TC4 and TC5 will not apply to proposals in accordance with these requirements. The requirement and timetable for the provision of the primary school shall be agreed with the Council as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future planning applications for the site subject to the capacity of existing local schools (see Policy IN10);
- d. An appropriate buffer zone alongside the A1(M) for noise attenuation which is to be informed by a noise assessment;

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- e. Principal vehicular accesses from Rotary Way and Burtree Lane;
- f. A link road between Rotary Way and Burtree Lane the precise details of which including development access points, together with a timetable for its implementation, shall be agreed with the Council as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future planning applications for the site;
- g. Further enhancements to the local road network of Burtree Lane, to include the:
  - i. western connection to the A68; and
  - ii. improvements to Burtree Lane, including a new or improved pedestrian and cycleway over the Bishop Line to connect the site to the Harrowgate Hill area or provide a suitable alternative route.

The implementation of these enhancements to the local road network of Burtree Lane will be linked to appropriate phases of development with the exact details to be agreed with the Council as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future planning applications for the site;

- h. Other necessary infrastructure as required by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and identified at the time of submitting a planning application;
- i. An integrated transport network focused on sustainable transport modes; including public transport, walking and cycling with strong links to established networks, adjoining communities, employment locations and Darlington town centre, which should be provided at the appropriate phases of the development identified in the infrastructure phasing plan;
- j. A network of connected and good quality green and blue infrastructure, the phasing of which is to be agreed with the Council as part of the comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure phasing plan, that:
  - i. retains and enhances the network of safe, attractive and accessible public rights of way, footpaths and cycle routes across the site;
  - ii. provides a pattern of well-integrated and inter-connected green spaces (along with their long term maintenance) across the site providing for the recreational needs of the local community, including nature friendly natural spaces, in accordance with Policies ENV 4, ENV 5 and ENV 9;
  - iii. protects the amenity of existing residential properties (see Policy DC 3);
  - iv. retains and enhances hedgerows and trees (see Policy ENV 7);
  - v. mitigates the impact on biodiversity (see Policy ENV 7);
  - vi. incorporates sustainable drainage systems; and
  - vii. incorporates improved pedestrian access and interpretation alongside the Stockton and Darlington Railway (see Policy ENV 2).

The site design and layout will be required to conserve, and where appropriate enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets, within and in the vicinity of the site including their setting in accordance with policies ENV1 and ENV 2 and the recommendations of the Darlington Local Plan Heritage Impact Assessment (2019)

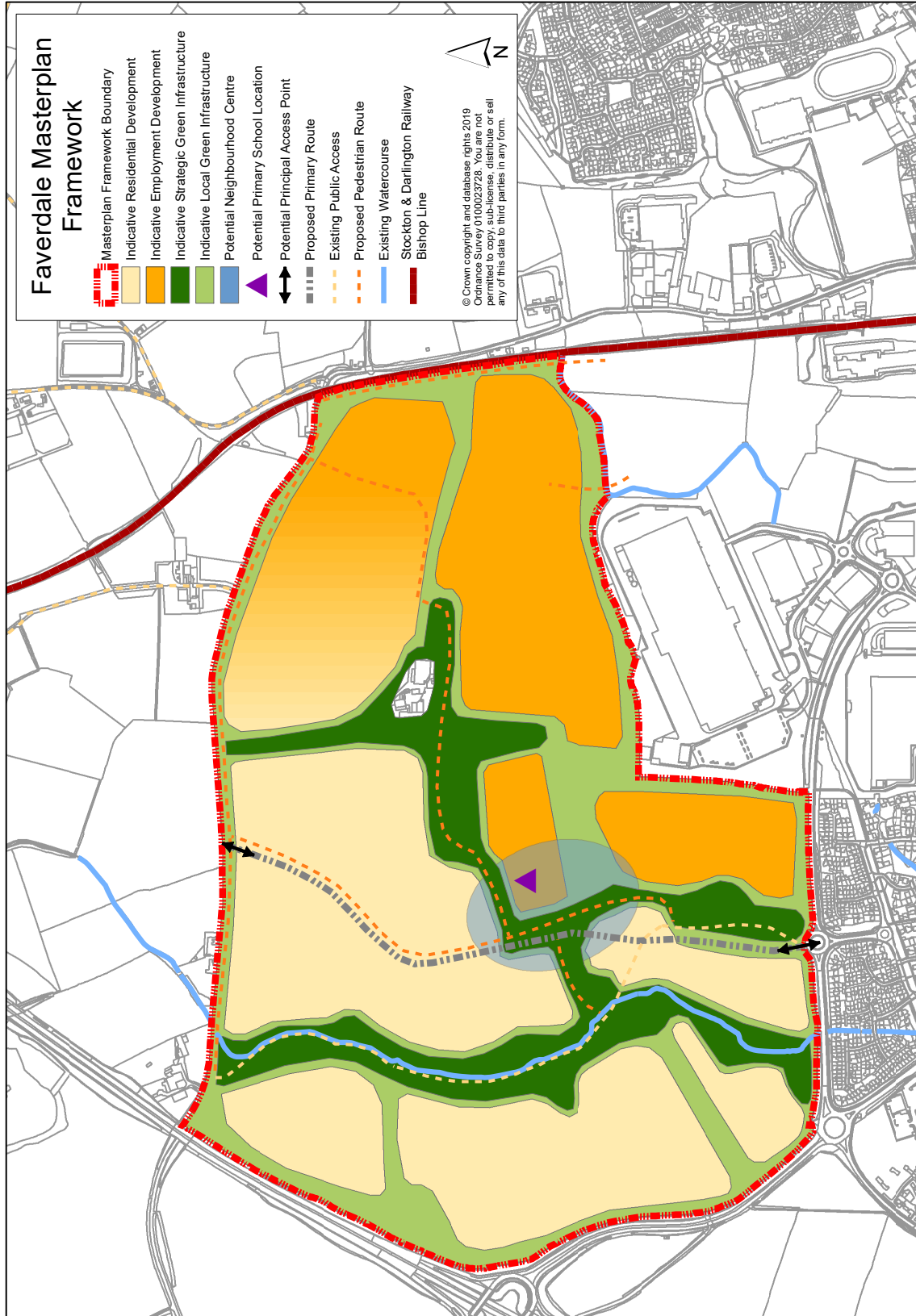
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Development should be located outside of areas of flood risk, and should be planned sequentially (Policy DC2), placing the most vulnerable development in the lowest areas of flood risk, and proposals should be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment.

As the development is expected to extend beyond the plan period, in line with national policy infrastructure requirements, the infrastructure phasing plan will be kept under review. Any proposal, in advance of a plan review, which exceeds 750 dwellings or 24 hectares (net) of employment land would need to carry out a review of all associated infrastructure requirements. If significant additional infrastructure is required the council will seek to update the policy as part of a review of the plan.

- 6.11.2** The Greater Faverdale allocation in the North West of Darlington was identified as having potential for mixed use development as part of the Local Plan Issues and Scoping consultation held in August 2016. In November 2016, the Council's Cabinet agreed to engage with the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS), now part of Homes England, to investigate how this part of the Borough could contribute to meeting the Borough's housing needs in a planned, sustainable way.
- 6.11.3** The Greater Faverdale allocation is supported by a Masterplan Framework created in January 2018 by the Greater Faverdale Site Group consisting of landowners, developers and consultants. Work on the Masterplanning Framework started in January 2017 and included consultation in September 2017. This work, along with the feedback from consultation, has informed the draft policy requirements for the strategic allocation.
- 6.11.4** The Masterplan Framework suggests a mixed use development of approximately 2,000 housing units and approximately 200,000 square metres employment space. Also it includes indicative access points, green and blue infrastructure, an indicative neighbourhood centre, a movement network, suggested indicative land uses and essential amenities.
- 6.11.5** The following Masterplan Framework illustrates the key principles for development of the Greater Faverdale site emerging from the masterplanning process and reflected in the policy.

Figure 6.3 Greater Faverdale Masterplan Framework



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- 6.11.6** Further progress of the Masterplan Framework towards a comprehensive masterplan including infrastructure phasing plan with design, scale, suggested mix of uses, indicative phasing and development direction will be required to be prepared in consultation with the community in advance of the first planning application being submitted for this site. The infrastructure phasing plan shall set out in further detail the appropriate phases of the development that the community and social facilities; green infrastructure and transport network requirements shall be provided.
- 6.11.7** The comprehensive masterplan should have regard to the strategic design requirements established in the Greater Faverdale Design Code and be based on a strong understanding of the characteristics of the site and its surrounds, and adopt the Healthy New Town principles to site design.
- 6.11.8** For this site the balance of residential versus employment space will be dependent on the economic climate and viability assessment of the site.
- 6.11.9** In line with the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment<sup>(24)</sup>, development proposals should avoid dense development around the Grade II listed manor house ruins and wall south east of Whessoe Grange Farmhouse in order to preserve its original rural landscape context. Opportunities to improve accessibility to and interpretation of the site as part of the development whilst preserving the most significant elements of its setting should be considered. In addition, areas of dense development should be avoided to the immediate south of High Faverdale Farm preserving prominent views of the farmhouse.
- 6.11.10** Development proposals should incorporate the route of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, providing improved access and interpretation, and aim to avoid creating a continuous area of urban development with the permitted development to the east of the rail line to conserve and enhance its setting. An appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation in advance of groundworks will be necessary, in particular around the site of the posited Whessoe Deserted Medieval Village, Roman Faverdale site and the Stockton and Darlington Railway.
- 6.11.11** Should development progress above the 750 dwellings or 24 hectares in the local plan to 2036 it will be necessary to undertake a proportionate review of the infrastructure phasing plan to accompany any planning application for accelerated development. This could include evidence from a Transport Assessment for highways infrastructure but should also consider other additional infrastructure requirements where necessary. Significant additional infrastructure requirements for development not considered in this plan may necessitate the need for a plan or policy review.

## EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH 7

## 7 EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

### Promoting New and Retaining Employment Opportunities

**7.1.1** The Local Plan suggests where and how a continuous and diverse supply of employment land will be provided within the Borough to meet the needs of existing and future economic development. It plans for up to 172 hectares (ha) of land allocations for employment land across the Borough in the period up to 2036. The current land available plus the allocations provides gross available employment land in the Borough of 226 ha. That translates to a net available plot portfolio of 158 ha developable for employment use for the Local Plan Period 2016-36.

**Table 7.1 Employment Land Availability**

	<b>Total Employment Land</b>	<b>Gross Available ha</b>	<b>Net Available ha<sup>(25)</sup></b>
Existing Employment Opportunities	507.16 ha	53.74 ha	37.62 ha
Employment Allocations	175.9ha	172.11 ha	120.48 ha
<b>Total</b>	<b>683.06 ha</b>	<b>225.85 ha</b>	<b>158.10 ha</b>

**7.1.2** National planning policy says that employment sites should not be protected over the long term if there is no reasonable prospect of them being used for that purpose. It also indicates that where this is the case, planning applications for alternative uses should be treated on their merits, having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.

**7.1.3** In advance of the Local Plan, two Employment Land Reviews (2012 and 2017) have been carried out which supplements the evidence in the Darlington Borough Council Economic Strategy 2012-2026.

**7.1.4** Since the recession of 2007-2013 Darlington is again experiencing substantial new jobs growth, with the number of residents employed returning to pre-recession levels. Current strong employment sectors include business services, subsea, public administration, education and health services, manufacturing, advanced engineering and logistics. Further growth is forecast in these areas and in a number of emerging sectors including digital and media, biologics, telehealth and healthcare. The Local Plan makes an allowance for 7,000 (full time equivalent) jobs over the plan period. This figure comes from projecting the most recent trend on actual number of jobs created in the borough available from national statistics (BRES 2005 – 2015) forward by twenty years. This was considered to be the most realistic and appropriate estimation of jobs growth over the plan period <sup>(26)</sup>.

**7.1.5** Whilst the area's office stock has been enhanced by a number of recent developments such as Business Central and the Bishopsgate Department for Education building, the town still remains a secondary office location on a regional level behind Newcastle and Leeds.

**7.1.6** The Employment Land Reviews and Economic Strategy suggests that:

- Embedding major 'footloose' businesses within the local economy should remain a key priority;
- About 172 ha of employment land should be allocated by the proposed Submission Local Plan;

25 70% of gross area (accounting for internal roads, car parks, verges, green space, utilities etc.)

26 As justified in the Darlington Future Employment Needs Report September 2017



## 7 EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Land next to the main highway and rail infrastructure should be protected to support development within the advanced manufacturing and subsea sectors for Darlington; and
- More high quality Grade A office premises of 20-50 sqm size and larger move-on space is needed in the Borough's main industrial estates, either as new build development or subdivision and refurbishment of larger, older buildings.

**7.1.7** National initiatives such as the Industrial Strategy have been introduced to support employment growth and an strategy will be developed for the Tees Valley and Darlington in the next few years.

**7.1.8** Additional evidence and recent developments suggest further economic growth potential for Darlington:

- The creation of the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) provides enhanced public investment for key infrastructure for employment sites such as the Tees Valley Enterprise Zone in Central Park South;
- Developed by public and private sector partners, the updated Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2016 sets out the ambition and priorities for generating economic growth through transformational change in the Tees Valley. With a target of achieving a net increase of 25,000 new jobs by 2026.
- Employment land and flexible premises offers are required to support and accommodate this growth. "Grow on" industrial space for existing businesses, high quality office space and additional space for key growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing, biologics and logistics will be essential.
- In 2015 the TVCA (as the former Tees Valley Unlimited) researched the needs of the large scale logistics markets to better understand how large scale sites would enhance the Tees Valley's share in the sector. Sites such as those at Greater Faverdale and Link 66 have been identified for Darlington as key employment sites to support the sector. A Darlington Borough Council Local Logistics Sector Study 2015 confirmed the locational advantages of those sites.
- There is new interest in certain sites, and interest from a number of companies for land and premises within the Borough. Local Growth Fund bids via TVCA have been submitted for key employment sites such as Ingenium Parc and Greater Faverdale to reflect current employment interest in the site.

### Policy E 1

#### Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities

The following existing employment areas, as shown on the Policies Map, are promoted and safeguarded for existing and ongoing economic investment. Within these areas, planning permission will be granted on available land and for the change of use of existing buildings or developed land (subject to any permitted development rights) in line with the 'suggested uses' of each site set out below. Proposals for other employment uses not falling within the 'suggested uses' of specific sites will only be permitted where the Borough Council is satisfied that they will not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining or nearby properties or prejudice the development of adjacent sites.

The Council will consider the use of planning conditions for applications which are for offices, research and development or light industrial uses (Use Class E(g)) to ensure that they remain in that use in perpetuity.

## EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH 7

Table 7.2 Existing Employment Opportunities

Site Ref	Name	Total Site	Gross Available	Net Available	Suggested Use
342	Faverdale East Business Park	65.87 ha	6.08 ha	4.26 ha	B2, B8 , E(g)
343	Faverdale Industrial Estate	60.32 ha	11.19 ha	7.83 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
346	Meynell Road West	8.5 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)
347	Cleveland Industrial Estate	14.6 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
348	Red Barnes Way	3.03 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
351	SW Town Centre Fringe	0.62 ha	0.16 ha	0.11 ha	E(g)
352	Barton Street/Haughton Road	1.24 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2 E(g), Sui Generis
353	Haughton Road/ Blackett Road	11.58 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
354	McMullen Road East	2.72 ha	0 ha	0 ha	Sui Generis
355	Lingfield Point	33.6 ha	2.74 ha	1.92 ha	Mixed Use
357	Morton Park	18.28 ha	5.79 ha	4.05 ha	B2, B8,E(g)
358	Yarm Road Industrial Estate	63.86 ha	1.87 ha	1.31 ha	B2, B8, E(g) , Sui Generis
359	Morton Palms Business Park	11.90 ha	6.08 ha	4.26 ha	B2, E(g)
363	Aycliffe	15.33 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2
364	Yarm Road South	34.69 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2 , E(g)
366	Meynell Road East	10.28 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2 , B8, E(g)
367	Link 66 / Symmetry Park	36.03 ha	13.10 ha	9.17 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
376	Whessoe Road	4.88 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)
378	Longfield Road	2.41 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2
379	Banks Road	9.70 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g), Sui Generis
380	Albert Hill Industrial Estate	16.02 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
404	Teesside International Airport North	53.96 ha	6.73 ha	4.71 ha	B2, E(g) and Airport related uses
409	Drinkfield Industrial Estate	13.51 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)

## 7 EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Site Ref	Name	Total Site	Gross Available	Net Available	Suggested Use
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>507.16 ha</b>	<b>53.74 ha</b>	<b>37.62 ha</b>	

**7.1.9** The Employment Land Review (2013 and 2017) recommendations have been balanced against other considerations, such as the momentum that could be generated by more recent interest and initiatives and the need to have a range and choice of sites, the Borough's aspirations for economic growth and the suitability of sites for other uses.

**7.1.10** Policy E 1 therefore recognises that there is still a reasonable prospect of employment uses being delivered on sites previously allocated. Their safeguarding / retention will ensure that a range and choice of employment land is available to meet all user requirements over the plan period.

### Policy E 2

#### Employment Allocations (Strategic Policy)

The following sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are allocated for new employment. Within these areas, planning permission will be granted in line with the 'suggested uses' of each site set out below. Proposals for other employment uses not falling within the 'suggested uses' of specific sites will only be permitted where the Borough Council is satisfied that they will not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining or nearby properties or prejudice the development of adjacent sites.

The Council will consider the use of planning conditions for applications which are for offices, research and development or light industrial uses (Use Class E(g)) to ensure that they remain in that use in perpetuity.

**Table 7.3 Employment Allocations**

Site Ref	Site Name	Total Site	Gross Available	Net Available	Suggested Use
80	East of Lingfield Point	10.30 ha	10.30 ha	7.21 ha	B2, B8, E(g),
185	Greater Faverdale	70.0 ha of gross 177.8ha site	70.00 ha for Employment	49.00 ha for Employment	B2, B8, E(g),
356	Ingenium Parc	40.80 ha	40.80 ha	28.56 ha	B2, E(g)
360	Heighington Lane North	5.70 ha	5.70 ha	3.99 ha	B2, B8, E(g)
362	Teesside International Airport South	39.3 ha	39.3 ha	27.51ha	B2, B8, E(g) & Airport related uses
368	Central Park South	9.8 ha	6.01 ha	4.21 ha	B2 , E(g)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>175.9 ha</b>	<b>172.11 ha</b>	<b>120.48 ha</b>	

## EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH 7

- 7.1.11** Due to the amount of vacant and undeveloped sites within the existing portfolio of employment sites only 7 sites will be allocated through the Local Plan. Three sites are identified as key strategically placed employment sites which will be used to attract high value sector growth to Darlington. Greater Faverdale as a strategic site will provide, as outlined in Policy H 11, opportunities as a Mixed Use Site.
- 7.1.12** Two sites have been identified through the Housing Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA, 2017) of being able to cater for additional residential development as Mixed Use sites due to their specific characteristics and locational factors.
- 7.1.13** The Local Plan also recognises the contribution that alternative uses can make to employment areas, where they comply with the objectives of the plan and are applied consistently, and can help to realise the development of employment uses, and the continued retention and attractiveness of employment sites. Acceptable uses are predominantly those that have a similar character to employment uses, but may not be in the same use class, and could include training centres related to employment in the industries on the estates or a particular occupier. Ancillary uses such as small cafes or nurseries serving the employees of the industrial area, or more diverse uses where they relate to the function of the estate or the surrounding area.

### Economic Development in the Rural Area

- 7.2.1** The Rural area for Darlington is the open countryside outside the Urban Settlement Limit including the Service Villages, Rural Villages and Hamlets.
- 7.2.2** Supporting economic growth in rural Darlington can mean accommodating acceptable farm diversification schemes, including developments like equestrian centres or livery yards, tourist accommodation (including static caravans, touring caravans and chalet-type accommodation), leisure uses, food and drink, small scale office space, restoration or arts and crafts businesses.

#### Darlington Farmers and Auction Mart (DFAM)

- 7.2.3** One of the key rural economic projects has been the relocation of the Darlington Farmers Auction Mart (DFAM) from the Town Centre to Humbleton Farm on the A68. This will deliver a regionally significant facility with significant rural economic development impacts and outcomes that will benefit the Borough and surrounding areas of North Yorkshire, County Durham, and beyond.

### Policy E 3

#### Darlington Farmers Auction Mart Relocation (Strategic Policy)

The Policies map shows the site of the relocated Darlington Farmers Auction Mart and where ancillary and related uses for rural economic development will be allowed, including:

- a. Use Class E(a) - small scale retail (rural based);
- b. Use Classes E(c) / E(gi) - small scale office;
- c. Use Class E(b) - food and drink.

Other uses including agricultural related services will be considered through the planning application process on their individual merits based on their relationship with the primary purpose of the site, scale, dimension, need, rural impact and added value to the rural economy.

### Economic Development in the Open Countryside

- 7.2.4** To safeguard the intrinsic character of rural Darlington, development associated with such uses (as set out in Policy E 4) should be appropriate in a rural setting, and minimise its impact on its surroundings. For caravan sites and tourist accommodation this means compact and unobtrusive

## 7 EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

sites making use of natural or enhanced screening wherever possible, provided by trees and landscaping, and making use of any existing buildings where possible. Touring caravan and camping sites, although mainly involving temporary structures, should also be screened as much as possible by existing or enhanced landscaping, with any associated facilities and new buildings kept to a minimum, by making use of existing buildings where practicable.

- 7.2.5** Retail uses in rural Darlington can help support the rural economy. Appropriate forms of retailing in the countryside are those required to support the primary agricultural holding or rural development use which could include the supply of agricultural supplies or machinery. Other goods or produce not for agricultural purposes should either have been produced on site or sourced from within the locality or should be ancillary to the primary activity on site. An example would be a shop selling fishing tackle and equipment at an established fishing venue.

### Policy E 4

#### Economic Development in the Open Countryside (Strategic Policy)

**Proposals for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses located in the open countryside including the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses will be supported where:**

- a. They enable the conversion or re-use of existing building(s), providing the buildings are:
  - i. sympathetic to their surroundings or can be made so, without significant demolition or rebuilding, and;
  - ii. remain in keeping with their surroundings and make use of retained features that contribute to local distinctiveness and historic interest if appropriate;
  - iii. capable and large enough for conversion without significant alteration and the need for additional buildings. Substantial extensions will not be permitted and any extensions that are required must be subordinate in scale and proportion to the original building.
- b. New buildings are well designed and wherever possible are located physically well-related to existing rural settlements and/or existing buildings and building groups. The character, scale and design of all proposed new buildings must be appropriate to its open countryside surroundings.

All proposals should be sensitive to their surroundings, provide satisfactory access from and not have an unacceptable impact on the local road network. Proposals must also not unacceptably affect amenity, not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on an active farm unit, and not prejudice any planned community use.

Proposals that demonstrate that they will directly and significantly contribute to the retention and / or development of local services, community facilities and infrastructure which make a location more sustainable will be supported.

#### **A) If the proposals are for equestrian related development then, in addition:**

- i. There must be adequate land for commercial uses, adequate off-road riding facilities available safely nearby that is proportionate to the number of horses to be kept on the land and located where there is, or could be, ready and safe access to the bridleway network; and
- ii. Any buildings required should be commensurate in size with the number of horses to be kept on the land and the amount of land available for use by those horses; and

## EMPLOYMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH 7

- iii. An agreed comprehensive scheme of management for any ancillary development including hard standing, access roads, parking, fencing, lighting, storage, waste disposal, ménages and the subdivision of fields will be required; and
- iv. The proposal, either on its own or cumulatively, taking account of any other horse related uses in the area, is compatible with its surroundings and protects water courses, groundwater and the safety of all road users.

**B) If the proposals are for tourist accommodation then, in addition:**

- i. New static and touring caravan sites, camping sites and chalet type accommodation or extensions to existing sites of this nature should be sited and screened through topography and/or vegetation in order to minimise visual impact. The materials and colours of the chalets or static caravans and associated site services and infrastructure should blend with its surroundings. All sites should have good access to the road and footpath network and will be subject to conditions to prevent the permanent occupancy of the site.
- ii. Other tourist accommodation should be located within development limits unless it can be demonstrated that the need is not met by existing facilities in Service Villages and villages with settlement limits.

**C) Proposals for outdoor leisure uses will also be supported in appropriate locations, provided that their impact on the open countryside is minimised and they provide satisfactory access arrangements and protect amenity.**

**D) If proposals are for the establishment or expansion of retail development outside of development limits then, in addition, it should be demonstrated that:**

- i. The proposal is connected to or adjacent to the primary agricultural holding or existing rural business;
- ii. The proposal is economically related to the primary agricultural holding or existing rural business and is ancillary to the primary existing use; and
- iii. For proposals over 500 sqm the sequential approach (Policy TC1) has been applied and there would be no significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of retail centres (policies TC1 and TC5); and
- iv. The proposal will not affect the retention of local village shops.

**7.2.6** Proposals requiring significant vehicle movements to deliver or distribute goods will be required to demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable impact on the safe operation of the public highway. Proposals that do need significant traffic generation to operate would likely be better located in a more established and accessible location. Applicants will be required to demonstrate with supporting information how the proposal meets this requirement.

**7.2.7** Developments in the open countryside also need to be sited to get the benefit of the open countryside location, and should not adversely affect existing agricultural operations. Equestrian developments, for example should be located where there is, or could be, ready and safe access to the bridleway network and any developments should not limit the future viability or sever any existing farm holding to an extent where its viability is adversely effected.

## 8 TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

### 8 TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

#### Darlington Town Centre

- 8.1.1** National planning policy indicates that the Council should pro-actively promote competitive Town Centre environments that provide consumer choice and a diverse retail offer. The Local Plan sets out the overall approach to town centres and retailing, to ensure the vitality and viability of the Town Centre is maintained and identifies opportunities to enhance the offer and continued provision of a range of retail, leisure and business uses. Darlington Town Centres role as the Sub-Regional Centre for the western part of the Tees Valley and neighbouring parts of North Yorkshire and South and West Durham, is protected and promoted, including its role as a market town.
- 8.1.2** The Local Plan sets out the hierarchy of centres in the Borough, defining the role and appropriate developments for each, to ensure that their function in providing food shopping and a range of local shops, leisure uses and services, is safeguarded and enhanced.

**Table 8.1 Hierarchy of Centres in Darlington**

Sub-regional Centre	i.e. Darlington Town Centre	> 100.000 sqm floorspace
District Centre	i.e. Cockerton	> 10.000 sqm floorspace
Local Centre	i.e. Mowden	1.000 sqm floorspace

- 8.1.3** The Local Plan seeks to focus retail activity within the Town, District and Local Centres in the Borough, and to avoid developments outside of these centres that would compromise their vitality and viability by drawing significant amounts of trade away from them. This policy does not prevent the development of small shops or convenience stores that serve local needs, but does help to ensure that development within centres is consistent with a centre's scale, function and physical capacity to integrate extensions. Adverse impact on vitality and viability could result in local services and amenities not being available and accessible to local communities. It could mean that people with restricted mobility will lose services and others will have to travel further.
- 8.1.4** The Local Plan defines the extent of Darlington Town Centre, the Primary Shopping Area (defined on the Policies Map) and the District and Local Centres. This is important as it identifies where Town Centre uses will be acceptable, and when a sequential assessment will be required.
- 8.1.5** The Town Centre is the defined area where main Town Centre uses will be located. Main town centre uses<sup>(27)</sup> are retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment, and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices, and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities). Strengthening the town centre by channelling new main town centre uses is vital if Darlington is going to fulfill its role as a Sub-Regional Centre. The definition of the Town Centre has been tested and approved by two Town Centre Conference events in 2015 and 2017.
- 8.1.6** On appropriate sites, the Local Plan supports the change of use to residential within the Town Centre Boundary. Permitted Development Rights (PDR) and a flexible approach to changes of use<sup>(28)</sup> will enable residential development in the Town Centre to ensure its continued vitality and enhance vibrancy.

<sup>27</sup> as defined in NPPF (July 2021)

<sup>28</sup> As recommended by paragraph 86 f) of the NPPF (July 2021).

## TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL 8

**Policy TC 1****Darlington Town Centre**

Proposals for main Town Centre uses should be located within the Town Centre Boundary identified on the Policies Map.

Where main town centre uses are proposed outside of the Town Centre boundary a sequential test should be applied in accordance with national policy.

- 8.1.7** The Town Centre boundary is shown in the policies map and includes south of St Augustine's Way (A68), south of Northgate Roundabout and St Cuthbert's Way (A167) to the north, Bondgate, Skinnergate and Coniscliffe Road to the west and is bounded by St Cuthbert's Way (A167) to the east and Grange Road / Victoria Road (A167) to the south.

**Primary Shopping Area**

- 8.1.8** The Primary Shopping Area (PSA) is defined as the area within the Town Centre where retail development, the main contributor to vitality and viability, is concentrated and should be densely focused. It covers all shopping frontages with the Town Centre.

- 8.1.9** There is a need for flexibility due to the changing role of town centres, which are no longer solely a shopping destination but provide a range of other leisure and social functions including housing and the use of upper floors.

**Policy TC 2****Primary Shopping Area**

The Policies Map defines the Primary Shopping Area within the Town Centre.

To maintain vitality and viability, the Local Planning Authority will permit non-retail uses in shopping frontages where appropriate, subject to:

- a. Its position and attractiveness within the frontage; and
- b. The relative pedestrian flow associated with the unit compared with the wider centre.

**Comparison and Food Retail Need**

- 8.1.10** The Darlington Retail and Town Centre Study Update 2017<sup>(29)</sup> indicates that there is currently no significant quantitative need for additional convenience retail development but that there would be a need for comparison goods between 2,700 sqm and 15,800 sqm from 2027 - 2032. By 2036 the comparison goods need could increase to 9,300 sqm - 26,200 sqm in total. It is likely that this will be provided through several smaller developments throughout the plan period. Additional large-scale food retail development is not being planned for at this time. There may be a qualitative need for additional foodstore provision in new strategic site allocations but this will be addressed through the planning application process.



## 8 TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

### Commercial / Kendrew Street Site

- 8.1.11** Land at Commercial Street / Kendrew Street (Site 271, circa 2.4 ha), currently used as a car parking area, has been identified as a sequentially preferable location to provide for the comprehensive regeneration of a central location. It is envisaged that the site would significantly improve and re-shape the retail and cultural offer for the wider Town Centre.
- 8.1.12** The delivery of a regeneration scheme will be critical in enhancing Darlington's role as a Sub-Regional centre, as identified within Policy TC 1 of the Draft Local Plan, meeting the quantitative and qualitative retail needs of Darlington and the wider Borough.
- 8.1.13** The Commercial / Kendrew Street site should be brought forward through a comprehensive approach for the area. This approach can involve a positive mixture of uses including retail, cultural and residential uses, supplemented by leisure, employment and educational uses that will complement the existing centre and form part of a sustainable extension to Darlington Town Centre.

### Policy TC 3

#### Additional Site for Town Centre Uses

In order to meet any future need for Town Centre Uses the following site is shown on the Policies Map as a potential Town Centre Extension Site:

**Table 8.2 Additional Site for Town Centre Uses**

Site Name	Size
Commercial / Kendrew Street	2.4 ha

The Council will support the regeneration of the Commercial / Kendrew Street site providing the following matters have been addressed:

- a. Ensuring sensitive integration of new buildings with old, seeking where possible to incorporate the existing historic fabric and retaining buildings that are of historic importance, and taking account of the key recommendations of the Darlington Local Plan Heritage Impact Assessment (2019);
- b. Development proposals must be of a high standard of design that are sympathetic and appropriate to the local area and makes use of local design styles and local materials;
- c. That any comparison and convenience retail element of the scheme are central and complementary to the wider regeneration of the Town Centre;
- d. Sufficient and appropriate provision is made for replacement vehicle parking, which minimizes surface car parking, to support the proposed development;
- e. Development should incorporate suitable linkages to the existing transport network and help mitigate issues of potential traffic congestion;
- f. Development proposals should utilise its frontage with St Cuthbert's Way to provide opportunities for innovative design and improved public realm.

- 8.1.14** Additional space to accommodate the expansion of Town Centre and Retail uses could be contained in this identified area which is currently made up of expansive ground level car parking areas. It would give the chance for investors to increase Darlington's market share in Town Centre Uses. The area has been previously identified by the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan (2013) and recommended in

## TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL 8

the Retail and Town Centre Studies (2014 and 2017). The Commercial Street / Kendrew Street site remains the sequentially preferable location to accommodate a comparison-led retail development within the town.

- 8.1.15** The Commercial / Kendrew Street site involves the regeneration of land and buildings to the North of Darlington Town Centre. Development proposals for this site should be underpinned by a masterplanning exercise for this site to reflect feasibility, place making ambitions and sustainable development. Developers and agents for this site will be expected to work with the Borough Council.
- 8.1.16** The regeneration of the Commercial / Kendrew Street site provides an excellent opportunity to address some of the accessibility issues within Darlington Town Centre. It is important that the regeneration of the site recognises the opportunities set out in the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan, particularly in relation to traffic improvements in Darlington Town Centre and the wider improvements to the cycling and walking network. The site specific Masterplan needs to take account of including these improvements.
- 8.1.17** The regeneration of the Commercial / Kendrew Street site presents a significant opportunity for a generational change to Darlington Town Centre. However, it is important that regeneration of this area benefits the whole of the Town Centre to ensure that businesses and operators also benefit from the significant growth that this regeneration offers. The Council will seek to promote improvement throughout the Town Centre through the preparation of a new Town Centre Strategy. The strategy will set out a positive and proactive approach towards regeneration, improvement and renewal, ensuring that the benefits (in terms of investment and footfall) arising from a scheme in Commercial / Kendrew Street are shared over the wider Town Centre.
- 8.1.18** Development proposals should take their cue from the historic grain of development within the site, with the design, scale and density of development reflecting the distinct characters of the Northgate and Town Centre Conservation Areas. Development proposals will need to consider an appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation prior to redevelopment.

### District and Local Centres

- 8.2.1** The District and Local Centres are important in meeting local needs, providing food shopping and a range of other local shops, services and leisure uses. They are both accessible and help reduce the need to travel. These centres are generally healthy with exceptionally low vacancy rates.
- 8.2.2** National planning policy indicates that policies should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs, and ensure that established shops and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable so they are retained for the benefit of the community.

#### Policy TC 4

##### District and Local Centres

The boundaries of the District and Local Centres are identified on the Policies Map.

- Cockerton (District Centre)
- Mowden (Local Centre)

Types of uses that will be acceptable within the boundaries of these centres include shops, financial services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, and a range of community and leisure facilities (included within class E(a-f) and sui generis of the Use Classes Order) providing they:

- a. Are physically integrated with the rest of the centre; and
- b. Will ensure the vitality and viability of the centre is maintained.

## 8 TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

Where main town centre uses are proposed outside the district or local centre boundary a sequential test should be undertaken in accordance with national policy.

### Development Outside of Existing Centres

- 8.2.3** The Council's policy is that main Town Centre uses should preferably be located within the existing Town, District and Local Centres. However, where development does take place elsewhere, it is important that it does not undermine existing centres.
- 8.2.4** Those proposing development of main Town Centre uses that are not in an existing centre should undertake a sequential assessment, to ensure that consideration is given to sequentially preferable locations. This also applies to proposals that are below the local floorspace threshold of 500 sqm set out within the policy. A sequential test is not required for proposals for office development within the identified employment areas or other employment sites identified in this plan and is also not required where the proposal reflects the existing use of the site. Matters to be set out in a sequential assessment are set out in national planning policy and guidance.

### Policy TC 5

#### Retail Impact Assessment Threshold

Proposals for retail (convenience and comparison) and leisure development generating over 500sqm additional floorspace outside Darlington town centre and which are not identified in the Local Plan policies will be required to undertake an Impact Assessment.

- 8.2.5** The locally set floorspace threshold of 500 sqm has been set as the requirement for impact assessments to be provided with development proposals, to ensure that the impact of proposals has been properly considered. Any proposals that are above these thresholds and on the edge of or outside of these centres must be accompanied by an impact assessment, to ensure that full consideration is given to the scale of development and any significant impacts that could result from retail proposals, when taken both individually and cumulatively with other proposals and developments. The impact assessment will be expected to be proportionate to the scale of the proposal. The 500 sqm thresholds are set as being broadly the maximum allowance in such locations before the Borough's retail strategy could be compromised. Matters to be considered in an assessment are set out in national planning policy and guidance.
- 8.2.6** An impact assessment would not need to be undertaken for proposals to create the neighbourhood centres required by policies H10 and H11 at Skerningham and Greater Faverdale where proposals satisfy the requirements established in these policies.

### Darlington - Town Centre Fringe

- 8.3.1** The Town Centre Fringe is a priority location for brownfield development and regeneration within the Borough, and significant development activity started in 2016. The Fringe is an extensive area: over 70 ha of land, buildings and roads, much of which is underused. It contains a mix of employment, residential, retail, leisure, car parking and other uses, and much of the area's housing is occupied by deprived households. The area of the Town Centre Fringe as identified in the Local Plan (2016-36) is more limited than the Council's wider Town Centre Fringe Masterplan area.
- 8.3.2** The Town Centre Fringe has a lot of advantages for future development - it is easy to get to by several modes of transport, close to the Town Centre, containing key buildings like the recently reopened New Hippodrome and other heritage assets and the River Skerne flows through it. It is also very visible from local roads and the east coast main line. The Bank Top Station Masterplan created in 2016 overlaps with the Town Centre Fringe area but synergies of development will be considered.

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- 8.3.3** The River Skerne was also identified as a strategic green infrastructure corridor. However, before the potential of the area to contribute much more to the growth, prosperity and quality of life of Darlington can be realised, there are significant issues to overcome, such as managing flood risk, changing the image of the area, tackling contamination and hazard, and improving connectivity across the inner ring road. Considering the area comprehensively provides the best way to ensure that both public and private investment is made effectively and in a timely and co-ordinated manner. Currently work with Homes England, the Environment Agency and the Tees Valley Combined Authority is ongoing to address funding gaps and ownership issues.

### Policy TC 6

#### Darlington - Town Centre Fringe

Development and regeneration of the Town Centre Fringe will be promoted throughout the plan period to deliver a range of mixed use development and environmental improvements. The uses likely to be acceptable include economic, commercial and residential (main town centres use proposals would, where relevant, need to satisfy the sequential approach (Policy TC1) and Impact Assessment (Policy TC5)).

To support the delivery of the remaining priorities identified in the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan, development in this area should:

- a. Manage flood risk along the whole of the river corridor that avoids most vulnerable development in areas at highest risk of flooding and incorporates enhanced river habitat and green infrastructure within the River Skerne Strategic GI corridor;
- b. Conserve historic buildings and where appropriate enhance the historic environment in the area, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for the celebration of Darlington's heritage;
- c. Provide an improvement of existing housing in the area;
- d. Provide improvements in connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport into and through the area to allow access to jobs, leisure and business opportunities.

The Gas Holder on Valley Street North poses a significant constraint to development and its removal and site remediation at the earliest opportunity will be supported.

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#### Safeguarding the Historic Environment

- 9.1.1** National planning policy<sup>(30)</sup> requires Local Planning Authorities to set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. It emphasises the importance of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and acknowledges the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.
- 9.1.2** The historic environment includes areas and buildings, archaeological sites, historic streets and transport routes, historic landscapes, parks and other green spaces. It is a non-renewable, shared resource, and any loss or harm to it is usually irreversible. Understanding the significance of the historic environment and the contribution that the setting of historic assets makes to their significance is essential to guide good decisions about land use change and development affecting them.
- 9.1.3** As a group, Darlington's archaeology and historic buildings are of considerable significance not least because of its potentially significant railway, industrial and Quaker history. The Borough's designated heritage assets<sup>(31)</sup> include:
- Over 550 Listed Buildings;
  - 19 Scheduled Monuments;
  - 17 Conservation Areas; and
  - 3 Registered Parks and Gardens.
- 9.1.4** The Borough also contains a wealth of non-designated heritage and archaeological assets. Non-designated heritage assets can be summarised as parts of the historic environment including buildings, structures, areas and archaeology that are considered by the Local Planning Authority to be locally significant. They can be identified through strategic planning and development management, included on a Local List, and can sometimes be as significant as designated assets.
- 9.1.5** The origins of the town of Darlington first appeared in writing in 1003. The small Anglo-Saxon settlement experienced medieval growth as a result of Darlington's position in the Durham bishopric. The market flourished to serve an agricultural hinterland and those passing through the town on the Great North Road between London and Edinburgh. Around St Cuthbert's Church, a prominent Grade I listed town centre landmark, grew an ecclesiastical complex, with the Bishop's palace at its heart (1164 -1870). By the 1530s Darlington was described as the best market town in the bishopric outside of Durham. In 1585 a fire destroyed most of medieval Darlington. The town was rebuilt within the medieval streets and burgrave plots and this pattern of central yards and wynds survives in the town centre today. There was little building beyond the confines of the medieval settlement, other than the mansions of the influential Quaker families on the fringes of the urban core, until growth was triggered by the arrival of the railway<sup>(32)</sup>.
- 9.1.6** Opened in 1825, the Stockton and Darlington Railway was funded by Edward Pease a prominent Darlington Quaker as the world's first publicly financed passenger railway. This is covered by a standalone policy (see Policy ENV 2) due to its national significance.
- 9.1.7** Darlington has a particularly significant Quaker history and associated heritage assets. Darlington Quakers played an active part in the government, industry, commerce and development in the town during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They were responsible for many of Darlington's landmark Victorian public buildings and manor houses, parks and cemeteries including South Park, the indoor market and clock tower, Crown Street Library, and the Friends Meeting House. The value

30 Chapter 16 of the NPPF (July 2021).

31 Identified on the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Durham County Council's Archaeology Service on behalf of Darlington Borough Council.

32 Gillian Cookson: The Townscape of Darlington (2003).

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and significance of these assets is recognised, for their contribution to the unique identity of the borough and their potential contribution to tourism. Non-designated heritage associated with the Quaker movement includes Elm Ridge Methodist Church and Carmel School.

- 9.1.8** Darlington has also played a significant role in the development of industry. It has a number of designated heritage assets of significance to industries like leather, tanning, textiles and steel. Designated assets include Tees Cottage Pumping Station and the Cummins building on Yarm Road, the latter being the most contemporary building – constructed in 1965 - to be listed.
- 9.1.9** ‘Experience Darlington’ is an overarching concept promoting heritage assets as part of the Visitor Economy Strategy<sup>(33)</sup> that seeks to link and make the most of Darlington’s locally distinct heritage as summarised above.
- 9.1.10** The vision for Darlington’s Town Centre Fringe and its historic environment is set out in the Conservation Management Plan<sup>(34)</sup> and aims for the area to be transformed into a vibrant urban area with well-maintained historic buildings, exciting small scale modern development, a thriving tourism industry based on railway heritage and a healthy, accessible river.
- 9.1.11** The Borough contains a significant Roman settlement at Piercebridge and other characterful rural villages and hamlets. These villages are home to a high concentration of listed vernacular cottages and historic farm buildings and are generally designated as Conservation Areas. Several of the Conservation Area villages are located along the River Tees corridor and this relationship with the river setting is an integral part of their historic and aesthetic value. Walworth Castle is a prominent Grade I listed building in a picturesque rural setting within the Borough. The character of the Borough’s rural historic environment and the heritage assets integral to it will be protected, enhanced and promoted.
- 9.1.12** The Council will support proposals which conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of Darlington. Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of those elements of the historic environment which contribute most to Darlington’s distinctive identity and sense of place are not harmed. These include:
- The buildings, spaces, trackbed and other infrastructure associated with the Stockton and Darlington Railway.
  - The medieval streets and burgage plots associated with medieval Darlington.
  - Evidence of Roman activity such as the settlement at Piercebridge.
  - The mix of buildings and spaces associated with the Quaker movement including Victorian public buildings, manor houses, parks and cemeteries.
  - Remnants of Darlington’s industrial heritage including leather, tanning, textiles and steel and its associated infrastructure.
  - The historic farm buildings and rural villages and hamlets, including those along the River Tees.
  - The range of its places of worship.
  - Conservation areas and listed buildings across the Borough.
  - Key cultural assets encompassing parklands, woodlands, landscapes, canals and riversides, museums, libraries, art galleries, public art, food and drink, customs and traditions.

33 Experience Darlington: A Visitor Economy Strategy 2016-2026, DBC.

34 A Conservation Management Plan for Darlington Town Centre Fringe, 2010, Archaeo-Environment.

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### Policy ENV 1

#### Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting Darlington's Historic Environment (Strategic Policy)

##### A) Designated Heritage Assets

When considering proposals affecting all designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas) or non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. Proposals should conserve those elements which contribute to such asset's significance, including any contribution made by their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm. Proposals resulting in less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets will be permitted only where this harm is clearly justified and outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals resulting in substantial harm to or total loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) will only be permitted where this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, or, all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage assets prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back in to use

Development involving the alteration, extension or change of use of a listed building or construction of any structure within its curtilage must:

- i. protect its significance as a listed building; and
- ii. protect existing historic hard and soft landscaping features including trees, hedges, walls, fences and surfaces; and
- iii. protect historic plot boundaries and layouts; and
- iv. ensure the optimum viable use of the building, where appropriate.

Any development affecting the setting of a listed building will be permitted if the proposal conserves or enhances either its significance and/or the contribution its setting makes to its significance. Proposals involving the demolition of a listed building or structure within the curtilage of a listed building will not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances as detailed in national policy.

Development will only be permitted in Parks and Gardens of National Interest where it cannot be accommodated elsewhere, is directly related to the conservation management of the park or garden, and does not harm those elements which contribute to its enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance or setting (including key views from or towards the landscape).

##### B) Conservation Areas

In addition to the requirements in part A proposals affecting a conservation area, involving the alteration, extension or change of use of a building or construction of any structure should preserve and enhance those elements identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the significance of that area. Special attention should be given to:

- i. existing architectural and historic character and associations by having regard to the positioning and grouping, form, scale, massing, detailing of development and the use of materials in its construction; and

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- ii. existing hard and soft landscaping features including areas of open space, trees, hedges, walls, fences, watercourses and surfacing and the special character created by them; and
- iii. historic plot boundaries and layouts; and
- iv. the setting of the conservation area.

Development will not be permitted that would lead to the loss of public or private open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas where the existing openness makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area or its setting, including landscape and townscape and views into or from the area, unless the public benefit demonstrably outweighs the harm.

The demolition of buildings or structures in a conservation area will not be permitted if:

- v. the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area (as identified within the conservation area appraisal); and
- vi. the structural condition of the building is repairable; and
- vii. there are no approved detailed plans for the redevelopment of the site and a contract has not been entered into for the implementation of that redevelopment; and
- viii. there has been insufficient consideration of other options to re-use the building in its current form.

### **C) Archaeological Sites**

Proposals affecting archaeological sites of less than national importance should conserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains. In those cases where development affecting such sites is acceptable in principle, mitigation of damage will be ensured through preservation of the remains in situ as a preferred solution. When in situ preservation is not justified, the developer will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before or during development. Subsequent analysis, publication and dissemination of the findings will be required to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.

Development proposals involving ground disturbance in Areas of High Archaeological Potential (as identified in APPENDIX C), must be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation report. Householder development and extensions, and alterations to existing commercial premises of 40 metres squared or less, are exempt from this requirement unless the proposed development is likely to affect a Scheduled Monument.

Outside Areas of High Archaeological Potential, planning applications on sites of more than 1 hectare must be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation report, unless the area is already known to have been archaeologically sterilised by previous development (such as mineral extraction).

### **D) Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

Proposals which would remove or harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will only be permitted where the benefits are considered to outweigh the harm. Proposals should seek to avoid harm to those features, including setting, which contribute to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, through measures such as good design.

### **E) Heritage at Risk**

Proposals that would help to safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Darlington's heritage assets, especially those identified as being at greatest risk of loss or decay, will be supported.

### **F) Securing the optimum viable use**

If the existing or original use of a heritage asset is no longer viable development proposals will be required to secure the optimum viable alternative use consistent with its conservation.



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- 9.1.13** The Council has a statutory duty to protect listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. Great weight will be given to the conservation of heritage assets in line with national planning policy<sup>(35)</sup>.
- 9.1.14** In addition to the Council's statutory obligations regarding the historic environment<sup>(36)</sup>, the Council will:
- Seek to identify, protect and enhance local heritage assets;
  - Promote heritage-led regeneration, including in relation to development opportunities in Darlington's Town Centre Fringe and proposals in relation to the Stockton & Darlington Railway Heritage Action zone;
  - Produce conservation area appraisals and management plans;
  - Maintain its positive approach to safeguard the future of heritage assets at risk.
  - Adopt a proactive approach utilising development opportunities to increase the promotion and understanding of the area's archaeology.
- 9.1.15** The Council will encourage developments promoting the educational, recreational and/or tourism potential of the locally distinct heritage, landmarks and historic villages of the Borough through sensitive management, enhancement and interpretation of these heritage assets as set out in the Visitor Economy strategy.
- 9.1.16** The Council will also seek to deliver the vision for Darlington's Town Centre Fringe over the plan period, to be transformed into a vibrant urban area with well-maintained historic buildings, exciting small scale modern development, a thriving tourism industry based on railway heritage and a healthy, accessible river, as set out in the Town Centre Fringe Conservation Management Plan.
- 9.1.17** A Heritage Impact Assessment has been produced to inform the Local Plan that assesses the suitability of a number of allocation sites from an historic environment perspective. Design and mitigation measures recommended by the assessment have been incorporated into the development criteria contained in APPENDIX B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS and the policies for the Skertingham and Greater Faverdale strategic allocations.

### Conservation Areas

- 9.1.18** In Conservation Areas particular attention must be given in all planning decisions to the desirability of conserving and enhancing a conservation area's significance. The Council will consider introducing Article 4 Directions where a conservation area is identified as 'At Risk' when annually surveyed by the Local Authority in conjunction with Historic England.
- 9.1.19** As part of the Council's positive strategy for the historic environment, it will prepare and review Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans for each conservation area, including any proposed new or extended areas, as the basis for determining proposals within or where it would affect the setting of conservation areas.

### Listed Buildings

- 9.1.20** The Borough of Darlington is fortunate in having a large stock of important listed buildings within its boundary, including those associated with the early railways. A listed building can be any kind of structure, such as a signpost, postbox, bridge, or telephone kiosk, for example, and not necessarily a building.
- 9.1.21** Any changes affecting the character or appearance of a listed building are likely to require Listed Building Consent. For example historic fabric such as doors, windows, fireplaces and so on are important to the character of the building and consent is likely to be required for their alteration, removal or replacement. Applications for Listed Building Consent are dealt with by the Council's Planning

35 Paragraphs 199 to 202 of the NPPF (July 2021).

36 Town and Country Planning Act 1990; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Area Act 1979.

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Team, alongside applications for Planning Permission and other planning-related applications (e.g. proposals for a change of use, extension or other alteration to the envelope of the building, or development within its curtilage). It is always advisable to consult the Borough Council's Planning Services section before proceeding with any changes.

### Archaeological Sites and Scheduled Monuments

- 9.1.22** Significant archaeology (designated and non-designated) in the Borough include those from the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. New archaeological investigations and finds continue to be added to the Historic Environment Record (HER) allowing greater understanding of this element of the historic environment. Survey and recording prior to development is an important way of adding to the record, particularly in areas of known local historical interest, such as within designated Conservation Areas, and Areas of High Archaeological Potential (see APPENDIX C), where archaeological finds are more likely unless the area has already been archaeologically sterilised by an activity such as mineral extraction.
- 9.1.23** In line with national planning policy<sup>(37)</sup>, applications for development involving ground disturbance within Areas of High Archaeological Potential will require the submission of an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. Where archaeology is found to be present the Council will require a mitigation strategy involving either preservation in situ, or excavation, analysis and reporting, or a combination of the two. Proposals affecting archaeological sites or monuments will only be approved where satisfactory mitigation measures can be implemented. Exemptions are made in Policy ENV 1 for small scale householder and commercial development that are unlikely to affect a Scheduled Monument.
- 9.1.24** Outside of the identified Areas of High Archaeological Potential, Durham County Council take the approach that desk-based assessment and, field evaluation (consisting of geophysical survey followed up by targeted trial-trenching) is required for all development proposals affecting an area of 1 hectare or more, unless it is already known to have been archaeologically sterilised by previous development such as mineral extraction. The reasoning underpinning this is that archaeological investigation and research in recent decades has shown right across the country that the number and geospatial density of archaeological sites is far higher than previously imagined and so the likelihood of encountering archaeology on a site of this size or larger has increased.

### Historic Parks and Gardens

- 9.1.25** A Register of Parks and Gardens of "Special Historic Interest" is maintained by Historic England to encourage their protection and conservation but has no associated statutory controls. The two registered sites within Darlington Borough are both Grade II, and both publicly owned: South Park and West Cemetery.

### Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 9.1.26** The significance, character and setting of heritage assets of local interest will be identified using the criteria provided at APPENDIX C and protected through the development management process (including pre-applications), through plan making (including neighbourhood plans), the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans, and other Council activities.

### Heritage at Risk

- 9.1.27** Heritage at Risk includes buildings, structures and sites whose preservation is threatened, often by vacancy or lack of regular repair and maintenance. Darlington Borough Council maintains a register of Grade II Listed Buildings at Risk (available online and on request). The ultimate responsibility for a historic building lies with its owner. However, the Council has the authority to issue enforcement notices to require necessary works to ensure a heritage asset is no longer at risk. These powers are used sparingly; it is in the best interests of all parties if work is carried out voluntarily and before

37 NPPF paragraph 194 (July 2021).

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emergency work is required. The Council adopts a proactive approach to heritage at risk by actively engaging in advice for proposals to enhance Heritage at Risk resulting in sustainable uses. Proposals that either secure the future of heritage at risk or prevent assets from becoming 'at risk' in the first place will be encouraged where the significance of the asset can be adequately protected.

### Securing the Optimum Viable Use

- 9.1.28** For statutorily protected buildings, those within conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets, the Council will seek to secure the optimum viable use. Keeping a building in its original use is preferred, as it generally has the least impact on its character or appearance. It may be converted to a new use, if it can be demonstrated that it will be consistent with its conservation and compatible with the significance and the setting of the historic building, and not detract from other evidential, historic, aesthetic or communal heritage values, or unless there are public benefits which outweigh the harm.

### Assessment of Heritage Significance

- 9.1.29** The Council has a responsibility to consider whether a building or structure is a heritage asset, either designated or non-designated, when exercising its planning powers. In Darlington many heritage assets will be related to the railways, Quaker's and industry but there are assets that have other local significance. The Council intends to produce a Local List, with community involvement and support, that would also include the relevant content of adopted neighbourhood plans. In the meantime, the Council has published a Criteria for Assessing Non-Designated Heritage Assets, based on Historic England guidance. This will enable the identification of non-designated heritage assets as they are brought to the Council's attention, particularly when proposals to alter them are received. Developing community skills and building capacity to identify non-designated heritage assets will help the Council to proactively meet its statutory duties in this regard. The Council is looking at options to set up an interactive way for people to nominate local heritage as well as comment on those put forward by the Council.
- 9.1.30** National planning policy<sup>(38)</sup> requires applicants to assess the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by a proposal including any contribution made by its setting<sup>(39)</sup> and the impact of development on them. Further information is available on the Council's website to assist in compiling an assessment of significance. This should be submitted in a Heritage Statement or Heritage Impact Assessment. Potential developers are advised to contact the Council in advance to find out what level of detail will be required, as this will vary for the type and size of proposal, and the number and significance of heritage assets likely to be affected. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

### Planning Applications

- 9.1.31** Permission will not be granted for applications which are not fully justified and accompanied by the information necessary to fully assess the impact of the proposal on the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset or assets. Proposals that affect heritage assets should be accompanied a Heritage Impact Assessment to demonstrate that the architectural and historic interest of the structure has been understood and accounted for in any proposals. Proposals that affect assets of the highest significance should also be accompanied by a Statement of Significance<sup>(40)</sup>, which may form part of a Design and Access Statement.

38 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF (July 2021).

39 Historic England defines the setting of a heritage asset as "The surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape".

40 As defined in paragraph 200 b) of the NPPF (July 2021).

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- 9.1.32** Where permission is granted for a development which would result in the total or partial loss of a designated heritage asset, approval will be conditional upon the asset being fully recorded and the record and commentary deposited with the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record.

## Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting the Stockton and Darlington Railway

- 9.2.1** The route of the Stockton and Darlington Railway through the Borough is mostly intact and still serves a transport function. The route includes several important structures, but only some, such as the scheduled Skerne Bridge, have statutory protection. The area around North Road Railway Station and within the Northgate Conservation Area has a particular concentration of railway heritage, including the Museum, Carriage Works, Lime Cells and Goods Shed and associated Victorian residential terraces. In addition to designated assets, Westbrook Villas, the Coal Drops to the rear of Westbrook Villas and the Railway Tavern Public House on Northgate are examples of non-designated assets to be found in the Borough with strong links to the town's railway heritage.

### Policy ENV 2

#### Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) (Strategic Policy)

Proposals which will conserve and enhance elements which contribute to the significance of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and its setting, including its trackbed and branchlines, will be supported.

Proposals will be supported where they include measures that preserve any physical remains along the route, include site interpretation and where appropriate reinstate a legible route where those remains no longer exist.

Development proposals that support the development of the S&DR as a visitor attraction including the creation of walking and cycling paths along its route will be encouraged.

- 9.2.2** Where a development is on or within 50 metres of the trackbed, or relates to a designated or non-designated heritage asset associated with the route, The 1825 Stockton and Darlington Railway: Historic Environment Audit should inform proposals and accompanying Heritage Statements and Heritage Impact Assessments.
- 9.2.3** In partnership with Historic England, Durham County Council, Stockton Borough Council and other key stakeholders, the Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage Action Zone initiative (2018-2023) will provide greater understanding of significance through historic area assessments, historic buildings assessments and archaeological investigations. Proposals for development associated with the S&DR must be informed by any research undertaken as part of the Heritage Action Zone, and subsequent planning documents, adopted by the Council.
- 9.2.4** The Council, with its partners, will develop further planning guidance, including a Conservation Management Plan, to ensure the protection, enhancement and promotion of this locally distinct and nationally significant heritage asset in advance of the 2025 bicentenary celebrations.
- 9.2.5** It is the long term aspiration to create a walking and cycling route along the full 26 mile route of the Stockton and Darlington Railway along with providing associated interpretation, opening up the route for leisure and tourist visits, and as an education resource.

## Local Landscape Character

- 9.3.1** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that valued landscapes should be protected and enhanced. The Darlington Local Plan protects and seeks to appropriately enhance the distinctive character of the Borough's natural and historic townscapes and landscapes, including unique features

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like rural gaps, green wedges, green corridors, historic routes and parklands. However, there are some parts of the inner urban area where landscape or townscape quality could be improved, in particular to better promote Darlington's railway heritage (see Policy ENV 2).

- 9.3.2** All perform an important role in helping to the keep the permanence of the landscape over the plan period particularly by protecting the Borough's settlement pattern and maintaining the openness between different neighbourhoods, so that each keeps their unique identity. As the Borough continues to grow each feature will in different ways help safeguard the identity of communities, particularly in areas that face growth pressures.

### Policy ENV 3

#### Local Landscape Character (Strategic Policy)

The character and local distinctiveness of the urban area, villages and rural area will be protected and improved by:

A) Retaining the openness and green infrastructure functions of:

1. The rural gaps, between Middleton St George and Middleton One Row, Middleton St George and Oak Tree, Hurworth on Tees and Hurworth Place, and between Darlington and the villages of Great Burdon and Barmpton; and
2. The green wedges of Cocker Beck/Mowden, Blackwell/Skerne Park and Haughton/Red Hall.

Within these areas, development will only be permitted where it:

- i. Protects and enhances the landscape character, setting and identity of the area;
- ii. Enhances biodiversity value by promoting protected and priority habitats and species;
- iii. Retains connectivity within the green infrastructure network; and
- iv. Is ancillary to a green infrastructure use.

or:

- v. The development proposed is for limited infilling on previously developed land, which would not have greater impact on the openness of the landscape than the existing development.

B) Retaining and enhancing the length, continuity, biodiversity, amenity and heritage value of:

1. The existing green corridors in line with Policy ENV 4; and
2. The historic routes of the Darlington/Middleton St George/A66/A67/ Stockton Corridor, the Former Barnard Castle Trackbed, Salters Lane, Honeypot Lane, Nunnery Lane and Cemetery Lane.

Development that adjoins these corridors and routes should:

- i. Positively respond to the landscape setting;
- ii. Conserve and enhance traditional landscape features including ancient and semi-natural woodland and hedgerows;
- iii. Retain and support their connectivity for people, habitats and wildlife;
- iv. Protect and enhance their ecological and heritage value in accordance with Policies ENV 1, ENV 2, and ENV 7; and
- v. Incorporate appropriate interpretation for ecological and heritage features.

C) Retaining and improving the special landscape, heritage and ecological qualities of urban and rural parklands at South Park, North Lodge Park, West Cemetery, Blackwell Grange, Rockcliffe Park, Middleton Hall, Walworth Castle, Redworth Hall, Hall Garth, Newbus Grange and Neasham Hall.

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D) Protecting and enhancing the natural quality of the rural landscape, where appropriate, reinstating traditional natural and built features.

E) Seeking high quality design in areas of low landscape quality in the urban area, to strengthen local character and distinctiveness, having regard to the Darlington Characterisation Study, Darlington Landscape Character Assessment and the Revised Design of New Development SPD, or their subsequent replacement.

- 9.3.3** Rural gaps have allowed more than one village to develop separately but nearby over time, for many years. Today these relatively small gaps remain important to the rural settlement pattern, to the character of the rural area and to its residents. This policy together with Policy H 7, will protect the rural gaps, conserving the character, openness and links to the wider landscape in order to maintain the attractiveness of the Borough's settlements and their settings.
- 9.3.4** The three green wedges, identified in the Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy, extend to the proposed development limit of the main urban area to ensure that their land uses, landscape components, openness, topography, nature of their urban edges and their relationship and importance to the character of Darlington is protected and appropriately enhanced.
- 9.3.5** The existing green corridors identified in Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy have a unique character that contributes to the identity and setting of adjoining neighbourhoods, such as the River Tees and the former Darlington and Stockton Railway corridor. Their length, distinctiveness and width vary (see Policy ENV 7). A number are also historic routes, that have historically connected nearby towns, villages, hamlets and scattered farms to the market town of Darlington, and provide insights into the past. Some, like Cemetery Lane, have kept much of their original width and features including walls and gateposts, others like Salters Lane have original hedgerows, ditches and banks in places.
- 9.3.6** Within and adjacent to these routes development should reflect variations in the local landscape character by enhancing local distinctiveness, guided by the Revised Design of New Development SPD and Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy, or their replacement. The use of interpretation and public art to provide greater understanding of ecological and heritage features will be supported.
- 9.3.7** The Borough has eleven historic ornamental parklands. The Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance the integrity and landscape quality of the seven rural parks and four urban parks. Any national and local designated features within their boundaries will be protected through national legislation and national planning guidance (see Policy ENV 1).
- 9.3.8** The rural landscape is characterised by mostly open, arable farmland with a mix of unique landforms, including ditches and cuts, village greens and in places traditional field patterns, hedgerows and wetlands. All help distinguish the rural area from the rest of the Borough, and so will be protected through this policy.
- 9.3.9** There are landscapes and townscapes in the Borough which detract from or do little to positively contribute to the Borough's attractive and distinctive character. If not addressed, these areas can adversely affect the image of the Borough and its attractiveness to businesses and investors. Development in these areas should include environmental quality improvements to restore or enhance the local landscape or townscape and help attract investment to the Borough, informed by the Darlington Characterisation Study, Landscape Character Assessment and the Revised Design of New Development SPD, or their replacement. Within the rural area, natural features such as hedgerows, field margins and wetlands should be re-created where appropriate.
- 9.3.10** As Darlington's unique environment contributes much to its distinctiveness, and that this is an objective of the Local Plan, the following policy identifies the key elements of the existing townscape and landscape that will be prioritised for protection and enhancement to help safeguard the distinctive environment of the Borough. Together with more specific detailed documents such as the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan, it will also help attract public sector funding and other investment to the Borough.

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### Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 9.4.1** Darlington benefits from an extensive green and blue infrastructure network; its multi-functional green spaces, green corridors, rivers and watercourses provide links within the Borough and to the rest of the Tees Valley, Durham and North Yorkshire. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, a landscape scale approach to green infrastructure will be adopted, using and managing land for what it is best suited to. Through investment, management and maintenance across the network, priority projects will be delivered that will make more of the network so that a range of green and blue infrastructure needs are delivered in each local area, and in the Borough, as a whole.
- 9.4.2** Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy facilitates the planning, design and management of the network to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the community; by supporting recreation, sport and play, walking and cycling, food production, flood storage and sustainable drainage benefits (see Policy DC 3) as well as the biodiversity and geological features that are found within it (see Policy ENV 7). It can also contribute to achieving the appropriate sustainable building standards (see Policy DC 1) required in new developments and enhance amenity for residents (see Policy DC 3).
- 9.4.3** The Green Infrastructure network in Darlington is made up of numerous public and private green spaces, landscapes and features including:
- Green corridors;
  - Green wedges (see Policy ENV 3);
  - Wildlife friendly green space, including designated wildlife sites<sup>(41)</sup>;
  - Informal recreational open space, children's play areas and landscape amenity space;
  - Playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities;
  - Formal parks, cemeteries and civic spaces;
  - Trees, woodland and community woodland;
  - Urban fringe;
  - Agricultural land;
  - Public rights of way and wider countryside access; and
  - Open countryside.

#### Policy ENV 4

##### Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

Green and blue infrastructure will be protected, and where appropriate, improved and extended to provide a quality, safe and accessible network of well connected, multi-functional open spaces for recreation and play and to enhance visual amenity, biodiversity, landscape and productivity. This will be achieved by:

- a. Development proposals within, or adjacent to an existing green corridor (as defined on the Policies Map) should conserve and enhance its function, setting, biodiversity, landscape, access and recreational value as appropriate to that location;
- b. Development proposals that are crossed by an existing or proposed green corridor (as defined on the Policies Map) should incorporate it into the sites layout and design having regard to green infrastructure functions appropriate to that location;
- c. Capitalising on opportunities to enhance and/or create green links between green and blue infrastructure features;

41 In Darlington designated wildlife sites include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

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- d. Expecting development to improve local water quality wherever possible, taking into account the Northumbria River Basin Management Plan;
- e. Working with partners and the community to bring forward priority projects and measures identified in Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Northumbria River Basin Management Plan;
- f. Providing green infrastructure as part of new residential and non-residential developments in line with Policy ENV 5;
- g. Refusing planning permission for development that would result in the loss of existing green space<sup>(42)</sup> unless it can be demonstrated that the loss of the space would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area or to local biodiversity (in line with Policy ENV 7), and one or more of the following criteria are met:
  - i. there is an identified surplus of that type of green space in the area and that its loss would not adversely affect the recreational needs of residents;
  - ii. satisfactory replacement green space is provided in a suitable location, accessible to current users and at least equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality;
  - iii. the proposal involves the development of an alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

- 9.4.4** At the heart of Darlington's green infrastructure network is a network of green corridors. Four green corridors including the River Tees and the River Skerne function within and across the Borough's boundaries, and eight green corridors, including the former Barnard Castle Trackbed, connect neighbourhoods to the urban and rural areas. Most are used now, but some will be new corridors (or parts of) added over the lifetime of this plan. In particular these will connect the strategic development locations and the urban fringe, provide connectivity within the inner urban area and enhance biodiversity (see Policy ENV 7) and movement (see Policy IN 1) across the Borough.
- 9.4.5** The widths of the green corridors have not been defined on the policies map as they are distinct, and this will vary along the length of each corridor depending on its qualities, characteristics and surroundings in any particular location.
- 9.4.6** Development proposals on sites crossed by, or adjacent to a green corridor should positively protect, incorporate and enhance the functions and features of the corridor as appropriate. Sites related to a proposed green corridor will be expected to actively incorporate the corridor into the layout and design of the development, responding to the specific landscape characteristics of the site (see Policy ENV 3), retaining existing natural assets and distinctive features as appropriate. In all cases, developments will be expected to respond to the priorities for each corridor, and seek to deliver the projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>(43)</sup>.
- 9.4.7** In the long term the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan will guide the creation of a new green corridor adjacent to the River Skerne and development on the eastern side of Darlington should seek to establish an extensive new wildlife friendly space further upstream adjacent to the river. Both will help re-create a more natural course for the river, provide environmental and water quality enhancements

42 For the purpose of Policy ENV 4 criterion G the term green space refers to all public and private, formal and informal, types of green infrastructure listed under paragraph 9.4.3, including component parts of the green corridors, but excluding urban fringe, agricultural land, open countryside and private gardens.

43 The projects related to each corridor are set out in Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy: A Guide to Darlington's Green Infrastructure 2013-26, DBC, 2013.



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and improve access for people and wildlife; a key priority in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. In addition, development of the Skertingham Strategic Allocation (see Policy H 10) will include enhancements of the river corridor to the north of the town.

- 9.4.8** Policy ENV 4 protects green corridors as well as a range of green spaces in the urban area and the villages, sports facilities (see also Policy ENV 9) and the diverse landscapes they connect for recreation, play, nature, movement and amenity<sup>(44)</sup>. The policy applies equally to land currently in use or last used for these purposes, including land that has been neglected for an extended period of time but is capable of being brought back into active use with reasonable endeavours. The decision on whether development proposals are assessed as involving the loss of green infrastructure will be determined on a case by case basis in line with this policy.
- 9.4.9** Most people have easy access to good quality parks and other green spaces for formal and informal recreation and play, while Darlington's impressive play offer means that most children have easy access to adventurous play, for example at West Park and Broken Scar. Wildlife friendly spaces, including Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites, provide most people with access to a quality natural environment (see Policy ENV 7), and a complementary network of smaller spaces provide for informal recreation (e.g. walking, jogging) close to homes and work.
- 9.4.10** However, quantity, quality and access to different types of open space varies between localities within the Borough. Unmet needs will remain unless existing spaces are put to new uses and/or new spaces are provided. Projects such as the Salters Lane Community Garden have increased the use of existing spaces to meet the needs of residents, and other similar projects are underway, where community groups have got funding from organisations like the National Lottery for the works. Elsewhere planning obligations, secured with new development, may also be used to secure enhancements to existing open spaces and the provision of new spaces to meet the needs of new residents.
- 9.4.11** The EU Water Framework Directive became part of UK law in 2003<sup>(45)</sup> with the primary objectives of achieving good ecological status in water bodies, and providing protection for drinking water sources and protected sites (Natura 2000 sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest). These requirements are reflected in the Environment Agency's Northumbria River Basin Management Plan which covers the Darlington Borough. In making decisions on spatial plans and planning applications, the Council has a duty to have regard to the Northumbrian River Basin Management Plan to ensure the protection and improvement of water quality. Changes to the design of development proposals will often avoid harm to water bodies. Development that would adversely affect the quality or quantity of surface or groundwater, flow of groundwater or ability to abstract water will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that no significant adverse impact would occur or mitigation can be put in place to minimise this impact within acceptable levels.
- 9.4.12** Applicants seeking to justify the loss of an existing green space on the grounds that there is a surplus of that type of green space in the area (under Policy ENV 4 criterion g. i.) will also need to demonstrate that its loss would not have an adverse affect on the wider recreational needs of residents. This consideration will include whether the land could be redesigned to serve an alternative green space function that would help to meet local shortfalls in a particular type of green space.

### Policy ENV 5

#### Green Infrastructure Standards

Developments including 20 dwellings (or 0.2 hectares) or more, or non-residential developments of 1,000m gross floorspace or more, will, subject to the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing provision, be expected to deliver new green infrastructure, to meet the additional need generated calculated using the

44 Individual green spaces have not been identified on the policies map but can be viewed on the online mapping resource on the Council's Planning Policy website.

45 Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2003.

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formula set out in paragraph 9.4.15 and having regard to the standards and costs contained in the adopted Planning Obligations SPD, or its replacement. Proposals should also ensure arrangements are in place for the maintenance of new green infrastructure provided in the longer term..

Green infrastructure should be delivered on-site and designed as multi-functional blue-green space to perform a range of green infrastructure functions where possible. Provision should be prioritised subject to need and having regard to the types and quantities of existing green infrastructure in the area as identified in the Darlington Green Infrastructure and Open Space Strategies and/or Planning Obligations SPD (as relevant) along with any other relevant evidence.

In areas of open space deficiency (identified in the Planning Obligations SPD or equivalent), schemes of between 11 and 19 dwellings (or 0.1 to 0.2 ha), or non-residential development of 500sqm to 1000sqm gross floorspace, will be required to make a financial contribution towards the improvement of off-site green infrastructure in the local area, calculated using the formula set out in paragraph 9.4.15. This should be equivalent to the additional need generated by the development and where this would deliver greater benefits to the wider community than on-site provision.

- 9.4.13** The requirements in Policy ENV 5 will be used to ensure that there is enough accessible green infrastructure overall to meet the needs of development with priority given to the provision of wildlife friendly green space and features associated with water and flood management systems. Spaces must also be of the appropriate quality and within a reasonable walking distance of most people's homes to ensure they are used positively. The policy will also help support efforts to attract external funding for improvements, prioritise initiatives for planning obligations and where appropriate the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or any successor, and help guide the Council's investment decisions. Guidance on integrating green infrastructure into new development is available in the Revised Design of New Development SPD, or its replacement.
- 9.4.14** As the Borough is relatively rich in the amount of open space it contains, new space will only be sought as part of major new development<sup>(46)</sup> where the amount and mix of development proposed requires substantial green infrastructure to deliver a sustainable new neighbourhood, or to create an appropriate business or leisure environment. The Council recognises it is not always possible to achieve this all on-site; in those cases, equivalent off-site provision will be sought. Also, for certain types of green infrastructure such as playing pitches it may be impractical to deliver as a standalone pitch and more beneficial to contribute to the enhancement of an existing off-site facility. For smaller developments in areas of open space deficiency a contribution towards improving the quality and functionality of existing open space may be required to ensure that the space is able to meet the needs of additional residents. This approach will also ensure that the network can continue to provide for other functions that green infrastructure is needed to perform.
- 9.4.15** Proposals where it has been identified green infrastructure provision is required should use the following formula to establish the amount of green infrastructure type to be provided by each new home and the financial contribution required in circumstances where an off-site financial contribution is required. Where proposals are providing a contribution towards quality improvement costs only this will be 50% less of the standard charge for quantitative provision. The same formula below will be applied to proposals for non-residential development where green infrastructure provision is required by replacing the dwelling occupancy with the employee occupancy of the proposal and applying a lower green infrastructure type standard per employee reflecting the lower level of usage. Further information on the inputs to the formula is available in the Planning Obligations SPD or its replacement.
- **Step 1 – Establish quantity required - Dwelling Occupancy multiplied by (x) green infrastructure type standard per resident equals (=) amount of green infrastructure type required per proposed dwelling**

46 Major new development: 20 or more dwellings or 1,000 metres gross non-residential floorspace.

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- **Step 2 – Determine financial contribution required for off-site provision - Amount of green infrastructure required per proposed dwelling multiplied by (x) cost of provision equals (=) standard charge per proposed dwelling**
- **Step 3 – Determine financial contribution required for off-site quality improvement costs - Standard charge per proposed dwelling divided (/) by 2 equals (=) quality improvement costs per proposed dwelling**

**9.4.16** In exceptional cases where these requirements cannot be delivered a comprehensive, open book viability assessment should be submitted with the planning application to show why a development cannot achieve these requirements.

**9.4.17** Provision should also be made for the maintenance of green spaces to ensure quality remains in the long term. For new large greenspaces, particularly those in the strategic locations, a maintenance levy<sup>(47)</sup> will typically be applied to each household and/or business, to ensure long term maintenance by a management company. Elsewhere, a one off maintenance contribution may be sought so that maintenance can be undertaken by the Council and in these circumstances the formula below should be used to calculate a contribution equivalent to 10 years maintenance. Where the maintenance sum is for off-site quality improvements costs the amount will be reduced by 50%. The same formula below will be applied to proposals for non-residential development where green infrastructure provision is required by replacing the dwelling occupancy with the employee occupancy of the proposal. Further details on the approach to implementation can be found in the Planning Obligations SPD or its replacement.

- **Step 1 – Establishing maintenance sum required - Dwelling occupancy multiplied by (x) average maintenance cost equals (=) maintenance cost per dwelling multiplied by (x) 10 = one off maintenance sum**
- **Step 2 – Determining maintenance sum for off-site quality improvement costs - One off maintenance sum divided by (/) 2 equals (=) quality improvement maintenance sum**

### Local Green Spaces

**9.5.1** Local Green Spaces are a relatively new type of designation enabling local communities to identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection through either a local or neighbourhood plan.

**9.5.2** The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open spaces, and sets out that designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing pitch), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

<sup>47</sup> Maintenance levy: annual sum paid by the houseowner or property owner to an independent body or management company to enable the long term maintenance of green space.

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**Policy ENV 6****Local Green Space**

Development will not be permitted within a Local Green Space, designated either within the Darlington Borough Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan, unless it is consistent with the National Policy approach for Green Belts.

The sites in Table 9.1, and identified on the Policies Map, are proposed for designation as Local Green Space:

**Table 9.1 Local Green Spaces Identified in Darlington Local Plan**

Site Reference	Site Name
LGS01	Beech Wood
LGS02	Springfield Park
LGS05	Fryers Field Recreation Ground
LGS12	North Park
LGS14	Merrybent Community Woodland
LGS15	Almora Hall Field, Middleton St George
LGS16	Middleton St George Playing Field
LGS17	Water Park, Middleton St George
LGS22	Tower Hill to The Front Middleton One Row
LGS23	Field to the East of Middleton Lane, Middleton St George

- 9.5.3** In making the decision on whether or not a green area should be designated as a Local Green Space, the Council has considered whether any additional local benefit would be gained by its designation in addition to another existing designation, such as a Local Nature Reserve or Conservation Area.
- 9.5.4** Designation as a Local Green Space gives an area protection consistent with that in respect of Green Belt.
- 9.5.5** In addition to the Local Plan, communities have the opportunity to identify and designate land as Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans.
- 9.5.6** Whilst the Local Plan does not designate any Local Green Spaces that currently fall within sites allocated for development in the plan, future reviews of the Local Plan will enable these areas to be reconsidered once there is more certainty over the layout of proposed development on these sites and any necessary compensatory measures resulting from the planning application process.

**Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

- 9.6.1** The Government published 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment in 2018' that seeks to, amongst other measures, embed an 'environmental net gain' principle for development and promotes taking a natural capital approach to conserving and improving the natural world. This policy aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within the Borough, in particular, the

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effect of new development on biodiversity and geodiversity assets. It provides detail on how potential impacts will be considered, to give more certainty to applicants and decision makers. Some practical design advice is also provided in the Council's Revised Design of New Development SPD.

- 9.6.2** Darlington Borough currently has 42 nationally and locally designated wildlife sites<sup>(48)</sup>, providing different levels of protection for a growing range of protected and priority habitats and species, including Skylark, Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Noctule Bat and Daubentons's Bat<sup>(49)</sup>. Nationally protected sites (Neasham Fen, Hells Kettles, Newton Ketton Meadows and Redcar Field SSSIs) will continue to be protected and enhanced, consistent with national legislation<sup>(50)</sup> and the objectives in their management plans, whilst Local Nature Reserves (such as The Whinnies and Drinkfield Marsh), Local Wildlife Sites and Community Woodlands have local protection. There are also three Local Geological Sites that protect areas of geological value in the Borough.
- 9.6.3** The Council intend to designate new Local Nature Reserves at Red Hall, Cocker Beck, and Mill Lane, and extend the Brinkburn and Maidendale LNRs to provide greater protection for the protected and priority habitats and species that live there. Other Local Nature Reserves may come forward through site development and involvement with communities. This will help the Borough meet the national standard for Local Nature Reserves.
- 9.6.4** In comparison to neighbouring authorities, Darlington does not have much designated land of a European or National standard, so the 300 hectares of other local wildlife friendly greenspaces, for example, Cocker Beck and Baydale Meadows, are therefore of high importance within the Borough. They allow wildlife, including protected Water Voles and Great Crested Newts to move between designated spaces for feeding, mating and migrating, so helping to ensure biodiversity remains viable in the long term.
- 9.6.5** 'More, better, bigger and connected sites'<sup>(51)</sup> across the Borough, linked by wildlife corridors, smaller wildlife rich 'stepping stones' and 'buffer zones', such as along the existing and proposed strategic green corridors, will help establish healthy ecological networks for all species<sup>(52)</sup>, including the Brown Trout, Little Grebe and Grey Wagtail, and allow ecosystems to be sustained, with attendant benefits<sup>(53)</sup>. The alternative, managing spaces in isolation, could lead to a decline in their number, quality and mix, potentially resulting in habitats being lost and the beneficial functions of ecosystems being reduced.

### Policy ENV 7

#### **Biodiversity and Geodiversity and Development (Strategic Policy)**

The Council will ensure that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection. The Council will also permit proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity where they accord with other relevant policies in the Plan.

Development will be refused if significant adverse effects to biodiversity or geodiversity, either alone or in combination, cannot in the first instance be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.

- 48 Designated sites in Darlington: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Community Woodland.
- 49 New sites are capable of being designated and existing sites de-designated over the course of the plan period based on the results of up-to-date survey work. The Tees Valley Nature Partnership maintain a list of designated wildlife sites in Darlington Borough on their website: [www.teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk](http://www.teesvalleynaturepartnership.org.uk)
- 50 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 51 Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, DEFRA 2011.
- 52 Identified by the Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), Tees Valley Nature Partnership, 2013.
- 53 E.g. breaking down waste products, regulating water and air quality, pollinating food and climate control.

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Development will be expected to minimise the impact on and provide net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent and resilient ecological networks, by:

- a. Avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts upon BAP priority or protected species. Any potential adverse impact upon the ability of protected species to survive, reproduce and maintain or expand their current distribution will be monitored through application of the derogation tests detailed in the Habitats Regulations, and;
- b. Significantly and demonstrably enhancing the quality, extent and mix of priority and protected habitats and species identified in the NERC list<sup>(54)</sup> through:
  - i. Incorporating native habitats, or habitat opportunities, within or around the site and/or as part of building design; and/or
  - ii. Creating, improving or extending ecological networks; and/or
  - iii. Contributing to the implementation of the management plans of the Tees Valley Nature Partnership within the Borough.

Enhancement measures must be compatible with existing biodiversity and ecosystems. In circumstances where the enhancement of biodiversity would place the viability of the development in question, the developer will be required to demonstrate their case to the Council's satisfaction.

Development proposals located within the areas listed below are encouraged, where relevant, to support the achievement of these specific actions as follows:

#### **A) River Tees Existing Green Corridor**

Encourage the protection and enhancement of connections between different parts of the ecological network through:

- i. Creating quality riverside habitat in buffer zones (see Policies ENV 4 and ENV 5);
- ii. Managing agriculture less intensively;
- iii. Planting native trees and ground plants;
- iv. Diversifying the mix of wetland and wet woodland habitats;
- v. Management of invasive species; and
- vi. Creating artificial habitats such as otter holts and bird boxes.

#### **B) River Skerne Proposed Green Corridor**

Encourage improvements to the value and ecological mix to:

- i. Provide quality priority habitats and species in the buffer zone;
- ii. Restore the natural river course, systems and character, e.g. meanders and earth bank sides;
- iii. Retain the natural floodplains;
- iv. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems;
- v. Plant more native broadleaved trees, grassland and wetlands to accommodate a range of protected and priority habitats and species;
- vi. Incorporate green features, such as green roofs and green walls; and
- vii. Manage invasive species.

54 Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 - Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England.

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### C) Rural area

Promote the reinstatement of traditional species rich field margins, hedgerows and trees, along with new opportunities for mixed habitats, including meadows, woodland and wetlands, to provide greater connectivity for wildlife (see Policies H 3, H 7 and E 4).

### D) Nationally and locally designated wildlife sites

Protect, maintain and where appropriate manage (as it depends upon ownership) and extend, in accordance with their management plans. Sites will be protected as follows:

#### i. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

Development likely to have an adverse effect on any of the Borough's or neighbouring SSSI's either individually or in combination with other developments, will not normally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the proposed development in that particular location, clearly outweigh its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the network of sites.

#### ii. Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites

Development likely to result in significant harm to any of the Borough's Local Nature Reserves or Local Wildlife Sites should be avoided by being relocated to an alternative site of less harmful impacts. Where this is not possible, and it is demonstrated development is required in that location it will only be permitted if the significant harm can be overcome by adequate mitigation or as a last resort appropriate compensation measures.

Designate new Local Nature Reserves which meet the Natural England Criteria to ensure the protection of land and species, including Red Hall Wetland, Mill Lane (spanning the Skerne) and Cocker Beck.

Local Wildlife Sites are identified and selected for their local nature conservation value. They protect threatened species and habitats acting as buffers, stepping stones and corridors between nationally-designated wildlife sites. Darlington has sites such as Blackwell Meadows, Coatham Grange and West Cemetery.

#### iii. Community Woodlands and Ancient Woodland

New development will be expected to retain existing woodlands. Development will not be permitted that would result in the loss of woodland unless the benefits clearly outweigh the loss and suitable replacement planting can be undertaken which provides woodland types matching those identified as Priority Habitats in the NERC List <sup>(55)</sup> that are found locally. Ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees are irreplaceable habitats and new development will not be permitted that would result in their loss, fragmentation, isolation or deterioration unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (as defined in national policy) and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

### E) Local Geological Sites (LGSs)

Protect the existing sites at Killerby (North Lane Quarry), Houghton-le-Side (Disused Quarry, Side Hill) and High Coniscliffe Quarries (Disused) and designate new sites, as appropriate.

### F) Wildlife friendly green spaces, parks and parklands

Protect and improve the wildlife value of green spaces, parks and parklands.

55 Identified under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) on the England Biodiversity List as habitat of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

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## Policy ENV 8

**Assessing a Development's Impact on Biodiversity**

Development proposals will be required to provide net gains in biodiversity (prevailing in national policy) and demonstrate achievement of this using the Defra Biodiversity Metric.

Development proposals that are situated within or adjacent to sites of biodiversity importance as identified in Policy ENV 7, or that are likely to have an adverse impact upon such sites<sup>(56)</sup> or upon sites that have a reasonable likelihood of hosting protected and/or priority species, will need to follow the sequence of actions set out below to identify how harm to biodiversity has been avoided, or failing that, adequately mitigated. Applicants should submit evidence that this process has been followed with any planning application:

1. Undertake a Phase 1 Habitat Survey to establish the type and mix of habitats and species present and any likely impacts;
2. For any habitats or species adversely affected, undertake an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and identify appropriate mitigation if possible;
3. Where protected species are present (including species protected under the Conservation & Habitats Regulations, and Wildlife and Countryside Act), further survey work will be required to comply with Habitats Regulations including fulfilling the three derogation tests; and
4. Take account of, and reflect the detailed advice set out in, Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the revised Design of New Development SPD or successor documents.
5. Provide a masterplan, management and maintenance plan for applications of 100 dwellings or more where relevant showing how the quality of biodiversity features will be maintained in the long term. Maintenance contributions where required will be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Where a development proposal cannot avoid significant harm to biodiversity following the consideration of avoidance measures and mitigation, as a last resort, suitable compensatory measures must be incorporated, including the creation of priority habitats<sup>(57)</sup>, with the first priority being on-site provision. Only with adequate reasoned justification will any off-site compensatory measures be permitted, with any such provision, agreed to be adequate and appropriate, secured by Section 106 contribution or Community Infrastructure Levy (or any other future delivery mechanism).

Where adequate compensation measures cannot be provided, and significant harm avoided, planning permission will be refused.

Where developers identify the presence of non-native invasive species on-site, measures will be required to contain the species and ensure it is effectively managed, or where possible, eradicated during development.

- 9.6.6** The NPPF<sup>(58)</sup> states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other measures, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Net gain is an approach to development that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. The Government intends to enshrine the

56 Sites situated further from a designated site may still have an impact - Natural England have developed buffer zones for SSSIs depending upon the type of development which may prove useful when considering applications.

57 As detailed in the NERC list.

58 Paragraph 174 d, NPPF (July 2021)



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requirement to deliver biodiversity net gains in law as part of the forthcoming Environment Bill. The Council will consider the need to develop local guidance on its approach to delivering net gains (including a strategy for using offsetting), potentially as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and will explore the benefits of agreeing a joint approach at the sub-regional level with the Tees Valley Nature Partnership.

- 9.6.7** Connectivity will be improved along watercourses, including the strategic River Tees and River Skerne, public rights of way, railway lines and along field margins in the rural area, to ensure species can move easily across and beyond the Borough. Improving the wildlife value of lower quality urban greenspaces will provide valuable habitats for species, including the Dingy Skipper and Holly Blue butterfly, and nesting birds like the Song Thrush and Spotted Flycatcher, which are in serious decline.
- 9.6.8** Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy includes a number of measures to improve the environmental and recreational value of the Borough's green corridors, and should be read alongside this policy when considering development proposals affecting a green corridor.
- 9.6.9** There are also big opportunities to increase the stock of protected and priority habitats and species through well-designed new developments<sup>(59)</sup>, especially in the strategic locations. In addition, development in the Town Centre Fringe (see Policy TC 6) will provide opportunities to greatly enrich local biodiversity.
- 9.6.10** Biodiversity varies according to location and the presence of protected and priority habitats and species. The type and level of assessments required alongside new development proposals will reflect biodiversity value, and a Phase 1 Habitat Survey (Extended)<sup>(60)</sup>, tree surveys and/or detailed species surveys may be required if protected or priority habitats and species are likely to be present. Through an Ecological Masterplan and/or the Design, Access and Sustainability Statement, the design and layout of new development should be informed by, and respond positively to, the ecological value of the site and the immediate environment and show how this will be protected and enhanced. Even where little biodiversity exists, functional ecological networks should be created; landscaping schemes and green roofs and walls can provide nesting sites, roosting sites and shelter for birds, bats and amphibians. Provision in or adjacent to a green corridor or a designated site, should be informed by the strategic aims of the corridor<sup>(61)</sup> and in the site's management plan.
- 9.6.11** It should be noted that the presence of protected species or habitats is not limited to the designated sites described above. Where internationally and nationally protected species, such as the otter and water vole are identified, development should protect them and their breeding and resting places from disturbance or injury. This will be monitored through application of the derogation tests set out in national legislation<sup>(62)</sup>.
- 9.6.12** With the exception of protected species where a licence may need to be sought from Natural England, impacts which are unavoidable should be fully mitigated for within the locality. Appropriate enhancements can include maintaining existing priority habitats, creating new habitats, providing sustainable drainage schemes with wetlands and reedbeds (see Policy DC 4), new native woodland and street trees and the protection of existing trees<sup>(63)</sup> (including ancient woodland and veteran trees) on or off-site, particularly in the strategic locations. Planning conditions and/or planning obligations may be used to secure mitigation.
- 9.6.13** Off-site mitigation measures will only be considered where there are justifiable ecological reasons that would result in a more appropriate solution to potential impacts on biodiversity as a result of development. This may include the relocation of a species or habitat to a more favourable location owing to existing circumstances or the creation of new habitats in an area nearby that will have a

59 In accordance with the Revised Design of New Development SPD, DBC, 2011.

60 Phase 1 Habitat Surveys assess habitats present, rare plant species, and whether the habitat has potential to shelter protected or BAP species.

61 As identified in Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy, DBC, 2013.

62 Detailed in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017.

63 Through Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

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greater gain in biodiversity than that which can be provided on-site. Such provision would be an exception from the normally accepted choice of protecting species and habitats on-site, or providing alternative on-site mitigation measures and will therefore be expected to clearly set out in the supporting ecological study why off-site provision would be an acceptable solution. It is not considered that geological mitigation could be provided off-site and satisfactory on-site solutions should be found if planning permission is to be granted.

- 9.6.14** The Council are exploring the potential to identify a number of biodiversity offsetting sites within the Plan to help compensate for the impact of developments on biodiversity in the Borough where provision cannot be made on-site in line with Policy ENV 7 and ENV 8. There is also a potential need to identify an appropriate offset site for Great Crested Newts. Examples where this offsetting approach has been successful in the past include the creation of a large wildflower meadow at Baydale Farm on the Teesdale Way and a mosaic of wetland habitats off Staindrop Road, Cocker Beck.
- 9.6.15** To ensure suitable schemes are brought forward and that the long term quality of all biodiversity features proposed is maintained, a masterplan, showing how the features will be designed should be submitted with any planning application for 100 dwellings or more, together with a management and maintenance plan, showing how the features will be maintained in the long term, and this should be submitted with any planning application. A maintenance contribution secured via a Section 106 agreement may be required.
- 9.6.16** The Council will continue to maintain access to up-to-date environmental and other relevant data, including Natural Network Mapping, and will continue to work closely with the Tees Valley Nature Partnership in implementing and monitoring policies and proposals affecting the natural environment.

### Outdoor Sports Facilities

- 9.7.1** Access to good quality, accessible, managed outdoor sport and recreation facilities can have an important role on the health and quality of resident's lives. Consequently, the Council aims to protect, enhance and extend the sporting offer in the Borough, to ensure that provision meets residents' needs now and in the future.
- 9.7.2** Outdoor sports and recreation facilities cover playing fields and Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) as well as a wide range of other facilities for tennis, bowling, golf, athletics and cycling, in the urban area and the villages. Between them, they enable people to enjoy sport at parks, schools and private clubs, either for casual, 'pay as you play' or competitive use. Within each playing field, a number of playing pitches can be marked out, sizes are different for adults and juniors, and the mix of pitches can vary to reflect the sporting seasons.

#### Policy ENV 9

##### Outdoor Sports Facilities

Outdoor sports facilities will be protected in line with Policy ENV4 and, where appropriate, facilities will be improved and extended, to provide a safe and accessible network of quality facilities for outdoor sport.

Through investment, management and maintenance, the most effective use will be made of the network in the future, consistent with the priority actions identified in the Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Needs Assessment and Strategy 2015.

Proposals for the development of new outdoor sports facilities will be permitted where:

- a. They are located within or adjacent to the development limit of a settlement, unless it can be demonstrated that they require a countryside location;
- b. The proposal would not give rise to significant traffic congestion or road safety issues;

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- c. They can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport in line with Policy IN 2;
- d. They protect the amenity of existing users of neighbouring land and buildings in line with Policy DC 3; and
- e. New buildings or structures are well designed and appropriately integrated into the landscape.

**9.7.3** Playing fields are provided and maintained in accordance with a hierarchy of provision. The focus are the three managed hub sites at Blackwell Meadows, Eastbourne Sports Complex and Longfield Academy which provide facilities for different sports for adults and juniors, and have changing rooms and car parking. All have secure community use and provide for competitive league matches as well as 'pay as you play'. A complementary network of smaller satellite sites including schools, parks and sports clubs provide for pitch sports closer to home and work. Single pitch sites in open spaces are the lowest tier and generally have no changing rooms or car parking. Continued use of this hierarchy will ensure provision best meets local needs and future demands, and encourages greater participation in sport in a cost effective way.

**9.7.4** The amount, quality, carrying capacity and accessibility of each playing field in the urban area and villages has been assessed in the Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Needs Assessment and Strategy (2015) to determine whether there is enough provision to meet the demand for football, rugby union, cricket and hockey for adults and juniors, now and in 2026. All playing fields will be protected by this policy and Policy ENV 4, and in line with national policy<sup>(64)</sup> and that of Sport England<sup>(65)</sup>. The Council will consult Sport England on applications involving the loss or alteration of a playing field as required by legislation<sup>(66)</sup>.

**9.7.5** The capacity of existing football pitches is constrained for a variety of reasons and as a result, there are insufficient pitches of the right type to meet projected demand. This is largely due to the recent growth in junior and 9v9 football and the overall pressures on the pitch stock, but is also influenced by the use of school sites (which must also accommodate curricular use) and a reliance on grass pitches for training. For adult pitches, the poor quality of facilities also restricts usage. There is a need to provide additional capacity in order to better the needs of existing clubs, but also to future proof the stock in the event of population growth and participation increases and also to ensure that demand is not constrained by supply. A new state-of-the-art AGP was opened at the Eastbourne Sports Complex in 2016 which has helped to increase local capacity.

**9.7.6** New outdoor sports facilities should, where appropriate, include changing and ancillary provision and meet with National Governing Body (NGB) standards and, wherever possible, should be developed in conjunction with existing clubs. The following general criteria should also be met:

- A high standard of design, construction and maintenance appropriate to the standard of play
- Adequate changing facilities that:
  - Are flexible, fit for a variety of purposes;
  - Fully comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act;
  - Provide for a number of different groups to use the facility at the same time, in safety and comfort; and
  - Meet current standards - Sport England & NGB guidelines.

64 NPPF (July 2021) paragraph 99.

65 Playing Fields Policy and Guidance, Sport England, 2018.

66 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

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- Managed community access
- Accessible by public transport and by car
- Sufficient car parking
- Size of pitches and run offs complies with NGB specification
- Security of tenure (at least 20 years) if a club is to be based at the site.

**9.7.7** The Council is currently in the process of updating the 2015 Darlington Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy along with the accompanying needs assessment and evidence base. This work may identify particular areas of need and opportunities for providing new sports facilities over the course of the plan period.

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- 10.0.1** The Local Plan seeks to improve connectivity, minimise the distance and length of the journey, and make best use of existing public transport and the highways network while delivering sustainable transport choices. The majority of new residential, commercial and employment development is therefore guided to the main towns and larger villages and sustainable methods of transport will be prioritised.
- 10.0.2** Infrastructure can be physical (e.g. transport, utilities), community and social (e.g. education, health) and environmental (e.g. parks and green spaces). Environmental infrastructure is dealt with in the 'Environment' section of the plan. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan accompanies the Local Plan and sets out the types and levels of infrastructure required to accommodate the growth proposed.
- 10.0.3** If infrastructure is not delivered alongside new development, it can put pressure on existing facilities that may not have the ability or capacity to cope with the additional demand.
- 10.0.4** The provision of infrastructure is achieved by a wide range of organisations. The Local Plan, in conjunction with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, will play a key role in securing public and private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery.
- 10.0.5** The local plan objectives relating to transport and infrastructure are to:

- Ensure that new development is in places where it will be reasonably accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.
- Maintain and improve transport links between communities within the Borough and further afield.
- Support development that enhances regionally and nationally important transport links including those offered by Darlington Station, Teesside International Airport, Teesport and the Strategic Road Network.
- Improve the local highway network by managing out strategic highway demands.
- Deliver communication infrastructure, including broadband, to enhance business and social interaction.
- Facilitate the delivery of strategic infrastructure that supports economic growth, including the supply of appropriate housing.
- Secure provision of necessary infrastructure to support growth including improvements to existing services.
- Ensure residents have reasonable access to education facilities within the Borough and where necessary developers should contribute to the provision of education facilities in sustainable locations.
- Create connected neighbourhoods, with local social infrastructure and inclusive public spaces that enable people of all ages and abilities from all backgrounds to develop strong communities.

#### Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network

- 10.1.1** It is vital that the Borough is accessible by a choice of transport modes and that improvements to the transport infrastructure and services encourage sustainable travel. This is important to unlock the economic growth opportunities within the Borough, and to connect to neighbouring regional centres and strategic national and international gateways such as Teesside International Airport, Teesport and the East Coast Mainline. Owing to its location and existing infrastructure, Darlington Borough

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also has a key role to play in delivering the wider vision for sustainable transport across the Tees Valley and beyond. The transport and travel needs of those with specific requirements (such as disabled and elderly people, parents with small children and wheelchair users) is also integral to this agenda.

### Policy IN 1

#### **Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network (Strategic Policy)**

The Council is committed to delivering an efficient transport system with a focus on the provision of infrastructure improvements, to encourage greater use of sustainable modes, leading to less reliance on single occupancy vehicle journeys. We will work with partners and developers to make the best use of and improve existing transport infrastructure, where appropriate, using developer contributions to manage the impact of development on the transport network.

To achieve this, the following priorities and actions have been identified:

#### **A) For cycling, walking and other sustainable transport:**

- i. Protecting existing footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways from development which would impair their functioning for recreation or as alternatives to the private car for accessing employment opportunities, shops and other community facilities;
- ii. Supporting the development of the key sustainable transport corridors identified within the Tees Valley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and 'Local Green Corridors' identified in the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy and safeguarding their routes from development which would impair their functioning for recreation or as routes for pedestrians and cyclists to access employment opportunities, schools, shops and other community facilities;
- iii. All new developments will provide permeability and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to make walking and cycling the first choice for short journeys;
- iv. Improving local connections across busy transport corridors which act as a barrier to local access. This will include working with Highways England and Network Rail to ensure the permeability of the A66 and rail networks respectively;
- v. Protecting and enhancing public rights of way as set out in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, 'Local Green Corridors' identified in the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy and links to long distance routepaths such as the Teesdale Way and NCN 14;
- vi. Identification and creation of a route that mirrors the original Stockton and Darlington Railway line as close as practicable in advance of the 2025 bicentenary (See also Policy ENV 2);
- vii. Support the creation of routes that allow residents in outlying villages to access Darlington, particularly by bicycle.

#### **B) For rail-based transport network:**

- i. Improving inter and sub-regional links to neighbouring centres by ensuring that the Borough is served by high quality rail and bus links;
- ii. Improving connectivity between other forms of sustainable travel and the rail network mainly by providing improved interchange facilities;

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### Specific priorities for the rail network:

- iii. Supporting the improvement of Darlington Station. Informed by a masterplan, work will be undertaken to improve interchange facilities and improvements to the mainline, local and inter-regional routes, potential high speed rail services and sustainable access to the station including bus, walking and cycling.

### C) For road-based transport network:

- i. Mitigating the impact of development at key junctions, on main arterial routes that form the towns Key Road Network and other important links that contribute to the effective movement of traffic to limit congestion.
- ii. Working with Highways England and adjoining authorities to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the strategic and main road networks;
- iii. Providing new local access roads and key road links to open up the locations for development identified in the Local Plan. Such works will be linked to development phasing and secured by legal agreement.
- iv. Maintaining an efficient bus network by ensuring new developments accommodate the needs of bus users, facilitate new bus routes and stops where appropriate and mitigate the impact of development trips on bus journey times through the provision of bus priority measures.

### Specific priorities for the road network:

- v. Working with Highways England to ensure the existing route of the A1 and A66 is maintained and improved in order to maintain its strategic function and enables residents and businesses to continue to benefit from good links to the strategic road network, with contributions sought from developers to a programme of highway improvements where applicable.
- vi. Provision of key routes as part of some development proposals within the plan, in conjunction with existing infrastructure, provide additional road, public transport and high quality cycle and footpath links to create an orbital route of the northern urban area of Darlington. These routes are:
  - Coniscliffe Park - link road connecting A67 to Staindrop Road;
  - Stag House Farm - link road connecting Newton Lane to Staindrop Road;
  - West Park Garden Village - link road connecting Edward Pease Way to Newton Lane;
  - Faverdale link road - connecting Rotary Way to Burtree Lane;
  - Berrymede Farm - connecting Burtree Lane to the A167;
  - Skerningham access roads – including local distributor road between the A167 and A1150 close to the Little Burdon roundabout in the broad location identified in the Skerningham Masterplan Framework;
  - Burdon Hill - link road connecting A1150 to B6279 Tornado Way and new link road to Red Hall; and
  - Link 66 / Symmetry Park - link road connecting the B6279 Tornado Way to B6280 Yarm Road.

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### Regional and Local Context

#### Transport for the North

- 10.2.1** Transport for the North (TfN) became the first Sub-National Transport Body in April 2018. Work is ongoing on developing a pan-northern Strategic Transport Plan which sets out the case for strategic transport infrastructure investment through to 2050. Their vision is of a thriving North of England, where modern transport connections drive economic growth and support an excellent quality of life.
- 10.2.2** The 30 year plan has been developed which outlines how transport connections across the North of England need to be transformed over the short, medium and long term to drive sustainable economic growth by 2050.
- 10.2.3** As part of developing the evidence base for the Strategic Transport Plan, the Integrated Rail and Major Roads Reports identified a series of connectivity priorities to support economic growth in the North.
- 10.2.4** Seven corridors are identified across different modes (and multi modes) of transport, three of which are relevant to the Tees Valley and Darlington Borough.
1. Connecting the Energy Coasts (Multi-Modal) - This corridor seeks to enhance the strategic connectivity, for people and goods, between the advanced manufacturing and energy generation research centres and assets. This is crucial to support the transformational growth potential within this economic area. For Darlington improvements to the East-West linkages for both road and rail are key considerations relating to this corridor.
  2. East Coast to Scotland (Rail) - Strengthening rail connectivity and capacity along the East Coast Main Line and other key parallel rail lines, such as the Durham Coast Line, to provide enhanced strategic and local connectivity in the North East, Tees Valley, East Riding and North Yorkshire. The strategy identifies that investment is required at rail stations, including Darlington, to increase capacity, promote economic growth, and make the most of the opportunities provided by high speed rail services.
  3. Yorkshire to Scotland (Road) - This road corridor looks to strengthen and complement the East Coast Road Corridor to Scotland and examines the transformational requirements to better connect the economic centres (including the Tees Valley) in this corridor beyond the current Road Investment Strategy commitments.

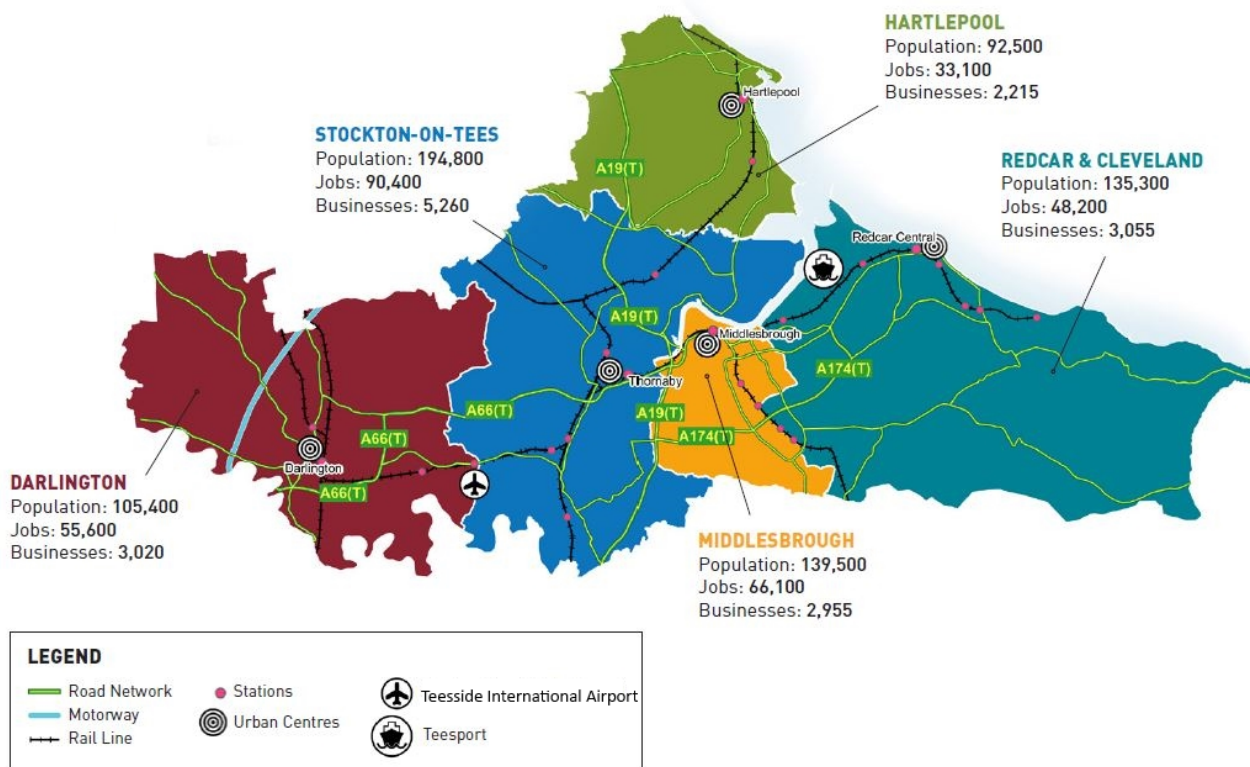
#### Tees Valley Combined Authority

- 10.2.5** Darlington is the gateway to the Tees Valley, and contains many key elements of the sub-regional transport network. Darlington is the point of arrival for those arriving by road via the A1(M) and A66, by air via Teesside International Airport and by rail from Darlington Station on the East Coast Main Line. Figure 10.1 below shows the key features of the sub-regional transport network.



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Figure 10.1 Key features of the sub-regional transport network



**10.2.6** The Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) was created in April 2016 to drive economic growth and job creation. The five Tees Valley authorities work closely with the business community and other partners to make local decisions to support the growth of our economy. Under the devolution deal with the government TVCA have taken on new responsibilities previously held by central government to enable investment decisions to be made locally based on the priorities of communities and businesses in the Tees Valley.

**10.2.7** The Tees Valley Combined Authorities' Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)<sup>(67)</sup> identifies one of the key objectives to unlock future growth as being 'to be better connected'. It is identified within the document that there is a need to improve road and rail connectivity for the region, in order to ensure Tees Valley firms can access UK and European supply chains, particularly in the Northern Powerhouse and that Tees Valley residents can benefit more fully from emerging job opportunities. Four priorities for delivering new transport infrastructure across the Tees Valley are also identified within the SEP over the next 10 years.

**10.2.8** Two of these priorities directly relate to Darlington transport infrastructure:

1. Implementation of the Darlington Station Improvement Project, which encompasses new platforms at Darlington rail station as part of a commercial redevelopment, delivering a 21st century rail gateway ready for high speed rail services;
2. Improved east-west road connectivity to provide a high quality, resilient corridor along the A66 from the A1(M) to the international gateway at Teesport.

**10.2.9** In addition, the devolution deal recognises Tees Valley's ambitions to continue to strengthen the bus network and the relationship and influence it has with local bus operators. The options to achieve this have now been formalised in legislation in the Local Bus Services Act.

67 Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan: The Industrial Strategy for Tees Valley 2016-2026, TVCA.

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- 10.2.10** A Strategic Transport Plan has also been prepared by the TVCA to support the Strategic Economic Plan, and sets out how we will improve and invest in the transport network to make this vision a reality. It is aimed at people living and working in the Tees Valley, as well as business owners, developers, Government, partner organisations and investors. The Strategic Transport Plan was adopted in January 2020.
- 10.2.11** In preparing the Strategic Transport Plan, a framework was developed based upon five themes, which are closely linked together and will all require improvement in order to meet the overall transport vision of Tees Valley. The five key themes are:
1. National Rail;
  2. Major Roads;
  3. Connecting Centres;
  4. Supporting Economic Growth;
  5. Local Journeys.
- 10.2.12** To support the Strategic Transport Plan itself, a series of supporting documents have been prepared which go into more detail on the current and future issues, and the interventions needed, across the five themes listed above.

### Darlington Borough

- 10.2.13** The council's Local Transport Plan sets out the short, medium and long term interventions required to improve the local transport network to meet the Council's and wider community objectives <sup>(68)</sup> for the economy, carbon reduction, health and social inclusion. LTP3<sup>(69)</sup> seeks to maintain and improve all aspects of the local transport system within tight financial constraints, focusing on maintaining the transport network for all types of travel and managing it to improve reliability and performance.
- 10.2.14** The Local Transport Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy both acknowledge that the existing capacity of the road network is a major issue for the Borough in delivering growth over the plan period. Some locations already experience traffic congestion during peak periods and this is likely to increase if no interventions are made. By focusing new development in parts of the Borough which have good access to existing or planned public transport provision, the spatial strategy of the Local Plan is designed to keep the impact of new development on the transport network to a minimum, but some supporting highway improvements will still be needed to enable regeneration plans to be delivered.
- 10.2.15** A new transport Local Implementation Plan for Darlington will be published for consultation upon adoption of the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan. This will integrate the strategic vision for the Tees Valley and local policies to meet the transport and travel needs of those working, living and visiting Darlington Borough.

### Walking and Cycling

- 10.3.1** Providing convenient access to an extensive, efficient and attractive footpath and cycle path network makes a major contribution to achieving sustainability and transport objectives, including improving health and well being amongst the local population that uses it, particularly where they are used for travel that may otherwise have been by private car, e.g. for journeys to work, shops, schools and other community facilities.

68 including One Darlington Perfectly Placed Community Strategy, Revised May 2014.

69 Third Local Transport Plan - Transport Strategy 2011-2026, DBC, March 2011.

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- 10.3.2** For cycling, National Cycle Route 14 has been developed between Darlington and Stockton and beyond to North Yorkshire, and Regional Route 52 runs inside the southern edge of the Borough. The Council has improved the cycle network between Darlington and Newton Aycliffe improving and creating around 2.6km of cycle path along the A167, Durham Road within the Borough and more works have been funded beyond the Borough boundary, to encourage more sustainable journeys to work between the two settlements. All these routes and future improvements will be safeguarded, promoted and developed as necessary.
- 10.3.3** The Borough's network of public rights of way, including permissive routes, provides an important recreational resource that enables the public to experience and enjoy the natural, built and historic environments through activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding. As such, these routes play an important role in ensuring the physical and mental health and wellbeing of residents as well as contributing to the Borough's visitor offer. The network is also an important sustainable transport resource, providing safe connections for low carbon forms of travel within, around and between settlements.
- 10.3.4** Wherever possible, public rights of way should be retained in situ and their recreational and amenity value enhanced as a result of development, for example through improvements to surface and boundary treatments, and through the provision of improved facilities (such as gates, stiles and signage etc.). Developments that, through poor design, negatively affect the amenity of a public right of way will not be supported. In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate to divert the route of a public right of way along a suitable alternative route that provides at least as good recreational and amenity value as the one being replaced. Important factors to consider where a route is to be diverted will include the safety, directness, convenience and attractiveness of the right of way following development. Where possible, routes should be diverted to maintain key views and long range vistas. New development should not demonstrably deter the use of a public right of way.
- 10.3.5** New walking and cycling provision will be made within the Strategic and Local Green Corridors identified in the Tees Valley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Darlington's Green Infrastructure Strategy, and covered by Policy ENV 4. These corridors have a key role to play in improving connectivity, particularly to the town centre, for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 10.3.6** Walking and cycling routes must, wherever possible, be integrated with other modes both in terms of access and connectivity and be associated with Green Infrastructure and public realm. New developments must provide access for all wherever possible with specific regard to facilitating independence for older people and the disabled, and providing safe routes to school and other social infrastructure. In common with roads, streets, green infrastructure and public spaces, passive surveillance should be achieved by overlooking, active frontages, good connectivity and through routes.
- 10.3.7** Developments identified in Policy H 2 Housing Allocations and Policy E 2 Promotion of New Employment Opportunities will also be required to provide a connected walking and cycling network which may also include the protection, improvement or rerouting of existing provision if appropriate. These include, but are not limited to:
- The Stockton and Darlington Railway - this is unique in the national context and is of national and international significance as reflected in the high number of designated and non-designated assets along its 26 mile route;
  - Route to Hurworth - There are a number of options to create a useable route including using the track bed of the old railway line;
  - Route to Heighington; to the north of Darlington lies the village of Heighington which is not directly connected to Darlington for cyclists.

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### Rail Network

- 10.4.1** Darlington is the main interchange hub in the Tees Valley for national and inter-regional rail connections, making it a 'gateway' for rail journeys into and out of the Tees Valley. In 2016/17 over 2.2 million passengers used Darlington station.
- 10.4.2** However, in comparison to its excellent north-south connectivity, Darlington is relatively inaccessible from other key centres within the Tees Valley and from nearby employment areas of South Durham via the Bishop Line. Journey times to Darlington from Middlesbrough and Stockton (as adjacent key centres) are improving, taking between 26-28 minutes which is comparable with car travel, however there are currently no direct train services from Stockton or Hartlepool to Darlington. The service is currently operated every 30 minutes with aspirations to a 15 minute frequency through to Saltburn. This relatively poor east-west connectivity by rail within the Tees Valley impacts on the external connectivity of the Tees Valley as a whole, reducing the attractiveness of the excellent north-south links from Darlington to potential users from the rest of the Tees Valley. However, capacity issues at Darlington are currently a constraint to enhancing these local rail links. In addition Darlington Station has been identified as one of the stations that will need to be upgraded as necessary to accommodate HS2 services.
- 10.4.3** Darlington to Bishop Auckland by train is around a 27 minute journey but is only operated on an hourly service. There are ambitions to increase this to a half hourly service.
- 10.4.4** Given the predicted increase in car ownership<sup>(70)</sup> in the Tees Valley and the advantage of car journey times, increased trips are forecast on the road network. Therefore, improvements to local as well as long distance rail services are sought by 2036.
- 10.4.5** Ensuring that rail freight can move easily to and from Teesport will be an important issue during the Local Plan period, for example, the operation of the Hitachi train manufacturing at Newton Aycliffe is identified as being one of the key employment opportunities in the North East and it is intended that components and other supplies required by the plant are transported by rail as often as possible. For the site to be well served by rail from Teesport, improvements and upgrades to Darlington Station are required. Teesport is by some margin the most important port in the North East and the fifth largest in the UK, and handled 35 million tonnes of cargo in 2015<sup>(71)</sup>.

### Creating a more efficient rail network

- 10.4.6** The Council is working with TVCA and other local authorities along the route of the East Coast Main Line (ECML) to make the case to Government and the rail industry for further investment in the ECML. Investment is seen as essential to improve journey times, service reliability, service frequency and the line capacity that is needed to support the movement of people and freight envisaged for Darlington and the Tees Valley, as set out in Darlington's Economic Strategy and the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan. The local authorities are keen to have a strong partnership with the rail industry, to create a vision for, and the strategic development of, the ECML and connecting services and routes, both for passengers and freight. Improvements that may be brought forward within the Plan period are:
- a. A revised platform layout and better passenger facilities at Darlington Station, either for local train services only or for ECML/future high speed rail services and local train services;
  - b. Modifications to rail infrastructure to permit larger shipping containers to be moved on freight trains, thus increasing the competitiveness of local businesses including Teesport;
  - c. Improving sustainable travel options to stations, including:

70 Road Traffic Forecasts 2015, Department for Transport, March 2015.

71 Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

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- Plan for the improvement of Darlington Station - first phase being the construction of Parkgate Footbridge completed in 2018;
- Public realm Improvements from town centre to Darlington Station.

### Road Network

**10.5.1** The main north-south road links to the Tees Valley are provided by the A1(M), a key national motorway network link for the west of the Tees Valley, while the east of the City Region is served by the A19(T). The main east-west links are provided by the A66(T) and A174(T). The Council is a partner in the emerging Tees Valley Area Action Plan which will set out the strategic priorities for the Tees Valley Combined Authority. In Darlington, the priorities are to improve key junctions serving the area from the A66(T) Darlington Bypass and the A1(M) to avoid levels of predicted traffic congestion that will prevent regeneration of employment areas.

**10.5.2** Whilst the Local Plan has been developed on the basis of ensuring that developments are in locations where sustainable transport options are available, some people will inevitably choose to access employment and key services by car. It is therefore important that the road network is managed in a way that ensures that it continues to function, facilitates our aspirations for economic growth and accommodates the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and other highway users.

**10.5.3** In doing this, the transport interventions need to:

1. Facilitate more jobs and homes without creating unsustainable levels of traffic congestion on the highway network;
2. Effectively manage the demand for roadspace from all types of transport;
3. Provide people with the ability to travel to training, jobs and other important services, especially those without access to a car; and
4. Improve Darlington's strategic links so that it can continue to play its role as a major gateway to the Tees Valley sub-region.

### Creating a more Sustainable Road Network (including improvement to bus services & new road based transport technologies)

**10.5.4** The quality of the road network will remain a vital part of the Strategic Transport Plan and the Local Implementation Plan as it is shared by several transport modes, including some more sustainable modes, such as public transport and cycling. It is therefore in the wider interest of sustainable travel to have a road network that continues to function efficiently.

**10.5.5** The continued growth of the economy should also take into account the use of all modes of transport and not just car based transport. Research has shown that the lack of a bus route can lead to jobs being turned down by unemployed people. Bus networks in England are estimated to generate over £2.5bn in economic benefits – around £1.3bn reflect user benefits from access to jobs, training, shopping and leisure opportunities. The remaining £1.2bn of benefits accrue to other transport users and society at large, through reduction in congestion, reduced pollution, lower accident rates, improved productivity and the stand-by value of bus networks.

**10.5.6** Although congestion in and around Darlington is less than in many other parts of Britain, new development planned across the region will add significantly to trips on the strategic and local highway networks. Without action, both will become more congested and unsafe as traffic levels increase, deterring or restraining development unless action is taken to improve capacity.

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### Strategic road network

**10.5.7** The strategic roads through the Borough (A1(M) and A66(T)) are forecast to come under increasing strain during the plan period, as a result of background traffic growth and traffic generated by specific proposed new developments. Improvement works at the following locations on the strategic highway network are likely to be prioritised within the plan period:

- A1(M) Junction 58 (Faverdale)
- A66(T) Morton Palms – Junction with Yarm Road
- A66(T) Great Burdon
- A66(T) Blands Corner
- Tees Valley East-West Connections A1(M) and the A66 to the West of Darlington (including potential Northern Link Road and dualling of the A66 between Great Burdon and Morton Palms).

**10.5.8** Initial work suggests that improvements can be largely accommodated within the existing highway network or on land in the ownership of the relevant highway authority, so it is not proposed to safeguard any land for them. The Council has been working with Highways England and other Tees Valley Local Authorities to produce an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Tees Valley region. Schemes identified through the AAP will be submitted to funding bodies such as the forthcoming Local Transport Board for financial support and Highways England. In addition major developments within the vicinity of these junctions may be required to contribute towards funding in the form of developer contributions.

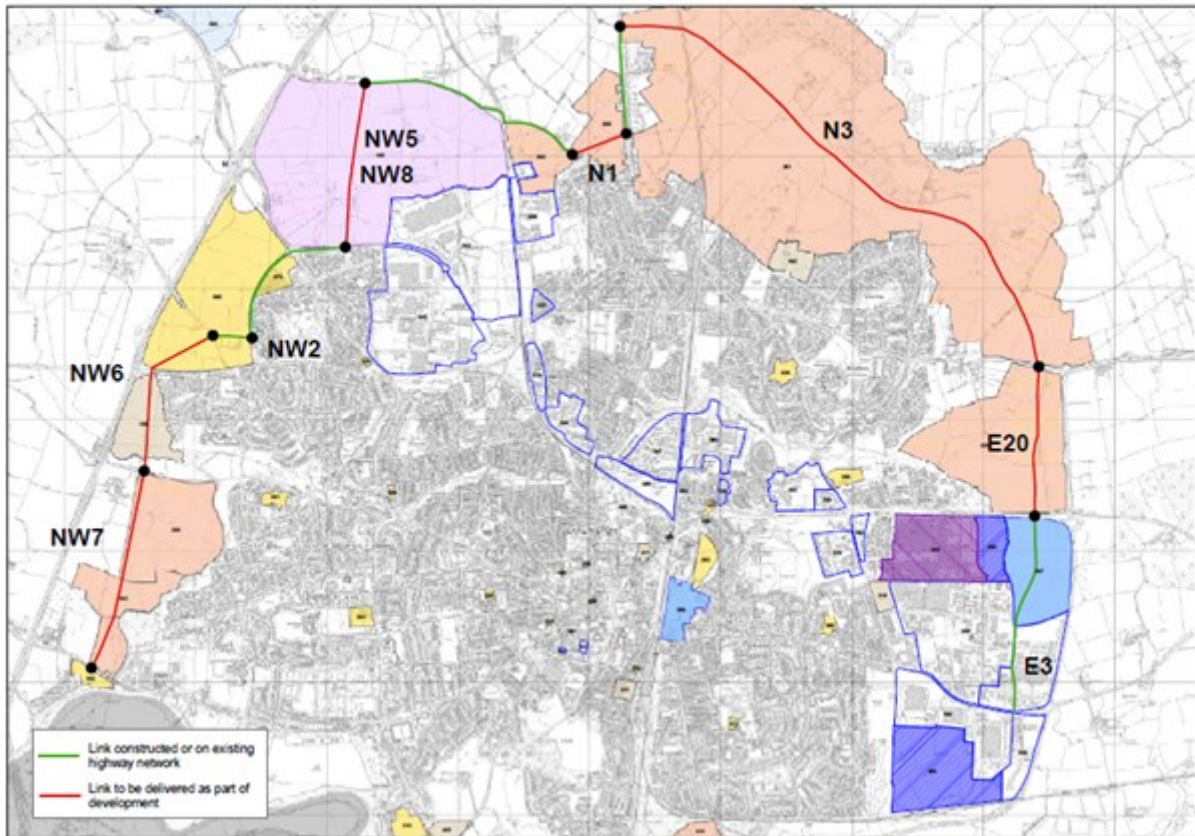
**10.5.9** A long term improvement to the strategic road network is being pursued by a number of partners including TVCA, Transport for the North and the Borough Council to provide improved connectivity along the A66 corridor. As part of these improvements a new Darlington Northern Link Road has been identified to support the Tees Valley SEP. The route would connect the A66 at Little Burdon Roundabout to Junction 59 of A1(M) and a Strategic Outline Business Case will be submitted to DfT in the early part of 2020. The route is not yet fixed and will not therefore be safeguarded within the Local Plan. The Local Plan is not reliant on the delivery of this route and the traffic modelling supporting the Local Plan assumes that the route is not in place.

### Local highway network extensions and improvements

**10.5.10** The highway schemes detailed in Policy IN1 part C(vi) are intended to serve a dual function in creating access to development sites but also providing travel choices for local trips. Through creating an interconnected orbital route this will improve connectivity for all forms of transport to the North of Darlington. These routes will be integrated into proposals for relevant sites and provide access to the development by road (including where appropriate public transport), cycleway and footpath. Figure 10.2 shows the sections of network already in place and those requiring delivery during the plan period.

## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Figure 10.2 Existing and Proposed Sustainable Transport Links



**10.5.11** The schemes detailed in Policy IN1 and Figure 10.2 are from West to East:

- Coniscliffe Park (NW7) - link road connecting A67 to Staindrop Road;
- Stag House Farm (NW6) - link road connecting Newton Lane to Staindrop Road;
- West Park Garden Village (NW2) - link road connecting Edward Pease Way to Newton Lane;
- Faverdale link road (NW5/NW8) connecting Burtree Lane to Rotary Way;
- Berrymede Farm (N1) – connecting Burtree Lane to the A167 and improvements to A167/Burtree Lane junction;
- Skertingham access roads (N3) – including local distributor road between the A167 and A1150 close to the Little Burdon roundabout in the broad location identified in the Skertingham Masterplan Framework;
- Burdon Hill (E20) - link road connecting A1150 to B6279 Tornado Way and new link road to Red Hall and Skertingham access roads; and
- Link 66 / Symmetry Park (E3) - link road connecting the B6279 Tornado Way to B6280 Yarm Road.

**10.5.12** Two new link roads have already been constructed to support development proposals:-

- West Park Link Road – This link road connects West Park Garden Village with Newton Lane and forms part of a longer route that will ultimately connect the A67 with the A68.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE 10

- Symmetry Park Link Road – This link road provides a parallel route to the A66 connecting the B6279 Tornado Way with B6280 Yarm Road.

- 10.5.13** The Council also remains committed to mitigating congestion at ‘pinch point’ junctions and funding for such is being pursued as a priority. As these works can generally be achieved within the existing highway, no land safeguarding for these schemes is required.
- 10.5.14** The Local Transport Plan highlighted that bus patronage is falling and steps must be taken to reverse this trend. Evidence was also provided of poor public transport connectivity to other labour markets within the Tees Valley.
- 10.5.15** Whilst a bus vision and strategy is being developed by the TVCA, as well as reviewing the opportunities that the Buses Act provides for bus schemes and passengers, it is important that at a Darlington level accessibility to a regular bus service remains a key policy for development, based on developing a fully commercial bus network and service. This is key in the selection of sites to be developed, the design of the road network to serve new developments and to enable buses to serve their customers.
- 10.5.16** It is important to take steps to protect the legacy of previous sustainable transport programmes such as Local Motion, Cycling Demonstration Town and Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement (TVBNI) and continue to support current initiatives during the plan period in order to achieve and sustain improved bus patronage. It is also vital to retain a good interchange in the town centre with good quality passenger facilities and information.

### Local Plan Highway Modelling

- 10.5.17** The impact of the Local Plan developments has been assessed with the Tees Valley Combined Authorities Strategic Transport (Voyager) Model. Growth across Darlington has been considered for 2020, 2025, 2030 and 2035.
- 10.5.18** The strategic modelling assessment confirmed that the areas of key change would be:
- The eastern area and associated A1150 East-West corridor where the short term economic development sites are located;
  - The western area including the A68 West Auckland Road corridor;
  - The northern area including A167 North Road corridor and associated A1150 East-West corridor;
  - Radial corridors such as Haughton Road and Yarm Road for access to the town centre; and
  - Longer term issues beyond 2035 related to the Garden Village developments to the north of the town and the background traffic growth on the A1150 and A66 corridors.
- 10.5.19** Results indicate that Local Plan Development trips are concentrated on corridors to the North and East of the town which is in line with the location of planned developments. The usage of roads such as Mill Lane / Sadberge Road as alternate routes to the A66 corridor is also noticeable but is a function of all traffic, not just traffic associated with new development.
- 10.5.20** Increases in morning link capacity stress at:
- A1150 Whinfield Road;
  - B6279 Haughton Road (north of East Mount Road).
- 10.5.21** Increases in evening link capacity stress at:
- A68 West Auckland Road, Woodland Road
  - A1150 Whinfield Road
  - B6279 Haughton Road (north of East Mount Road)



## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- A167 North Road corridor
- A67 / Carmel Road corridor
- Yarm Road approach to Morton Palms from east

**10.5.22** From this strategic model, travel demands have been extracted for more detailed analysis within the local microsimulation models that investigate the impact of Local Plan trips and evaluate the planned mitigations in more detail. These comprised:-

- A66 Eastern Darlington Model
- North Darlington Aimsun Model
- A68 Western Darlington Model

**10.5.23** The detailed traffic modelling indicates that the development within the Local Plan does not have a severe impact on the local and strategic highway network subject to the schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan being implemented.

### Improving Access and Accessibility

**10.6.1** Development that offers better access to all forms of travel will help the Borough to become more sustainable, healthy, green and prosperous. Sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling, public transport and facilities for alternative fuel vehicles will be promoted through travel planning as well as good design.

#### Policy IN 2

##### Improving Access and Accessibility (Strategic Policy)

The Council expects development to promote accessibility and permeability by creating places that are well connected with each other and with existing transport networks. The needs of pedestrians, cyclists, bus and rail users, as well as those with specific needs should be prioritised to reduce the need for travel by private vehicle.

Development will be appropriately located to reduce the need to travel by car and the number and length of car trips made to access local amenities.

In order to improve access and accessibility during the plan period:

- Proposals for new buildings or the change of use or alteration of existing buildings to which the general public and employees have access will be required to provide suitable access and facilities, particularly for people with mobility issues.
- Ensure that all new neighbourhoods are permeable by providing high quality, safe and easily accessible walking and cycling routes to important local services such as shops, particularly those selling fresh food, schools, primary health care, leisure and employment opportunities.
- All developments should provide safe access to the Borough-wide cycling and walking network including links to the Public Rights of Way network and leisure routes.

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- d. All new major development should be accessible by public transport. It is therefore expected that 80% or more of dwellings on a site will be within a 400 metre walking distance of a bus stop served by a regular daytime service (at least every 30 minutes). Where appropriate, financial contributions to provide a supported or extended bus service for up to 5 years, and bus stop infrastructure will be sought where sites are not currently served by regular services.
- e. Contributions will be sought from all developments, where considered appropriate, for the following sustainable travel measures:
  - Provision of regular bus services and infrastructure in locations that are currently poorly served by public transport;
  - Safer Routes to School;
  - Measures to support the Travel Plan;
  - Public Rights of Way improvements.

- 10.6.2** Darlington has a well-developed cycle network including over 40 kilometres of dedicated off road cycle routes based around seven radial routes which start in the town centre and end in various locations on the edge of the urban area. These routes link major employment sites to the main residential areas within the town. The routes are signed using specially approved cycle signs which show typical cycle times rather than distances and are colour coded depending on the route. There is also a circular route which connects the main radial routes to each other and provides a longer leisure route for cyclists. Work in recent years has focussed on connecting rural communities to the urban area of Darlington, and also connecting to County Durham in the north where a significant number of commuter journeys begin or end. The Borough already has an extensive network of cycle routes, but more needs to be done to make cycling a more attractive option compared to the private car. Larger employers, particularly within the urban area, will therefore be encouraged to provide facilities such as secure cycle parking, changing and showering facilities, where practicable.
- 10.6.3** Whilst most roads have a footpath along side and the Rights Of Way network<sup>(72)</sup> provides a comprehensive network of footpaths and bridleways in both the urban and rural areas, there are still gaps in the walking network for some, meaning it is difficult to connect to other modes of transport such as rail or bus. During the plan period, the Council will seek to improve these connections particularly where they are poor, near to proposed development. New development should provide walking links into existing residential, leisure, retail and commercial developments to improve connectivity and permeability.
- 10.6.4** Physical infrastructure interventions, such as cycle routes and bus stops, will be combined with travel information and marketing measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport wherever possible, particularly on or near Key Sustainable Transport Corridors (as identified on the Policies Map). Travel plans (Policy IN 3) and developers planning obligations identified in Policy IN 2 will be the main tools used to embed sustainable travel choices and behavior into new developments from the outset.
- 10.6.5** Access to sustainable transport should also be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset, and guidance is provided within the Design of New Development SPD as to how this may be achieved.
- 10.6.6** Developments that are not within a reasonable walking distance of existing bus services will be expected to contribute to provide a supported bus service for 5 years. A reasonable walking distance is considered to be 400m but other material considerations will be taken into account at the planning

72 Including Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways.

## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

application stage including the distance to local services on foot, the frequency of existing bus services on routes further than 400m away and the likelihood, or otherwise, that a supported service will become commercially viable.

- 10.6.7** The creation of safe and convenient access to all buildings and public spaces is also a priority to help ensure that everyone can help create and benefit from a more prosperous Darlington<sup>(73)</sup>.
- 10.6.8** The town is well served by a commercial bus network. It comprises of a number of key routes which typically have between 4 and 6 buses per hour with a number of secondary routes providing half hour services, though some are less frequent.
- 10.6.9** Darlington has good rail connections to national and sub-regional services utilising East Coast Mainline and trans-pennine routes. There are limited communities that are directly served by train services for local trips. Opportunities do exist for growth in local train journeys, particularly at Dinsdale Station which serves Middleton St George but also at North Road Station.

### Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

- 10.7.1** In accordance with National Policy development proposals that are likely to generate significant additional journeys should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan whilst smaller developments may require Transport Statements.

#### Policy IN 3

##### Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

The Local Planning Authority will require the preparation and implementation of Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and other schemes and agreements to promote the use of sustainable transport for journeys to work, training and education. Proposals that have potential significant impacts should be accompanied by a Travel Plan where appropriate.

Major developments will be required to engage in the Travel Planning process and produce a Transport Assessment. Proposals will be supported that:

- a. Improve transport choice through the provision of information and encouragement to maximise opportunities to travel sustainably;
- b. Minimise the number of single occupancy vehicle trips generated by the development;
- c. Contribute positively to managing congestion, reducing environmental impact and maintaining safety.

Travel Plans must be iterative documents which must be site specific and guided by a framework of common principles and components.

A framework Travel Plan will be appropriate where there is no identified end user or there will be multi-occupancy of a site. Each organisation within a development will be expected to produce a site specific Travel Plan.

Travel Plans should identify the specific required outcomes, targets and measures, and set out clear future monitoring and management arrangements all of which should be proportionate. They should also consider what additional measures may be required to offset unacceptable impacts if the targets should not be met. A travel plan co-ordinator should be appointed to identify opportunities for the effective promotion and

73 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed Community Strategy 2008 - 2026, Revised May 2014.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE 10

delivery of sustainable transport initiatives and to fulfil the management and monitoring requirements. The Council will work with businesses and specifically the travel plan co-ordinators to ensure the travel plans are being developed, maintained and monitored.

- 10.7.2** The Borough has effective sustainable transport networks and the council are committed to improve this network as part of development proposals. The promotion of Travel Plans is essential to encourage residents and employees to use these networks and to inform them of the travel choices available. Key elements include the marketing of public transport, cycling, walking and the provision of charging points for electric cars and the promotion of car sharing in trying to influence travel behaviour.
- 10.7.3** Complementary public transport, cycling and pedestrian initiatives to larger scale developments should be delivered through Travel Assessment/Travel Plan agreements between operators, developers, planning and transport authorities.

### Parking Provision including Electric Vehicle Charging

- 10.8.1** The provision of high quality parking for motorised vehicles throughout the Borough is seen as crucial in keeping Darlington as a competitive place to do business, whilst maintaining the environment that makes for its high quality of life.
- 10.8.2** National policy<sup>(74)</sup> requires local authorities to consider setting local parking standards for new development and to ensure there is an improved quality of parking in town centres that is convenient, safe and secure.

#### Policy IN 4

##### Parking Provision including Electric Vehicle Charging

In addition to supporting and facilitating the use of sustainable transport modes, the Council will continue to ensure there is an adequate supply of safe, secure and convenient public parking for vehicles within and adjacent to the town centre.

Throughout the Borough, new development (including change of use) will be required to provide safe and secure space for vehicle parking and servicing within the site. Provision should be made for residents, employees, customers, deliveries, visitors and others who may visit the premises, including people with disabilities. The number of spaces provided and the nature of the provision (including provision for motor cycle parking) will have regard to local circumstances and the standards set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide or any successor.

Safe, secure and appropriate provision for cycle parking storage, and where appropriate changing and showering facilities will be encouraged, having regard to standards set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide or any successor within all new developments including shared facilities within flats.

Every new residential property which has a garage or dedicated marked out residential car parking space within its curtilage should include an electrical socket suitable for charging electric vehicles.<sup>(75)</sup> An exemption would be made for residential apartments and residential care homes with communal parking areas.

Non-Residential development creating over 50 parking spaces are required to provide at least one double electric vehicle charge point (2 spaces). For each additional 50 parking spaces at least one double charging point will be required.

74 NPPF Paragraphs 107 and 108 (July 2021).

75 The minimum requirement would be a single phase 13 amp socket.

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- 10.8.3** Local parking standards for new development and changes of use will be set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide (due to be updated 2021/22), in the meantime nationally defined parking standards will be applied in the Borough.
- 10.8.4** The adopted Parking Strategy proposes a zonal approach to provide enough convenient parking options to support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. There will be a small number of time limited short stay parking spaces in central locations with wider short stay provision within the Inner Ring Road (area identified as 'Town Centre' on the Policies Map). Outside of the ring road existing parking provision will generally be protected for long stay parking and Residents Parking Zones, unless part of a wider regeneration scheme.
- 10.8.5** The Council will continue to support and facilitate sustainable development of businesses in the town centre by offering contract parking for operational needs to businesses with more than 5 employees who have an employee travel plan in place. This initiative recognises that businesses located in the town centre can be more sustainable in terms of the transport movements that they generate, yet need convenient parking for operational purposes to keep commercially competitive.
- 10.8.6** National Policy<sup>(76)</sup> also requires plans to exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes including incorporating facilities for plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. To encourage the use of electric vehicles it is proposed that new development during the plan period should support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure where this does not affect its overall viability.
- 10.8.7** It is recognised that for development of residential apartment blocks or communal parking areas it may not always be suitable or feasible to require charging points.

### Airport Safety

- 10.9.1** Teesside International Airport is recognised by the Council as essential to the economic performance of the Tees Valley, and to Darlington Borough. It is identified as a strategic location for airport-related employment uses in Policy E 2 'Employment Allocations (Strategic Policy)'.
- 10.9.2** The airport is a civil aerodrome of importance to the national air transport system<sup>(77)</sup>. As such, the capacity of the airport to operate safely is protected by land use planning restrictions placed on the surrounding area. These include requirements to consult with the airport operator for proposed developments above a particular height or with certain other characteristics that may create a hazard for aircraft using the airport, if proposed developments are within identified zones (as detailed on map at APPENDIX D). Examples are developments likely to attract birds, developments with lights that could distract or confuse pilots, or developments that reflect, diffract or otherwise interfere with the radio signals used at the airport. Wind turbines can also have a distracting effect on radar, so the operator of Teesside International Airport and the Ministry of Defence will be consulted on all applications for wind turbines measuring 11 meters or more from ground to blade tip, or with a rotor diameter of 2 meters or more.
- 10.9.3** The airport also has an associated Public Safety Zone at the south-western end of the runway. This is indicated on the map at APPENDIX D and shown on the policies map, as required by Government policy<sup>(78)</sup>. Various types of development will not be permitted in a Public Safety Zone if it increases the number of people living, working or congregating within the Zone and, over time, the number should be reduced, as circumstances allow.

76 NPPF paragraph 85 (July 2021).

77 Joint ODPM/DFT Circular 01/2003.

78 DFT Circular 01/2010.

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**Policy IN 5****Airport Safety**

Within the established 13km (bird strike hazard area) and the 15km (radius of critical airspace) safeguarding areas surrounding the airport, as identified on the policies map, relevant development proposals will require consultation with the operator of the airport, and must consider the operational integrity of the airport, its surveillance systems, and the safety of air traffic services, in accordance with Government Circular 1/2003, or any successor guidance.

Within the Public Safety Zones adjacent to the airport runway, as identified on the policies map, there is a general presumption against new development, unless the proposal accords with guidance in Government circular 1/2010 or any successor guidance.

## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Physical Infrastructure

- 10.10.1** The term 'physical infrastructure' embraces all services necessary for any development, including water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy and telecommunications. In this document, transport infrastructure is addressed separately in Policy IN 1, flood risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in Policy DC 2.
- 10.10.2** National planning policy requires the Council to identify priorities for infrastructure provision, including the need for strategic infrastructure and to support the expansion of high quality electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband. The Darlington Local Plan encourages enhanced infrastructure provision that supports delivery of its vision and objectives.
- 10.10.3** Tees Valley Combined Authority (Formerly Tees Valley Unlimited) prepared a Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP)<sup>(79)</sup>, the conclusions of which inform this section. The SIP considers infrastructure themes which impact upon Tees Valley's strategic sites including utilities, flood risk, energy and broadband. Further detail will be provided in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to accompany the submission of the Local Plan.

### Utilities Infrastructure

- 10.10.4** The Council has consulted the utility companies to ensure there is sufficient capacity in existing infrastructure for the housing, employment and other growth proposed in the Local Plan.
- 10.10.5** Electricity and gas distribution strategic networks have sufficient existing capacity for most of the development requirements in the Borough during the plan period. However, for some larger strategic sites such as Skerningham, investment will be needed to provide an enlarged local distribution network. Sufficient water supply is guaranteed over the plan period owing to the large Northern England supply base through local reservoirs. Within the Borough the Stressholme sewage treatment works has sufficient capacity within current discharge consent limits to accept and treat additional waste water flows from the proposed housing and employment allocations. Again for larger strategic sites new sewer system extensions would be required within the Local Plan period.
- 10.10.6** Unlike other infrastructure, the Council cannot seek planning contributions for utilities, as this type of infrastructure is delivered by others. It is therefore necessary to ensure that developments are accompanied by the utilities required to support the development at the time it is built, to ensure there is no net negative impact on the operation of existing networks.
- 10.10.7** All utilities companies have identified early consultation with potential developers as an important requirement in identifying the need for any reinforcement or upgrading of their infrastructure networks. Before submitting a planning application, those applying for new development or intensification of use will be expected to contact all the relevant utilities providers and regulatory bodies to ascertain how their development can be accommodated.
- 10.10.8** Future capacity is unlikely to present a barrier to major industrial, business and residential developments provided sufficient notice is given to utilities companies and therefore no specific planning policies to enable or facilitate improvements to physical infrastructure networks are required.
- 10.10.9** The Council will work in partnership with utility companies to ensure infrastructure networks continue to accommodate growth and support economic development.

79 Tees Valley Strategic Infrastructure Plan, TVU, November 2014.

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### Policy IN 6

#### Utilities Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

Proposals for new development must be capable of being accommodated by existing or planned utilities (whether supplied by utilities providers or the development itself) and should not:

- a. Have a net negative impact on the operation of existing utilities networks; or
- b. Worsen the services or protection from risk enjoyed by the existing community.

Utilities include gas, electricity, off-site service infrastructure, surface water management, sewage disposal, flood risk defences and flood control facilities.

#### Telecommunication Infrastructure

**10.10.10** Telecommunication infrastructure entails fixed and mobile telephony infrastructure and provisions for fixed and mobile broadband infrastructure, providing better telecommunication infrastructure whilst ensuring there are no significant adverse amenity or public safety impacts.

**10.10.11** High quality advanced communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. Whilst communications networks in the Borough need to be expanded and upgraded, the way this expansion is carried out should have due regard to public safety and visual amenity.

### Policy IN 7

#### Telecommunication Masts

Development of electronic communications infrastructure will be permitted provided proposals meet the following criteria:

- a. Siting and appearance of proposed apparatus and associated structures seeks to minimise impact on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- b. If located on a building, apparatus and associated structures should be sited and designed in order to minimise impacts to the external appearance of the host building;
- c. If proposing a new mast, it should be demonstrated that the applicant has explored the possibilities of erecting apparatus on existing buildings, masts and other structures such evidence should accompany any application made;
- d. Development should not have an unacceptable effect on areas of ecological interest, landscape importance, archaeological sites, conservation areas or buildings of architectural or historic interest.
- e. It is not harmful to visual or aural amenity or the safety of highway users and does not interfere with air traffic equipment.

**10.10.12** Progression of speed and quality in mobile phone technology with aspirations for future 5G networks will see the renewal of current telecommunication mast infrastructure suitable for 3G / 4G services in Darlington Borough over the plan period. The Council is keen to facilitate such improvements to



## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

support quality of life for citizens and facilitate business growth. In line with national policy<sup>(80)</sup> we seek to support mast and asset sharing, network convergence and support siting of equipment on tall buildings and structures to support data speed and reception.

**10.10.13** Evidence will also be required to demonstrate that telecommunications infrastructure will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, such as air traffic services.

### Broadband Infrastructure

**10.10.14** In the last ten years Darlington's broadband fibre infrastructure network has been significantly improved by commercially driven upgrades from Openreach and Virgin Media and the impact of the government funded Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme in urban and rural Darlington.

**10.10.15** The public funded Digital Durham BDUK programme phases enhanced broadband speed capability for the Tees Valley Combined Authority and other authorities in the North East since 2014. However, whilst superfast broadband accessibility<sup>(81)</sup> in Darlington has significantly improved, several strategic housing and employment development sites have not yet been connected to futureproof broadband infrastructure altogether.

**10.10.16** Broadband provision is now seen in the UK as the 4th utility and citizens are now able to demand access to minimum speeds by providers through the Governments Universal Service Obligation (USO) scheme which commenced March 2020.

### Policy IN 8

#### Broadband Infrastructure

Development proposals for housing sites of more than 50 homes and employment sites of more than 0.5 ha must ensure that broadband connectivity and ducts are provided for the development.

**10.10.17** The Council will ensure with developers that future broadband infrastructure provision in larger housing and employment sites will be identified and provision gaps are closed within the planning application process (and may include appropriate planning conditions) of these developments.

**10.10.18** This includes several strategic housing development locations and new employment allocations such as Skertingham (Policy H 10) and Greater Faverdale (Policy H 11). For Rural Areas of the Borough public funding from TVCA and BDUK<sup>(82)</sup> will be utilised to increase superfast coverage to at least 98% in the Tees Valley.

### Renewable Energy Infrastructure

**10.10.19** Renewable Energy Infrastructure supports the mitigation of Climate Change and supports smart energy systems and energy flexibility. The council supports carbon neutral solutions and the overall reduction of carbon emissions throughout the development process.

**10.10.20** The types of renewable and energy efficient infrastructure which are deemed applicable include:

- Wind Energy
- Solar Energy

80 UK's Electronic Communications Code based on the Digital Economy Act , OFCOM / DCMS 2017.

81 Superfast = at least 24 mbsec (megabits per second) download speed.

82 BDUK Superfast Extension Phase 2 + 3 2017-2020.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE 10

- Hydro Power
- District Energy networks

**10.10.21** One of the key aims of the Local Plan is to reduce energy use and carbon emissions. Appliances like industrial and new domestic scale renewable installations feeding into the electricity grid through existing connections, electric vehicles and heat pumps are anticipated to impact on supporting renewable or efficient energy solutions and reducing carbon emissions.

### Policy IN 9

#### Renewable Energy Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

Renewable and low carbon energy development including community-led initiatives will be supported across the Borough, where proposals are in accordance with the following relevant criteria. In determining planning applications for such projects significant weight will be given to the achievement of wider social, environmental and economic benefits.

- a. Wind energy development will be granted planning permission if the applicant can demonstrate that, following consultation, the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing, and the proposal will not have unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively upon:
  - i. shadow flicker;
  - ii. visual dominance;
  - iii. protected species and habitats;
  - iv. landscape character and fabric;
  - v. the historic environment, including heritage assets and their settings;
  - vi. communication links; and
  - vii. aviation and radar.
  
- b. Solar Power developments will be granted planning permission if the applicant can demonstrate that the following considerations have been taken into account:
  - i. the importance of siting systems in situations where they can collect the most energy from the sun;
  - ii. need for sufficient area of solar modules to produce the required energy output from the system;
  - iii. the colour and appearance of the modules;
  - iv. demonstrate effective use of land by focussing large scale solar farms on previously developed and non agricultural land;
  - v. where a proposal involves agricultural land it has been demonstrated that:

## 10 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. the land has been shown to be poorer quality land in preference to higher quality agricultural land; and
  2. the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around solar arrays;
- vi. the proposal has adequately mitigated the visual impact on the landscape and the effect of glint and glare on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety.
- c. Hydro Power: Applications for hydropower will need to be accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment. Early engagement should take place with the local planning authority and the Environment Agency.
- d. District Heating: Required in major development over 300 houses to be enabled for district energy connection unless demonstrated not to be feasible or financially viable to do so.

Where relevant, planning applications will also need to include a satisfactory scheme to restore the site to a quality of at least its original condition once operations have ceased.

**10.10.22** The Council will ensure that future development makes the fullest contribution to minimising carbon emissions in accordance with the "use less energy, supply energy efficiently and use renewable energy" assumption to assist in meeting local, Tees Valley and national CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets. The Council will promote the development of district energy networks on larger strategic sites where opportunities exist due to high heat density or an increase in heat density brought about by new development.

**10.10.23** The whole of Darlington Borough is identified as suitable for wind energy development subject to proposals complying with the relevant criteria set out in Policy IN9 including demonstrating in accordance with footnote 54 of the NPPF (July 2021) that, following consultation, the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing. Whether the proposal has the backing of the affected local community will be a judgement at the planning application determination stage<sup>(83)</sup>.

### Community and Social Infrastructure

**10.11.1** Access to a wide range of good quality community facilities is identified as a key contributor to the health and well-being of people who live and work in the Borough and is one of the key objectives of the Local Plan vision, aims and objectives (Section 2). The timely provision and upgrading of facilities is required to ensure Darlington's future growth brings more prosperity, safety, sustainability and inclusiveness and maintains and improves health and well-being.

#### Policy IN 10

##### Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

##### A) Education

If need is demonstrated<sup>(84)</sup> then a planning obligation will be sought based on a calculation of:

83 NPPG (5-033-150618)

84 The nearest school or another school, within 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools, is operating within 5% of its capacity.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE 10

- (Pupil place generation per family dwelling)<sup>(85)</sup> – (existing spare capacity in local schools) x (Department for Education (DfE) standard cost per place);<sup>(86)</sup>

Planning obligations for education provision will not be sought for:

- residential developments of 9 units or less;
- non-residential development;
- affordable housing schemes;
- single bed properties;
- specialist housing for the elderly (Use Class C2);
- student accommodation (unless it specifically includes provision for families;
- purpose built hostel or holiday accommodation which are incapable of occupation for general residential purposes because of their layout, ownership, management or occupancy restrictions.

Land will be reserved for education uses within the following sites:

- South of Yarm Road in Middleton St George (site 247)
- Land at Berrymede Farm (site 008)
- West Park Garden Village (site 068)
- Coniscliffe Park North (site 249)
- Provision on strategic sites of Skerningham and Greater Faverdale are dealt with in Policies H 10 and H 11.

Such land will be reserved until an agreed trigger point linked to phasing, to be stipulated in a legal agreement prior to the granting of planning permission. If there are no firm plans for the school at that time, the land may be made available for alternative community uses. If none of these can be delivered within a reasonable time (to be agreed in advance), the land may be considered for additional new housing.

### **B) Protection of Existing Community Facilities**

The loss of any community facilities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- there are sufficient other suitable alternative community facilities either within the neighbourhood or accessible nearby; or
- the community facility is no longer needed; or
- there is no management and funding resources existing or that could be generated within the local community that could secure and sustain a facility that meets identified local needs; or
- the community facility cannot be secured or sustained through the partial redevelopment of the site.

85 Latest TVCA Pupil Projection report.

86 DfE place generation settlement figure (currently £13,115 per primary place and £17,050 per secondary place).

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### C) Provision of new community facilities

Proposals for new and expanded community services and facilities will be supported in accessible locations, providing that the scale of development is appropriate to the area in which it is proposed.

For new indoor sports provision and arts and cultural facilities, priority will be given to new proposals according to the settlement hierarchy set out in the plan. Proposals will be permitted elsewhere if it is demonstrated that:

- i. there is a need for it in the location proposed; and
- ii. it will be easily accessible by a choice of means of transport; and
- iii. for arts and cultural facilities that, through market research and/or an impact assessment, it can be shown that there would not be any damaging impact on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre, including the evening economy.

Secure community access, outside of core school hours, will be required for any new provision on educational sites.

2.4 hectares of land (as identified on the Policies Map) will be reserved at West Cemetery for future burial space.

### Education

- 10.11.2** Access to good schools is critical to the quality of life of residents, and improving it is a key ambition within the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy.<sup>(87)</sup> The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities<sup>(88)</sup>.
- 10.11.3** The Council has to assess the local need for school places and ensure that every child resident in the Borough can have a place in a state funded school in Darlington.<sup>(89)</sup> It works with a wide range of education providers, such as Academies<sup>(90)</sup> and Free Schools<sup>(91)</sup> to ensure this.
- 10.11.4** The main planning issue is how to meet any need for additional school places arising from planned housing growth and population change.<sup>(92)</sup> However, uncertainty around future projections, due to changes in birth rate and fluctuations in build rate of housing developments means that predicting the school place requirement over the entire Plan period is difficult.
- 10.11.5** Expansions have recently taken place at Heathfield Primary School and St George's Primary School that have created additional capacities.
- 10.11.6** It is envisaged that an additional need for school places is likely to arise in the medium to long term where significant new housing is proposed, particularly in the north, north-west and east of the Borough. Following the same strategy of supporting existing schools, expansion of existing school facilities to accommodate additional demand will be considered in the first instance. An updated SOP is currently under preparation that will identify existing schools that will be expanded next.

87 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed 2008 -2026 (Revised May 2014), DBC.

88 NPPF paragraph 95 (July 2021).

89 A High Quality Place for Every Child, School Organisation Plan (SOP) 2013-17, DBC.

90 State funded schools directly funded by central Government and independent of the Local Authority.

91 State funded independent schools.

92 Every 100 new houses is expected, on average, to produce between 18 and 20 primary school age children and 13-15 pupils of secondary age.

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**10.11.7** To ensure new schools can be delivered close to the strategic housing growth areas if they are required, the Skertingham and Greater Faverdale Strategic Allocations (Policy H 10 and H 11) will safeguard land for future education provision. In addition land will be safeguarded at Berrymead Farm (site 008), South of Yarm Road in Middleton St George (site 247), Coniscliffe Park North (site 249) and West Park Garden Village (site 068).

### Community facilities

**10.11.8** Policy IN 10 seeks to safeguard local services and facilities that meet people's day to day needs. Local shops and other retail outlets are also covered within the policy. This policy covers community centres, village halls, social clubs, children's centres, churches, mosques and other community resources, such as libraries, which are important for socialising and other community activities. Public houses are also important venues for community engagement and venues to host community activities, and are covered in the policy as a community facility.

**10.11.9** Many community facilities are experiencing reduced income, arising from either reduced use or reduced public sector or other external funding. Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to maintain a list of community assets<sup>(93)</sup>. This provides certain community groups with an opportunity to protect and preserve local assets of community value. If these assets are put up for sale, in the first instance community groups have the 'right to bid' for them in an attempt to retain the facility<sup>(94)</sup>.

**10.11.10** The loss of a community facility will be resisted where it is the only remaining facility in a community, where there is an identified need for it, and where a source of funding for ongoing management and maintenance could support the facility. Evidence in support of retaining the last community building must show there is no accessible alternative suitable facility. A 'lack of need' argument would need to be backed up by evidence, e.g. by surveying all community groups in the area, and a 'lack of funding' argument would need evidence that no other community group in the neighbourhood would be prepared to take over the facility.

### Indoor Sports Facilities

**10.11.11** Indoor sports facilities include swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness facilities and dance studios, and other specialist provision such as indoor bowls, squash courts, gymnastics centres, boxing gyms and indoor tennis<sup>(95)</sup>. These facilities can be provided by academies, schools and colleges, private sports clubs, parish councils and at community and village halls.

**10.11.12** The policy seeks to protect and where appropriate, enhance a range of - quality, accessible and safe facilities, to support more participation in indoor sports and promote healthier lifestyles. In recent years, access to sports facilities at educational sites has improved, as several schools have successfully converted to Academy status and new and improved facilities have been provided, e.g. at Longfield Academy, which has provided a third strategic 'hub' site for indoor sports provision in addition to the Eastbourne Sports Complex and the Dolphin Centre. Improvements to facilities at other key education sites will provide a network of complementary satellite sites for indoor sports provision.

**10.11.13** However, access to and quality of existing facilities can be improved further. A key priority<sup>(96)</sup> is to ensure sport and physical activity facilities and spaces (including schools) are available for community use. Although an indoor BMX and skate park has been provided at Faverdale, there is evidence to suggest that not enough specialist sports provision, specifically indoor tennis courts and indoor active play facilities are available in the Borough.

**10.11.14** As most indoor sports provision is market led or otherwise outside Local Authority control, quality and access improvements can only be secured through the planning system by attaching conditions to planning permission for extensions, alterations or for new facilities. The policy requires community use to be secured for new provision on educational sites in priority locations.

93 Community assets can be land or buildings in public or private ownership.

94 Darlington Borough Council Policy on The Community Right to Bid for Assets of Community Value.

95 as defined in Darlington's Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy.

96 Darlington Draft Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2013-2018, April 2013 (Priority Action 9).

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### Arts and Cultural Facilities

- 10.11.15** There are aspirations in the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy<sup>(97)</sup> to promote and enhance arts and culture in the Borough. The Creative Darlington vision identifies arts and culture as being central to Darlington's future identity and economic success. Through bringing people together, the arts have a key role to play in promoting and enabling social inclusion and cohesion. The Town Centre remains a focus for cultural heritage and an ideal setting for cultural activity and events.
- 10.11.16** Darlington Hippodrome (formerly the Civic Theatre) has reopened after a £13.7m restoration and upgrade that has seen the creation of Theatre Hullabaloo for children. Funding has been provided by Heritage Lottery and Arts Council funding to facilitate these projects.
- 10.11.17** The Head of Steam, Darlington's Railway Museum, is another successful facility which promotes the town's distinct heritage. It is also a focus for social and cultural events and activities and is likely to have a key role to play in celebrations for the 200 year anniversary of the launch of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The Crown Street Art Gallery and The Bridge, a community arts venue, are other key venues managed by Creative Darlington, an organisation who encourage the development of arts in the Borough.
- 10.11.18** Cultural and arts facilities are facing new challenges as income sources, including public sector funding, are increasingly under pressure. It is likely that not all arts and cultural facilities can be sustained through the Plan period, and any new facilities will need to be largely privately provided and supported. It may be possible to sustain some existing provision or to deliver new facilities, by sharing facilities and/or support with other community uses. As recognised within the Creative Darlington vision, the sustained development of the sector will depend on the support, co-ordination and prioritisation across arts organisations.

### Cemeteries

- 10.11.19** The Council is responsible for managing and maintaining three cemeteries, West Cemetery on Carmel Road North (the largest), North Cemetery on North Road and East Cemetery on Geneva Road.
- 10.11.20** North and East Cemeteries are likely to have enough space during the Plan period (to 2036)<sup>(98)</sup>. However, in order for the Council to continue to meet the burial needs of the Borough there is a significant need for new burial space at West Cemetery, the existing space for graves is likely to be used by 2020/21<sup>(99)</sup>.
- 10.11.21** The cemetery has been extended four times since it opened in 1858, with the latest extension in 1997, the area now covers 15.3 ha.
- 10.11.22** At West Cemetery 2.4 ha of land adjoining the existing cemetery site is allocated and reserved for further burials to meet the need for the remainder of the plan period.

97 One Darlington Perfectly Placed: A Vision for Darlington 2008-2021, Revised May 2014, DBC.

98 North Cemetery has an average of 25 burials per annum with approx 700 grave places remaining and East Cemetery having an average of 12 burials per annum with 400 grave places remaining.

99 There are on average 65 burials per annum using new graves in the West Cemetery and there are currently 200 new grave spaces remaining.

## MONITORING FRAMEWORK 11

## 11 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

- 11.0.1** A central element of the implementation of planning policies is assessing their effectiveness through robust monitoring mechanisms. The Local Planning Authority will regularly assess the performance of individual policies and overall progress in delivering the strategic objectives of the Local Plan. This will be used to inform any change to policies or additional actions considered to be required.
- 11.0.2** This will be carried out by collecting information on a number of indicators and will be reported on an annual basis in the Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR). Key Local Plan monitoring indicators have been selected to:
- provide information about whether policies are achieving their objectives;
  - determine if targets are being met;
  - determine if the policies in the Local Plan remain relevant or whether updates to policy are required.
- 11.0.3** Monitoring of the Local Plan will primarily be achieved through the collection of information about the effectiveness of key Local Plan policies. This information can be used to identify when a change in the approach to development management decision making is necessary to ensure that the objectives underpinning planning policies are achieved. In defining objectives for each policy, these generally relate to the identified strategic objectives within the Local Plan aimed at bringing about the overall vision. However, some policies do not align precisely with a strategic objective, or do so with several. Here the overall and underlying objective is sustainable development; steering growth into centres best able to support it, reducing the need to travel, harmonising housing and employment, creating vital communities and reducing human impacts to the minimum consistent with achieving a decent standard of living and passing the same on to future generations.
- 11.0.4** The Local Plan indicators are included in Table 11.1. Wherever practicable, targets have been set for each of the Local Plan indicators, however, not all of the outcomes of individual policies are easily assessed. In such cases trends will be monitored and the baseline for reporting will be either the commencement of the Plan period (2016) or the adoption date of the Plan.
- 11.0.5** It is also important to note that as well as the monitoring mechanisms outlined above, the NPPF requires that policies in local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least one every five years and updated as necessary. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy. The Council will undertake a review within the timescales set out.



## 11 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Table 11.1

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
Sustainable Development				
The Settlement Hierarchy				
SH1	Amount of development by type within each settlement. Amount of development by type within each settlement.	Deliver overall distribution of sites in accordance with the settlement hierarchy	Development Management Records	DBC
Design and Construction				
DC1	Number of developments that demonstrate that they accord with the Design of New Development SPD	100% of applications accord with Design of New Development SPD	Development Management Records	DBC
DC2	Number of proposals granted consent contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding	No applications granted contrary to EA advice on flooding	Development Management Records.	DBC/Environment Agency
DC3	Number of developments which incorporate the health and well being principles	100% of relevant planning applications assess the needs of health	Development Management Records	DBC
DC4	Number of planning consents with a condition/agreement requiring jobs skills/apprentice training	Monitor	Development Management Records	DBC
Homes				
H1	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	Maintain a 5 year rolling supply	Development Management Records and Forward Planning, Planning Policy monitoring using trusted	DBC, Developers and Landowners

## MONITORING FRAMEWORK 11

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
			sources (eg Building Control, NHBC, Council Tax, site visits)	
H2	Net additional dwellings delivered	Deliver 492 dwellings per annum	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring using trusted sources (eg Building Control, NHBC, Council Tax, site visits)	DBC, Developers
H3	Number of developments outside development limits	No inappropriate housing development	Development Management Record, Planning Policy monitoring using trusted sources (eg Building Control, NHBC, Council Tax, site visits)	DBC
H4	Number of dwellings within developments which meet category 2 and 3 of Building Regulations Document M	45% meet category 2 and 9% for category 3	Development Management Records and Housing Section	DBC
H5	Number of affordable dwellings delivered	10-30% affordable delivered	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring using trusted sources (eg Building Control, NHBC, Council Tax, site visits)	DBC and Registered Providers
H6	Number of dwellings delivered through rural and entry-level exception schemes		Development Management Records, Planning Policy	DBC and Registered Providers

## 11 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
H7	Number of dwellings provided outside development limits	No dwellings provided unless for agricultural or forestry purposes	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring using trusted sources (eg Building Control, NHBC, Council Tax, site visits)	DBC
H8	Number of extra bedrooms in homes of multiple occupation	Number of applications approved	Development Management Records	DBC
H9	Net additional traveller pitches delivered (permanent or transit)	To meet identified demand	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
H10	Masterplan agreed by Council	Masterplan agreed prior to applications received	Committee records	DBC
H11	Masterplan received and agreed by planning committee	Masterplan agreed prior to applications received	Committee records	DBC
<b>Employment for Economic Growth</b>				
E1	Safeguard existing employment land	No net loss of existing employment land/buildings to other uses	Development Management Records	DBC
E2	Amount of vacant employment land available for development by type: a. allocated; b. with planning consent	Amount and type of employment provision delivered (unit floorspace and site size).	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC

## MONITORING FRAMEWORK 11

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
E3	Relocation of the Auction Mart	Planning permission issued and development started	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
E4	Amount of development permitted in the open countryside	Development limited to appropriate development	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
<b>Town Centres and Retail</b>				
TC1	Net floorspace developed for town centre uses per annum, by: a. town centre; b. edge of centre; c. out of centre location.	Increase the vitality of the town centres and reduce vacant premises	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
TC2	Maintain the attractiveness of the primary shopping area	Number of vacant units within the town centre	Annual survey, Planning Policy monitoring and surveys	DBC
TC3	Provision of additional retail floorspace within the town centre boundary	Amount of additional floorspace/number of additional units	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
TC4	Maintain the vitality and viability of district centres	Number of vacant units or changes of use from acceptable uses	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC
TC5	Retail Impact Assessments submitted where required	Number of retail impact assessments received on developments between 500 sqm and 2,500 sqm	Development Management Records, Planning Policy monitoring	DBC

## 11 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
Environment				
ENV1	<p>1. Number of proposals granted permission contrary to Historic England advice on the grounds of impact on locally, regionally or nationally designated sites</p> <p>2. Reduction in the number of assets that are classified as heritage at risk.</p> <p>3. Preparation of a local list</p> <p>4. Completion of conservation area action plans and management plans where one has not been produced and review others where necessary</p>	<p>No applications granted contrary to Historic England advice</p> <p>Monitor Heritage at Risk Register.</p> <p>Track progress on local list preparation.</p> <p>Track progress on conservation area action plans and management plans.</p>	<p>Development Management Records</p> <p>Council's Conservation Officer</p>	DBC
ENV2	Protect the integrity and associated assets of the S&DR railway	Number of applications determined which have an impact on the railway route of asset	Development Management Records	DBC
ENV3	Loss of important landscape areas	Applications which would result in the loss of important	Development Management Records	DBC
ENV4	Protection of green infrastructure assets	Monitor	Development Management Records	DBC
ENV5	Creation of new green infrastructure	Amount of new green infrastructure provided	Development Management Records	DBC

MONITORING FRAMEWORK 11

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
ENV6	Protection of designated local green spaces	Any net loss of identified	Development Management Records	DBC
ENV7	Protection of biodiversity and geodiversity	No net loss	Development Management Records including S106 agreements securing funds	DBC
ENV8	Ensure measures are taken to protect important sites/species	Sites are protected or adequate mitigation is undertaken	Development Management Records	DBC
ENV9	Protection and improvement of sports facilities	No net loss of sports facilities	Development Management Records	DBC
<b>Transport and Infrastructure</b>				
IN1	Number of travel plans submitted as part of decision making process	Monitor	Development Management Records	DBC
IN2	All schemes to incorporate designs which allow alternatives to private motorised transport	Monitor	Development Management Records	DBC
IN3	Number of major developments that have submitted Travel Plans/Travel Assessment with their application	100% of applications have submitted a Travel Plan/Travel Assessment where required	Development Management Records	DBC
IN4	Number of electric charging points installed	Increased provision	Development Management Records	DBC
IN5	Any developments within the defined safeguarding area around the airport.	The airport operator are consulted on 100% of applications within the	Development Management Records	DBC

## 11 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Policy	Indicator	Target	Source	Responsibility for Delivery
		safeguarding area as defined on the Policies Map		
IN6	Impact of development on utilities networks	No net negative impact	Development Management Records	DBC
IN7	Total of Telecommunications notifications received by: a. new location; or b. on existing telecommunications locations	Monitor	Development Management Records	DBC
IN8	Provision of broadband infrastructure within qualifying developments	All qualifying developments to provide broadband infrastructure	Development Management Records	DBC
IN9	Number of renewable energy schemes submitted	Number of schemes approved	Development Management Records	DBC
IN10	Contributions and community facilities provided	The amount of contributions secured for education and other community facilities.	S106 records	DBC

## GLOSSARY 12

## 12 GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing	Defined by the National Planning Policy Framework MHCLG, 2021.
Amenity	A broad concept that refers to the pleasant or satisfactory aspects of a place which add positively to its overall character and to the enjoyment of residents or visitors. For example, it encompasses human health, quality design, provision and protection of local services, local economy and the protection of the countryside, historic environment, environmental character and visual, air and noise quality. Amenity also encompasses leisure and sporting areas, such as playing fields and other open spaces used for sport.
Ancillary Uses	A subsidiary or secondary use or operation closely associated with the main use of a building or piece of land.
Ancient or Veteran Tree	A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
Ancient Woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).
Biodiversity	Variety of life including different plants, animals and micro-organisms, and the ecosystems of which they are a part.
Blue Infrastructure	Blue Infrastructure is a term used to describe a wide range of landscape elements linked to water including rivers, streams, lakes, pools, ponds and other water courses. Blue Infrastructure can include both natural and man-made landscape elements.
Climate Change Adaption	Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.
Climate Change Mitigation	Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Conservation Area	A designated area of special architectural and/or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is a recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole.
Developer Contributions	Section 106 contributions, planning obligations and /or Community Infrastructure Levy.
Entry-level Exception Sites	A site that provides entry-level homes suitable for first time buyers (or equivalent, for those looking to rent), in line with paragraph 71 or successors of the NPPF.



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Flood Risk Assessment	Ensures that flood risk to a proposed development is considered, as well as the impact the development will have elsewhere on people and property. Its scope will reflect the scale, nature and location of the development.
Footloose Businesses	An industry that is not tied to any particular location and can relocate in response to changing economic conditions.
Green Corridor	Linear green feature connecting different greenspaces, can incorporate walking and cycling routes. Most are also wildlife corridors.
Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.  Includes locally important green spaces, green wedges, wildlife sites, allotments, urban fringe, trees, woodland, rights of way and countryside.
Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
Historic Environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Infill Development	The development of a small area of vacant land between existing buildings.
Local Green Space	A designation either in a local plan or neighbourhood development plan that provides special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Main Town Centre Uses	Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
Major Development	For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m <sup>2</sup> or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
Material Consideration	A material consideration is a matter which the decision maker must take into account when assessing a planning application.
Market Signals	Local demand/pressures indicated by price signals or other indicators of market preference.
Maintenance Levy	Annual sum paid by the house owner or property owner to an independent body or management company to enable the long term maintenance of green space or sustainable drainage
Masterplan	A type of planning brief outlining the preferred usage of land and the overall approach to the layout of a development. To provide detailed guidance for subsequent planning applications.

## GLOSSARY 12

Neighbourhood Plan	A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Non-Designated Heritage Assets	Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by the Local Planning Authority as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.
Open Space	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
PDL - Previously Developed Land	<p>Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.</p> <p>This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for mineral extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds, and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.</p>
Primary Agricultural Holding	An applicant's main holding registered as an agricultural holding used solely or mainly for the purposes of agriculture, horticulture.
Rural Exception Sites	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
Setting of a Heritage Asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
Site of Special Scientific Interest	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

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SPD - Supplementary Planning Document	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
Stepping Stones	Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.
Strategic Policies	Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Sustainable Drainage Systems	Reduces and slows the quantity and rate of surface water run-off from new development, dealing with it as close to the source as possible.
Sustainability Appraisal	An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.
Townscape	The general appearance of a built-up area, for example a street a town or city.
Transport Assessment	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and measures that will be needed to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.
Transport Statement	A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.
Travel Plan	A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and is regularly reviewed.
Wildlife Corridor	Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
Windfall Sites	Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

## HOUSING TRAJECTORY A

### APPENDIX A HOUSING TRAJECTORY

- 1** The housing trajectory demonstrates that there is a range of sites that are capable of meeting the Local Plan housing target and ensuring a continuous five-year supply of deliverable housing land throughout the plan period. It is an estimate and outlines the amount of dwellings expected to be delivered each financial year. Site information and standard assumptions have been utilised to form the trajectory. The assumptions include factors such as standard timescales for obtaining planning permission and average build rates (dependent on the type and number of builders involved in a scheme). The forecast is not precise but is the best approximation of delivery based on the information available. It is important to note that the housing trajectory does not place any phasing restrictions on the sites and they may come forward sooner than indicated.
- 2** The Council will monitor the delivery of housing via site visits on a quarterly basis. The trajectory will be updated at the end of each financial year and any changes in build rates will be reflected in the projection.

# A HOUSING TRAJECTORY

Site number	Site Name	Planning Status	Site Location	Total Units	Size (ha)	2016/17 Completions	2017/18 Completions	2018/19 Completions	2019/20 Completions	2020/21 Completions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total within plan period
	North Farm	Complete	Village	13	1	1																				1
	West Park	Complete	Urban	36	1.57	14	8																			22
	Middleton Hall Retirement Village	Complete	Village	36	10.64	9	1																			10
	Lingfield Point Phase 1	Complete	Urban	273	9.33	47	71	67																		165
	Land North of Badminton Close	Complete	Urban	12	0.39	12																				12
	96 Camell Road North	Complete	Urban	36		1	35																			36
	West of Hammond Drive	Complete	Urban	18	0.62		18																			18
	Lime Avenue	Complete	Urban	16	0.48		16																			16
	Fenby Avenue	Complete	Urban	28	0.65		28																			28
	Sugar Hill Grove, Alderman Leach	Complete	Urban	34	0.8		31	3																		34
	West of Anitree Court, Anfield Court	Complete	Urban	21	0.48		21																			21
	Land South of Sherbourne Close	Complete	Urban	18	0.68		18																			18
	Land Adjacent to Millburn Lane	Complete	Urban	40	1.43		14	26																		40
	Land Adjacent to Alexander Street	Complete	Urban	66	2.65		8	58																		66
	Former Eskbourne School Phase 2	Complete	Urban	60	2.11		29	31																		60
	Land adjacent to 125 - 165 Raughton Road	Complete	Urban	73	2.31			73																		73
	Land West of 2000th Avenue Way East, Carlson Way	Complete	Urban	62	1.9			62																		62
	St. James Court	Complete	Urban	12	0.11			12																		12
	Woodburn Nursery	Complete	Urban	25	1.88			10	15																	25
	Former Darlington Football Club	Complete	Urban	82	2.18	23	19	15	5																	62
	Blanche Pease Annex, Arts Centre	Complete	Urban	34	0.28				34																	34

HOUSING TRAJECTORY A

Site number	Site Name	Planning Status	Site Location	Total Units	Size (ha)	2016/17 Completions	2017/18 Completions	2018/19 Completions	2019/20 Completions	2020/21 Completions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total within plan period	
	Land between railway and railway line West, MSG	Complete	Village	44	1.2		12	32																		44	
	Beech Crescent West, Highington	Complete	Village	43	2.08			22		21																	43
	Neasham Nursery	Complete	Village	10	0.64			4		6																	10
	North of Red Hall	Complete	Urban	81	2.92		20	49		12																	81
	Rear of Cockerton Club	Complete	Urban	20	0.39					20																	20
	The Paddocks, Sadberge Road	Complete	Village	234	10.41		69	75		18																	234
	Aviston House, Aviston Road	Complete	Urban	13	0.08					13																	13
	Cochman Victoria Road	Complete	Urban	39	0.12					39																	39
	Fence, Nesfield Club	Complete	Urban	15	0.08					15																	15
	Ferry Avenue (Phase 2)	Complete	Urban	14	0.49					14																	14
	Oak Tree, MSG	Complete	Village	12	0.37			7		5																	12
	West Park Flats	Complete	Urban	40	0.42					40																	40
	Land west of 153 East Mount Road	Complete	Urban	12	0.04					12																	12
	Barton Street	Complete	Urban	16	0.67					16																	16
3	South of Burnee Lane	Commitment	Urban Extension	380	17.02						15	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	5			380
8	Berrymead Farm	Commitment	Urban Extension	370	21.24						10	60	60	60	60	60	60	60									370
10	Blackwell Grange West	Commitment	Urban	59	9.75			3		11	15	15	15														59
16	Lancaster House, DTVA	Commitment	Village	55	1.88			4		27	24																55
25	Fence Ais Centre, Vane Terrace	Commitment	Urban	38	0.47			1		0	4																38
28	Springfield School	Commitment	Urban	80	2.93			33		32	15																80
45	High Stiel	Commitment	Village	198	8.49					12	20	18		30	30	30	30	28									198
51	Mowden Hill	Commitment	Urban	30	1.98					19	11																30

# A HOUSING TRAJECTORY

Site number	Site Name	Planning Status	Site Location	Total Units	Size (ha)	2016/17 Completions	2017/18 Completions	2018/19 Completions	2019/20 Completions	2020/21 Completions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total within plan period
52	Central Park	Commohert	Urban	359	4.47	50	52	1	30	32	30	30	25													250
60	North West of Heron Drive	Commohert	Urban	35	1.34			10	1	1	10	10	4													35
63	School Aycliffe West	Commohert	Village	101	3.97			25	43	23	10															101
65	Land between Middleton Lane and Neasham Road	Commohert	Village	27	2.49			6		2	10	9														27
68	West Park Garden Village	Commohert	Urban Extension	1200	79.32					21	30	30	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	861
73	West Park (remainder)	Commohert	Urban	164	4.78		34	15	18	9	20	20	8													124
78	East of Middleton Road Sabarage	Commohert	Village	25	0.75						5	20														25
89	Land west of Old Farm, MSG	Commohert	Village	61	2.66						10	30	21													61
91	Wolveth Road, Houghington	Commohert	Village	75	3.34				19	41	15															75
103	East of Roundhill Road (Phase 1)	Commohert	Village	95	5.79				16	16	15	15	15	2												95
146	Land South of Railway, MSG	Commohert	Village	330	14.8						15	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	15				330
228	Norrigale House, Town Centre	Commohert	Urban	96	0.14													96								96
241	St Clares Abbey, Carmel Road North.	Commohert	Urban	10	2.49						10															10
318	N. of Allington Way	Commohert	Urban	85	3.37				30		30	25														85
333	East of Roundhill Road (Phase 2)	Commohert	Village	100	5.17				21	14	15	15	15	15	5											100
340	East of Gate Lane, Low Coniscliffe	Commohert	Village	37	3.38					11	15	11														37
386	Land between the A166 and railway line East, MSG	Commohert	Village	20	0.64					16	4															20
391	Chauncy House, 4-6 Horsemarket.	Commohert	Urban	11	0.04						11															11
394	Lakkeste, The Old Brickworks, Neasham Rd.	Commohert	Village	118	5.59	2	1	33	3	0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9							118

# HOUSING TRAJECTORY A

Site number	Site Name	Planning Status	Site Location	Total Units	Size (ha)	2016/17 Completions	2017/18 Completions	2018/19 Completions	2019/20 Completions	2020/21 Completions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total within plan period
395	Dr Piper, King Street.	Comm/hert	Urban	30	0.13											30										30
406	Northern Echo Building	Comm/hert	Urban	52	0.15							52														52
420	Former Fire Station, Leadmill Street	Comm/hert	Urban	30	0.1							30														30
421	Elegant House, Whinsea Road	Comm/hert	Urban	22	0.18							22														22
422	Reservoir (Dlauses) Darlington Water Treatment Works, Sabarage	Comm/hert	Village	46	2.8											20	26									46
423	213, 217 & 219, Station Road	Comm/hert	Urban	12	0.2					12																12
424	182 Northgate	Comm/hert	Urban	24	0.1							24														24
425	Former Rise Golf Club, Eldon Place	Comm/hert	Urban	18	0.05					18																18
11	Cattle Mart	Potential allocation	Urban	76	2.16										30	30	16									76
20	Great Burdon	Potential allocation	Urban Extension	1250	88.39											50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	500
41	South Conscliffe Park	Potential allocation	Urban Extension	535	28.32						30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	420
95	Beech Crescent East, Highburton	Potential allocation	Village	20	1.53								20													20
99	Maxgate Farm, MSG	Potential allocation	Village	260	13.71						15	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	5				260
100	Hill Farm, Branscombe	Potential allocation	Urban Extension	450	21.89												30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	270
185	Greater Faverdale	Potential allocation	Urban extension	2000	178.48								30	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	750
249	Conscliffe Park North	Potential allocation	Urban extension	985	50.08								6	30	30	30	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	516
251	Skemington	Potential allocation	Urban extension	4500	482.19							30	60	60	60	120	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	1650
395	Lingfield Point	Potential allocation	Urban	331	33.6										30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	331
392	Elm Tree Farm	Potential allocation	Urban Extension	150	7.1						30	30	30	30	30	30										150
403	Blackwell Grange East	Potential allocation	Urban	72	5.26							15	15	15	15	15	12									72
410	Scips Lane, Hurworth Moor	Potential allocation	Urban extension	700	34.47							60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	700



# A HOUSING TRAJECTORY

Site number	Site Name	Planning Status	Site Location	Total Units	Size (ha)	2016/17 Completions	2017/18 Completions	2018/19 Completions	2019/20 Completions	2020/21 Completions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total within plan period																		
411	Chesnut Street Car Park	Potential allocation	Urban	34	1.37						17	17														34																		
412	12-18 Skirmingate	Potential allocation	Urban	15	0.22						15															15																		
<b>Small Sites (Less than 10 units)</b>						16	23	37	32	28	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	511																		
<b>Total Gross Completions</b>						175	495	596	538	546	449	555	708	553	655	780	789	768	635	575	550	590	575	550	526	11608																		
<b>Total Net Completions</b>						171	486	591	536	537	2021/22 - 2035/26										2920	2026/27 - 2030/31										3547	2031/32 - 2035/36										2791	9258

## HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS B

## APPENDIX B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

## Housing Sites

## Urban Extensions

**Site 3 - South of Burtree Lane**

The site is an urban extension to the north of the main urban area. It is bounded by Burtree Lane to the north and Whessoe Road to the west. It is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 380 dwellings.

**Issues and requirements:**

- a. Site vehicle access will be from Burtree Lane and Whessoe Road.
- b. The site is located adjacent to the railway line to the west and employment uses to the south. Design and layout of a development scheme should mitigate any potential impacts on amenity.
- c. An electricity substation is located to the west of the site. Site layout should incorporate any easements required.
- d. There is woodland scrub and two areas of wetland on the site.
- e. A development scheme should strengthen landscape screening and woodland planting along the northern boundary of the site.
- f. Development should be focused to the south of the site and create linkages with the recreational area located off Tintagel Court.
- g. A development should look to enhance recreational links southward and seek better links to the wider footpath network to the north.

**Site 8 - Berrymead Farm**

The site is an urban extension to the north of the main urban area; it is bounded by Burtree Lane to the south and Beaumont Hill to the east. It is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 370 dwellings.

**Issues and requirements**

- a. Site vehicle access will be from Burtree Lane.
- b. A beck valley runs through the site. This should be protected and taken account of in site layout. Green infrastructure should be enhanced along the corridor.
- c. Land is to be reserved on the site for 1 primary school.
- d. The north western parts of the site occupy the highest ground and should remain free of residential development.
- e. Strong boundary planting would be required to define a settlement edge to the north, which could be combined with green infrastructure along the watercourse.

**Site 20 - Great Burdon**

The site is an urban extension to the east of the main urban area. It is bounded by the A66 to the east, Darlington Road (A1150) to the north and Tornado Way (B6279) to the south. The site is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 1250 dwellings; 500 of which are estimated to be delivered during the plan period.

## B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

### Issues and requirements

- a. Site vehicle access is to be taken from Darlington Road (A1150) and Tornado Way (B6279).
- b. Site layout should make an allowance for a distributor road which will run north south across the site, linking Darlington Road (A1150) and Tornado Way (B6279).
- c. Development should be concentrated on the southern part of the site to the south-east of Burdon Hill. Any development proposed to the north of Burdon Hill must converse those elements which contribute to the significance of listed buildings in Great Burdon, and the Haughton-le-Skerne Conservation Area. Avoid development on or immediately around Burdon Hill.
- d. The western area of the site is within flood zone 2 and 3. This should be reflected in the site layout and development directed away from this area in line with the sequential approach. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).
- e. The river corridor of the Skerne along the western boundary should be protected and enhanced including significant new green infrastructure provision. Robust links should be created to this area.
- f. Local recreation and green infrastructure links surrounding Red Hall Local Wildlife Site could be strengthened.
- g. There are opportunities to strengthen vegetation along existing road corridors in order to enhance green connectivity.
- h. Historic field boundaries should, where possible, be maintained.
- i. A gas pipe line, electricity pylons, water mains and sewers cross the site. Appropriate easements or diversions should be provided.
- j. A scheduled monument (a World War II bombing decoy control shelter) is located to the north east of the site. Consideration of the Scheduled Monument must inform the site layout and design including a significant buffer to the monument. Improve interpretation and accessibility to this historic asset as part of the sites development whilst preserving its setting. An appropriate programme of archaeological evaluation and monitoring will need to be undertaken during groundworks to identify and record the location of decoy fires and safety enclosures related to the shelter.
- k. The historic routes of the Stockton & Darlington Railway runs along the sites southern boundary and should be incorporated into the development with interpretation and access provided.
- l. Development proposals need to consider an appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation of features identified during earlier geophysical survey and ensure they are suitably investigated and recorded prior to development.
- m. A public right of way crosses the western part of the site, north to south, and should be considered in site layout.
- n. There is the potential of great crested newts on the site. An ecological survey would be required to support a planning application.
- o. A robust and appropriately landscaped boundary would be required along the north western edge of the site to maintain the openness and green infrastructure function of the adjoining Great Burdon Rural Gap (see policy ENV3).
- p. The openness and green infrastructure functions of the Haughton/Red Hall green wedge on the western part of the site should be retained and enhanced (see Policy ENV3).

### Site 41 - Coniscliffe Park, South

The site is an urban extension to the south west of the main urban area. It is bound by Coniscliffe Road to the south. The site is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 535 dwellings, 420 of which are estimated to be delivered during the plan period.

### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicle access is to be taken from Coniscliffe Road.

## HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS B

- b. Allowance should be made in the site layout for a distributor road which would run north south through the site. This should link to site 249 (Consicliffe Park, North) to the north.
- c. A small part of the site on the eastern edge adjacent to Baydale Beck valley is within flood zone 2 and 3. This should be reflected in the site layout and development directed away from this area in line with the sequential approach. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).
- d. A development scheme should give adequate buffering and protection to Baydale Beck. There is also the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure network along this existing corridor and create new linkages to it.
- e. A public right of way crosses the site north south and across the centre of the site. This should be considered in site layout. The development will also provide convenient and safe pedestrian and cycle connections into the existing urban area crossing Baydale Beck.
- f. Eastern edge of site is within an area of interest with regards to Great Crested Newts. An ecological survey would be required to support a planning application.
- g. The site is adjacent to Broken Scar Local Wildlife Site. There is the opportunity to create enhanced habitat links to this site.
- h. Waste water treatment works are located to the east of the site and should be given consideration in layout.
- i. Appropriate landscaping should be provided as part of a development scheme on the western boundary with the adjoining Local Green Space (ref LGS14 Merrybent Community Woodland) and with the agricultural land to the north.
- j. The frontage to the A67 should be carefully designed in order to mitigate landscape and visual impacts. Development should be set back from the A67 with appropriate landscaping on the southern part of the site.

**Site 100 - Hall Farm, Branksome**

The site is an urban extension to the west of the main urban area. It is bound by the A1(M) to the west and Malvern Crescent to the east. The site is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 450 dwellings; 270 of which are estimated to be delivered during the plan period.

**Issues and requirements**

- a. Allowance should be made in the site layout for an outer distributor road, running north south across the site.
- b. A proportion of the site along the southern boundary is within floodzone 2 and 3. This should be reflected in the site layout and development directed away from this area in line with the sequential approach. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).
- c. Beck valleys (Baydale and Cocker Beck) within and adjacent to the site should be protected and opportunities taken to extend and enhance green corridors / green infrastructure. Significant green infrastructure should be provided along the southern boundary to mitigate potential flooding.

## B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

- d. A significant landscape buffer should be provided along the A1(M).
- e. A public right of way extends along the sites western boundary. This should be considered in site layout and opportunities for enhancement.

### Site 249 - Coniscliffe Park, North

The site is an urban extension to the south west of the main urban area. It is bound by Staindrop Road (B6279) to the north. It is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 985 dwellings; 516 are estimated to be delivered during the plan period.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicle access is to be taken from Staindrop Road.
- b. Land is to be reserved on the site for 1 primary school.
- c. Allowance should be made in the site layout for a distributor road which would run north south through the site, linking to site 41 to the south (Coniscliffe Park, South).
- d. Electricity pylons cross the site; appropriate easement should be provided.
- e. The A1(M) lies to the west of the site; a suitable landscape buffer should be provided. A robust boundary would also be required along the western edge of the site to distinguish between the main urban area and surrounding countryside.
- f. A small area of the site along the eastern edge is within flood zone 2 and 3. Development should be directed away from this area in line with the sequential approach. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).
- g. Baydale Beck and wildlife friendly open space runs along the eastern boundary of the site. This part of the green infrastructure network should be protected and enhanced. There is also the opportunity to create improved connectivity with the Cocker beck corridor and the river Tees.
- h. There has been recent record of Great Crested Newts on the site. An ecological survey should support a planning application.
- i. Public rights of way cross the site in a number of areas. These should be accommodated in site layout.
- j. The development will provide convenient and safe pedestrian and cycle connections into the existing urban area crossing Baydale Beck.
- k. The frontage to the B6279 should maintain the openness of the approach into Darlington.

### Site 392 - Elm Tree Farm

The site is an urban extension to the north east of the main urban area . The site is to the north of Sparrow Hall Drive. It is a greenfield site which is largely in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 150 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicle access is to be taken from Sparrow Hall Drive.
- b. The Green Lane historic track runs adjacent to the site and should be protected.
- c. Old farm buildings on site could contain biodiversity interest. An ecological survey may be required to support a planning application.
- d. There is opportunity for reinforcement of local recreational and green infrastructure links particularly west towards Springfield Park and north towards the River Skerne.

## HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS B

### Site 410 - Snipe Lane, Hurworth Moor

The site is an urban extension to the south of the main urban area. It is bound by Neasham Road to the east, the A66 to the south and railway lines to the west and north. The site is greenfield land in agricultural use and is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 700 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicle access to the site should be taken from Neasham Road.
- b. There is a small area of landfill on the site and areas of gypsum which should be considered in any development proposal.
- c. Site is adjacent to the A66 to the south and railway lines to the west and north. Site layout should mitigate any potential impacts.
- d. The site is located adjacent to the Geneva Wood Local Nature Reserve. A scheme should include provision of appropriate landscaping and other mitigation, including landscape buffer, to reduce impact on the LNR. The opportunity could also be taken to create new green links to this area.
- e. There is the opportunity to strengthen boundaries along the A66 and Neasham Road with planting to create green corridors and a green arrival into Darlington from the West.
- f. There is the potential for Great Crested Newts on the site. An ecological survey will be required to support a planning application.
- g. A number of public rights of way cross the site which should be considered in the site layout.
- h. There are a number of railway cottages on the site which should be integrated into the scheme.

### Urban Area

#### Site 11 - Cattle Mart

This brownfield site is currently in use as a cattle and auction mart and is located to the south west of the town centre. Although not currently available work is underway to relocate the mart in the near future from the town centre area to a site at Humbleton Farm adjacent to the A68 currently under construction. The current mart site is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 76 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. The East Coast mainline and Bank Top Station lie to the east of the site; appropriate mitigation should be provided.
- b. The site will likely have some contamination that should be remediated as part of a development scheme.
- c. Numerous TPO trees are present along the sites northern boundary. Development need not impact on the trees and could result in new planting.
- d. The Grade II\* listed Bank Top Station is located adjacent to the site. Development of the site will need to enhance the setting of the listed building and also reflect railway terraced development which is prevalent in the area.
- e. Development should be concentrated on the western half of the site set back from Park Lane maintaining open views of heritage assets.
- f. Development should respect the historic grain of development, use sympathetic materials, and be of an appropriate scale and design so as not to compete with the more prominent buildings in the area, particularly Bank Top Station.
- g. Wherever possible, non-designated heritage assets (identified by the Heritage Impact Assessment) on the site should be retained and re-used as part of the sites redevelopment. Development proposals

## B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

will need to consider an appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation during groundworks, in particular in the area of the existing carpark.

- h. There is the potential for bats to be present in the existing buildings on site.

### Site 318 - N. Allington Way

The site is open space / disused playing field and is located in the eastern part of the main urban area. It is bound by Allington Way to the south, McMullen Road to the west and Lingfield Close to the north. The site is proposed for allocation for residential development with a yield of 85 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. The site lies adjacent to an employment use to the east. A landscape buffer should be provided adjacent to the neighbouring use to mitigate any impacts.
- b. A public right of way runs alongside the sites northern boundary.

### Site 355 - Lingfield Point (Mixed Use)

The majority of this site is brownfield land and is occupied by some existing employment uses. It is situated to the east of the main urban area of the Borough and to the south of the B6279. It is proposed for allocation for mixed use development with an indicative yield of 331 dwellings and potential B2 and E(g) uses .

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Potential for contaminated land which should be remediated as part of a development scheme.
- b. The site is adjacent to employment uses to the west; mitigation would be required.
- c. A public right of way runs alongside the sites southern boundary.
- d. There is a raised reservoir along the southern edge of the site along with a small wooded area.
- e. The site lies close to the Redhall Wetland.
- f. Northern boundary of the site is adjacent to the Stockton & Darlington Rail Line. Interpretation should be provided within a scheme.

### Site 403 - Blackwell Grange East

The site is located to the south of the main urban area of the Borough and is an area of open space (disused golf course). The site is located to the east of Carmel Road South and to the west of Grange Road. It is part of the grounds of Blackwell Grange Hotel which is located to the north. The site is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 72 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. The site forms part of the grounds to the Grade II\* listed Blackwell Grange Hotel (and Grade II listed outbuildings). Development should protect the setting of the Grade II\* listed Blackwell Grange and its parkland curtilage. Proposals should be informed by the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment (2020) There is the potential to better reveal the approach to Blackwell Grange along the historic drive from Grange Road.
- b. A development scheme would need to restore the remaining parkland area to the Grade II\* Listed Building, undertake an ecological survey and propose adequate mitigation for any impact on the adjacent Local Wildlife Site.
- c. Any development will be required to be of the highest quality, ensuring it is low lying, wooded in character including the planting of a perimeter tree canopy and creative and innovative in design.

## HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS B

- d. There are a number of TPO trees/groups on the site. Some form a strong continuous tree belt along the boundaries with the highway. There are also a number of single TPO trees across the site. The trees should be retained and maintained.
- e. The site is within an area of high interest with regards to Great Crested Newts. An ecological survey will be required to support a planning application.

### Site 411 - Chesnut Street Car Park

This site is located close to the town centre along the Houghton Road. The site currently comprises an area of open space adjacent to the main road and a surface level car park accessed off Chesnut Street. The site is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 34 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicle access to the site should be taken from Lodge Street with pedestrian and cycle access possible via Chesnut Street.
- b. Site development will require mitigation for the loss of open space.
- c. Retain mature trees on the site wherever possible.
- d. Investigate need for site remediation.
- e. Incorporate appropriate measures to minimise the potential impact of noise from the adjacent employment area on residential amenity.
- f. Provide suitable mitigation for areas of site at risk of flooding. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).

### Site 412 - 12 to 18 Skinnergate

The site is located in the heart of Darlington's town centre along Skinnergate. This brownfield site is currently occupied by a number of vacant commercial properties. The site is proposed for allocation for a mixed commercial and residential redevelopment with an indicative yield of 15 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Development should be in keeping with the Town Centre Conservation Area, and must protect and conserve the significance of historic assets associated with the site.
- b. The design approach and materials used in the development should respect adjacent traditional properties.
- c. Incorporate appropriate measures to minimise the potential impact on residential amenity from town centre commercial premises.

## Villages

### Site 95 - Beech Crescent East, Heighington

The site is located to the north of east of Heighington village and is bound by the A6072 to the east. It is greenfield land currently in agricultural use. The site is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 20 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements:

- a. Vehicular access to be taken from the adjoining committed site to the west.



## B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

- b. The impact on the Heighington conservation area and the grade II listed buildings to the south should be carefully considered in the development of this site. Any scheme would require appropriate design and layout to mitigate any harm to these heritage assets and should be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment.
- c. The site is within an area of special archaeological interest.

### Site 99 - Maxgate Farm, MSG

The site is located to the north west of Middleton St George and to the west of Station Road. It is currently in agricultural use and is to the north of Middleton St George water park. The site is proposed for allocation for residential development with an indicative yield of 260 dwellings.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicular access is to be taken from Station Road.
- b. Site layout shall consider the two public rights of way which cross the southern part of the site.
- c. A beck valley crosses the site to the north and there are a number of mature hedgerows on the site particularly along the western side of the site. Site layout shall retain and incorporate these features. Opportunities should also be taken to enhance the green infrastructure network and link to the wider network.
- d. There is a non-designated public house related to the Stockton and Darlington Railway located adjacent to the site on the corner of Station Road and Sadberge Road. Any development scheme should look to incorporate interpretation of the historic route.
- e. An area of open space should be provided opposite the public house and design housing to face onto this to strengthen the 'village green' character.

## Employment Sites

### Site 80 - East of Lingfield

The 10.3 hectare site is located on the East side of Darlington between Lingfield Point to the west and Link 66 / Symmetry Park to the east. The northern boundary is with Tornado Way (DETC) and the southern boundary is with Yarm Road Industrial Estate.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicular access to be taken from Tornado Way and Eastpoint Road via the existing roundabout.
- b. An ecological assessment of the site will be required to support a planning application.
- c. Enhance the landscaped edge along the sites eastern and southern boundaries.
- d. Retain the small woodland area in the sites south west corner.

### Site 356 - Ingenium Parc

The 40.8 hectare Ingenium Parc site is a prime industrial and commercial development site south of the Cummins Engine Factory on Yarm Road. The site is East of Maidendale Local Nature Reserve and North of the Darlington to Middlesbrough railway line. To the east of the site is the Cleveland Bridge building and Morton Palms Business Park. A masterplan for Ingenium Parc sets out potential design principles and requirements for the sites development.

## HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS B

### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicular access to be taken from Salters Lane.
- b. Provide new road infrastructure connecting the site to Morton Palms Business Park.
- c. An ecological assessment of the site will be required to support a planning application.
- d. Improve connectivity to Maidendale Local Nature Reserve and provide a suitable buffer to offset biodiversity impact.
- e. Development should appropriately scaled and designed and be set back from the sites northern boundary to reflect the original designed landscape setting of the Cummins Engine Factory. Retain and enhance the existing landscaping.
- f. Development proposals will need to consider an appropriate programme of targeted archaeological evaluation and mitigation, particularly in the southern part of the site.
- g. Concentrate development on the southern and western parts of the site.
- h. Historic field boundaries should, where possible, be maintained.
- i. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that helps enhance habitats and biodiversity in the area.

### Site 360 - Heighington North

The 5.7 hectare Heighington North site is part of the cross boundary Merchant Park development with County Durham in which the Hitachi factory in Newton Aycliffe is located. The sites East and South boundaries are with the remainder of the Merchant Park site. The sites Northern boundary is with Heighington Lane.

### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicular access is to be taken from Heighington Lane.
- b. Development proposals should be in line with the Merchant Park Masterplan.
- c. Retain and enhance the wooded areas along the sites North and West boundaries.
- d. A small part of the site is within flood zone 2 and 3 as Demon's Beck runs through the site. The site is also at risk from surface water flooding along the beck corridor. Development should be directed away from this area in line with the sequential approach and appropriate mitigation provided. No development should be within FZ3b (with exception to essential infrastructure or water compatible development).

### Site 362 - Teesside International Airport South

The 39.30 hectare Teesside International Airport South site lies to the south of the operational airport and its eastern boundary is defined by the borough boundary with Stockton-on-Tees. The southern and western boundaries of the site are with agricultural land running towards the river Tees.

### Issues and requirements

- a. Vehicular access should be provided across the sites boundary with Stockton-on-Tees Borough via the adjoining allocation site in Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan
- b. Development must not interfere with the operation of the airport.
- c. A joint design approach with the neighbouring allocation site in Stockton-on-Tees is required.
- d. A detailed masterplan for the site that describes the significance of heritage assets on the site and seeks to conserve and enhance them must be submitted in support of any planning application.
- e. The scale, layout and design of development should respond sympathetically to the historical significance of the site, preserving the overall layout of the Second World War and Cold War airfield,

## B HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION STATEMENTS

and securing the future of the remaining heritage assets on the site as identified in the Heritage Impact Assessment.

- f. Development should look to retain the form and layout of the former military airfield by locating buildings of an appropriate scale and design over the dispersal areas and former administrative building footings, interspersed by grassland areas, and by maintaining the existing access plan. Development proposals should include signage and information that helps to interpret the history of the site.
- g. Development proposals should acknowledge the historical association between the former military airfield and the adjacent Grade II Church of St George, protecting the setting of the building.
- h. Targeted archaeological evaluation will be required prior to development and any resulting mitigation secured in line with Policy ENV 1.
- i. Careful ecological assessment and planning is required, taking into account existing landscape features.

### Site 368 - Central Park South (Employment)

The 9.84 hectare Central Park South site is a strategic employment site close to Darlington's town centre and Bank Top Station. The site is located north of Yarm Road and encompasses John Williams Boulevard South. The site is the only employment area classified as a Tees Valley Enterprise Zone in Darlington and is already the location for a number of buildings key to economic growth in the town such as Business Central, the Advanced Biologics Manufacturing Centre and the National Horizon Centre.

#### Issues and requirements

- a. Comply with the revised Masterplan for Central Park South (2016), providing plots for B2 and E(g) land uses.
- b. Ensure that a high quality of design is delivered that meets the aspirations of the Central Park Enterprise Zone.
- c. Provide a suitable landscape buffer to East Coast Mainline and residential areas to the East and North of the site.
- d. Enhance connectivity to Bank Top Station and Teesside University and College.

## DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS C

**APPENDIX C DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS****Summary of Designated Heritage Assets****Listed Buildings**

A full list of Listed Buildings in Darlington Borough can be found at [www.darlington.gov.uk/conservation](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/conservation)

**Scheduled Monuments (19)**

- Archdeacon Newton: medieval site
- Bishopton: Castle Hill earthworks
- Brafferton: Ketton Bridge
- Coatham Mundeville: medieval village
- Darlington: Coniscliffe Road waterworks
- Great Burdon: World War II bombing decoy control shelter
- Heighington: camp on Shackleton Hill
- High Coniscliffe: Smotherlaw round barrow
- High Coniscliffe: Ulnaby deserted medieval village
- Low Dinsdale: earthworks of manor house
- Low Dinsdale: Anglo-Saxon cross
- Middleton St. George: deserted village of West Hartburn
- Middleton St. George: Tower Hill Motte
- Piercebridge: Roman station
- Piercebridge: Piercebridge Bridge
- Sadberge: shrunken medieval village
- Sockburn: All Saints Church
- Summerhouse: Summerhouse earthworks
- Walworth: deserted village

**Conservation Areas (17)**

- Bishopton
- Coatham Mundeville
- Cockerton Green
- Denton
- Haughton-le-Skerne
- Heighington
- High Coniscliffe
- Hurworth
- Northgate
- Middleton One Row
- Piercebridge
- Parkgate
- Sadberge
- Summerhouse
- Town Centre
- Victoria Embankment
- West End

**Registered Parks and Gardens (3)**

- South Park
- West Cemetery
- Landscape at Cummins Engine Factory

## C DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS

### Significance of Heritage Assets in Darlington

In determining planning applications that may affect a heritage asset the Council requires applicants in a Heritage Statement or Design and Access Statement to describe and assess the significance of the heritage asset(s) affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

As a group, Darlington's archaeology and historic buildings are of considerable significance. The Borough's archaeology, historic buildings and historic landscapes are of national importance and of significant international importance are the links to the formation of passenger railways and British Quaker heritage. In assessing the heritage significance of a place consideration should be given to:

- Understanding the fabric and evolution of the place
- Identifying who values the place, and why they do so
- Relating identified heritage values to the fabric of the place
- Considering the relative importance of those identified values
- Considering the contribution of associated objects and collections
- Considering the contribution made by setting and context
- Comparing the place with other places sharing similar values
- Defining the significance of the place.

When assessing proposals which have impact upon heritage assets the relative values afforded by each asset will need to be considered in order to determine if a proposal is acceptable. The borough-wide values which contribute to the significance of the borough's heritage are summarised below, making reference to the principles set out in Historic England's Conservation Principles document .

**Evidential value**: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

While existing knowledge of Darlington's heritage assets is vast, there is still great potential to provide new information and enhance our understanding of the Town's historical development, the people who lived here and the activities which occurred.

Further archaeological discoveries may be made within the local area and the significance of existing heritage assets could be revealed or new heritage assets formally identified. Opportunities for the discovery of new evidence of the role that sites, industries and people played in the history of the area are great.

There may also be knowledge within the local community in Darlington which has not been shared or well documented but holds key information.

**Historical Value** - the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.

Heritage assets within Darlington are invaluable in illustrating its history and development. Important monuments, such as Roman Piercebridge, the Iron Age hill fort at Shackleton Beacon Hill and various Medieval deserted villages, contribute to our understanding of early settlements, movements and defences in the North, with some offering particularly well-preserved examples of their type within the region and nationally.

Perhaps the most important heritage assets though are those dating from the Industrial Revolution, such as the Tees Cottage Pumping Station, Skerne Bridge and Hopetown Carriage Works, when Darlington was at the forefront of the development of the railway in Britain and extensive innovation was occurring.

Alongside this, a valuable collection of civic and private buildings have strong historical associations with important people, particularly those belonging to the Quaker movement which had a profound impact on Darlington and Britain, both socially and economically. This Quaker influence is well represented through heritage assets including, but not limited to; Barclay's Bank, Crown Street Library and South Park.

**Aesthetic Value** - the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

The aesthetic value of Darlington varies widely.

## DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS C

Attractive country houses, grand public buildings, historic villages and affluent suburbs demonstrate fine architecture, often attractive settings and subtle beauty, highly valued by local communities.

Commonly co-located are simple and uniformed rows of terraces with strong rhythm and architectural integrity and at times a feeling of enclosure. These complement a range of other more imposing buildings from the age of industry which display, at times fortuitous, architectural splendour despite their utilitarian purpose.

The central urban landscape has a distinctive skyline with a range of towers and spires providing key landmarks within the town centre, in particular the Market and Station Clock Towers, St. Cuthbert's Spire and St' Johns Tower.

Darlington also has a number of distinct historic suburbs including the first suburban developments in the town, dating from the 18th Century, such as the former Duke of Cleveland's Estate, which includes Cleveland Terrace, Milbank Road and Thornfield Road. Other areas also characterise periods of growth in the town such as the Victorian suburbs around Eastbourne Road, Milton Street, Cobden Street and Bright Street, the railway suburbs in the Hopetown and Rise Carr areas, and the garden suburbs off Yarm Road including The Mead, The Broadway and The Stray.

The rural landscape is well formed by traditional farmsteads and cottages, and provides a pleasing contrast to the more urban areas along with attractive parks.

**Communal Value** - the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The historical association between Darlington and the early development of the railways in Britain is represented through a range of significant buildings. These are undoubtedly an integral part of the Town's character, identity and distinctiveness which instils a sense of civic pride within the local community.

Many heritage assets are valued for their associations with the past. The local community has deep attachments to many buildings in Darlington which goes beyond the economic and amenity benefits. Family connections for many create a sense of identity and remind communities of the foundations of the Town, despite continuous modern development.

## C DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS

### Local List and Non-designated Heritage Assets

National planning practice guidance refers to non-designated heritage assets as locally significant buildings, monuments, sites, places areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

They can be included on a Local List, something which the Borough Council are working towards, but do not have to be. An alternative is a criteria-based approach, which has been taken by a number of Local Authorities and has been shown to be robust at both application and appeal stage. The production of a Local List remains a goal of the Council, however with current resources a criteria-based approach is considered sufficiently thorough, transparent and pragmatic.

Once identified these buildings and sites will be recorded on the Council's in-house UNiform system and will be added to the Historic Environment Record (HER).

Darlington's locally significant buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes will be identified using the following criteria either through the development management process (including pre-applications), through plan making (including neighbourhood plans), the production of Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans, and other Council activities.

**Table C.1 Criteria for assessing non-designated heritage assets**

Criteria	Description
Rarity	Not many examples locally. This can include unusual assets such as cast iron bridges and traditional signage or more common ones of unusual architectural style or materials.
Representativeness	May be representative of a particular architectural period, architect, movement, company or group of its time, for example Quaker, railway, Victorian and industrial.
Architectural Interest	Of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; important examples of particular building types, materials and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation) and significant plan forms.
Townscape or Landscape value	Key landmark buildings or structures and buildings that strongly contribute to a view or roofscape vista. Valued open spaces, (including designed landscapes, streets, squares, parks, gardens, amenity and green spaces), walls, fences, railings, street surfaces (including cobbles, setts and grass verges). Street furniture (including signposts, streetlights, benches, post boxes and telephone boxes).
Group value	Groupings of assets with a clear visual, design or historic relationship (including farmyards, terraces, group form and layout), contribution to streetscene, roofscapes and perception.
Artistic interest	An asset with artistic interest exhibiting some degree of creative skill (including sculpture, painting, decoration, advertisements, memorials, gates, railings, door surrounds, finials and signage).

## DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS C

Criteria	Description
Historic association	Associated with an historical person or event of acknowledged note (including important local figures or events, for example landowner, commemorative event, charity, ecclesiastical or other community group and former resident). Highly unlikely this would apply to assets associated with a living person.
Archaeological Interest <sup>(100)</sup>	There may be evidence to suggest that a site is of significant archaeological interest. To be assessed in conjunction with Durham County Council's Archaeology Section.

Significance can be informed by a significant written record, for example the Historic Environment Record, Pevsner and published articles.

If the potential asset meets two or more of the criteria set out in the table above then it should be considered a Non-Designated Heritage Asset.

100 Non-designated Heritage Assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets, as stated in Footnote 68 of the NPPF (July 2021).



## C DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS

### Areas of High Archaeological Potential

Durham County Council's Archaeological Service maintain the Historic Environment Record (HER) on behalf of Darlington Borough Council. The HER is the principal source of information about the historic environment of County Durham and Darlington.

Using the information contained in the HER, the County Council has assisted the Borough Council in producing a map of areas that include, or have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest. The identification of these 'Areas of High Archaeological Potential' is part of the Borough Council's positive approach to the historic environment as required by national policy<sup>(101)</sup>.

In mapping Areas of High Archaeological Potential the following have been included, where present in the Borough:

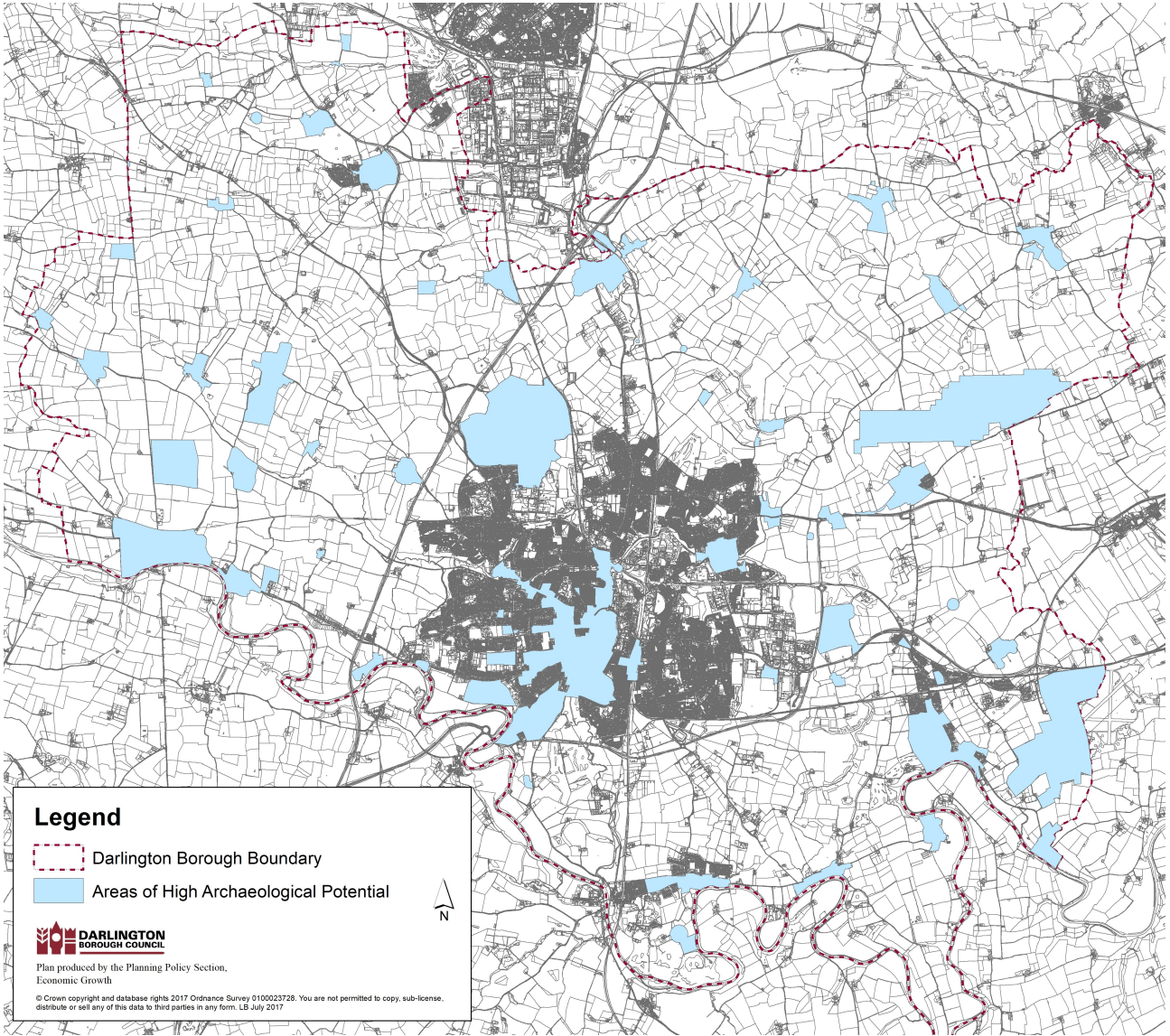
- Scheduled Monuments and a 50 metre buffer zone around them. The reason for the buffer zone is that many scheduling's were done decades ago with only the core element protected. Also, in some cases, subsequent research and discoveries have shown sites are often more extensive than previously appreciated;
- Conservation areas along with the 'historic cores' of settlements (as defined by the County Durham and Darlington Historic Landscape Characterisation Project) which may not be a Conservation Area or extend beyond the Conservation Area boundary;
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Undesignated deserted or shrunken medieval villages;
- Mining and industrial sites/complexes;
- Archaeological sites and their environs;
- Cluster analysis involving Historic Environment Record records that are within 100 metres of another record. The basis for this is that clusters of discoveries in close proximity may well indicate the existence of hitherto unknown sites. However, certain types of site do not usefully reflect this, and were filtered out of the cluster analysis – these included:
  - Records which fell into the areas already added to the trigger map by the above processes.
  - Records likely to reflect buildings, rather than archaeology (e.g. Broad Type of Historic Building; or Monument Types such as Barn, Bastle, Cart Shed, Dovecotes; Farmhouse, House, icehouse, Public House, School, Sheep Fold etc.).
  - Records which were thought to represent single features (e.g. Boundary Stones, Milestones, Chest Tombs, War Memorials, Commemorative Monuments, Crosses, Effigies, Gate Piers, Grave Slabs).
  - Monuments types which often represent storage locations of items rather than find locations (e.g. Altars, Sculpture, Hog backs – all of which are often depicted at the Church they are stored at rather than from where they were recovered).
  - Non-archaeological records (e.g. Broad Types of Historic Overviews, Maritime or Aircraft Crash Sites, or Monument Types of Local History or relating to any of these broad types e.g. Wreck, Ship etc.).

In some cases – for example Piercebridge – research both here and at other Roman forts shows that the complex of archaeological phenomena outside the defended area is far more extensive than once appreciated (including civil settlement, cemeteries, religious sites, etc.) so the area of archaeological interest extends beyond the formally designated area.

101 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF (July 2021).

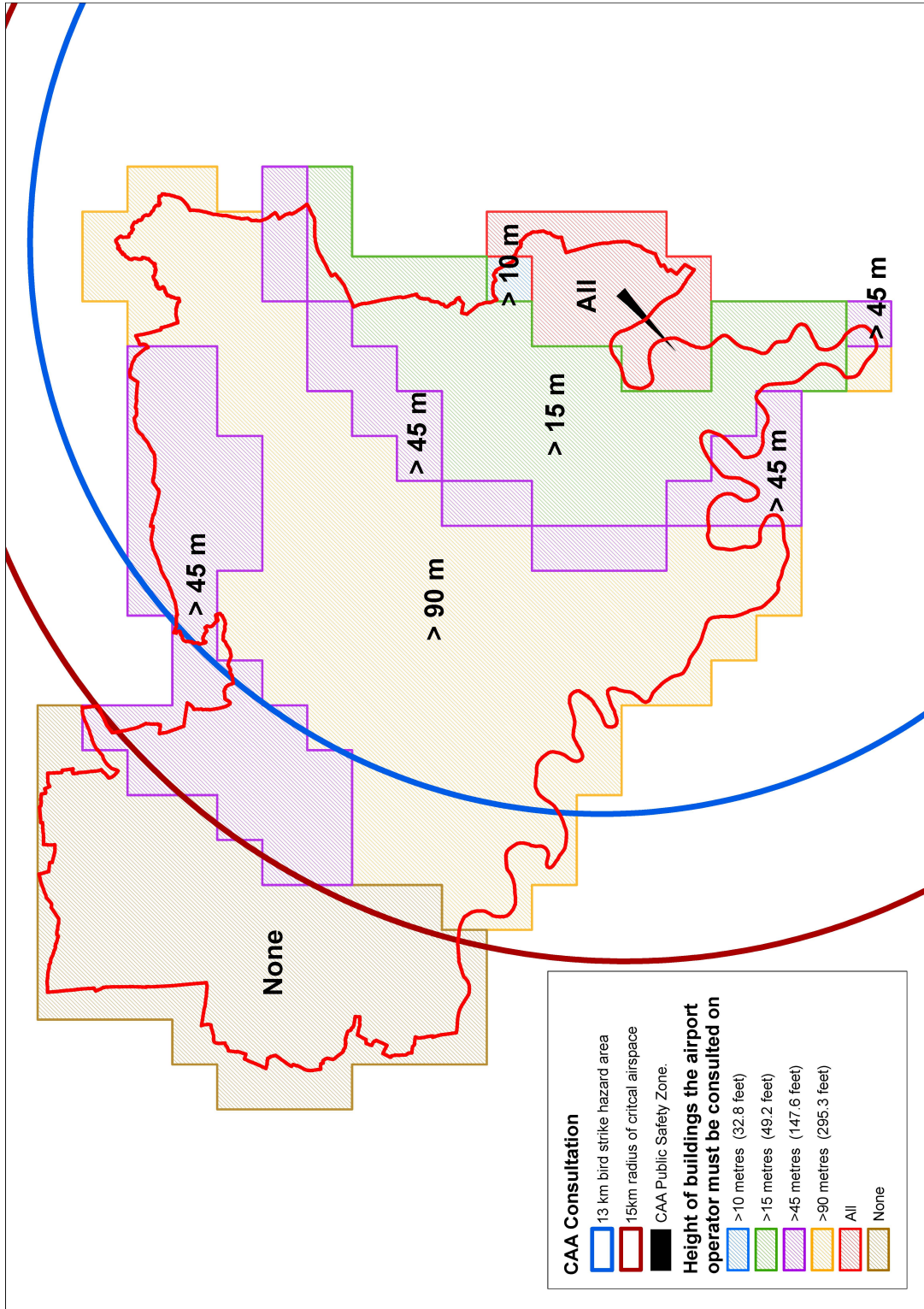
## DARLINGTON'S HERITAGE ASSETS C

Figure C.1 Areas of High Archaeological Potential



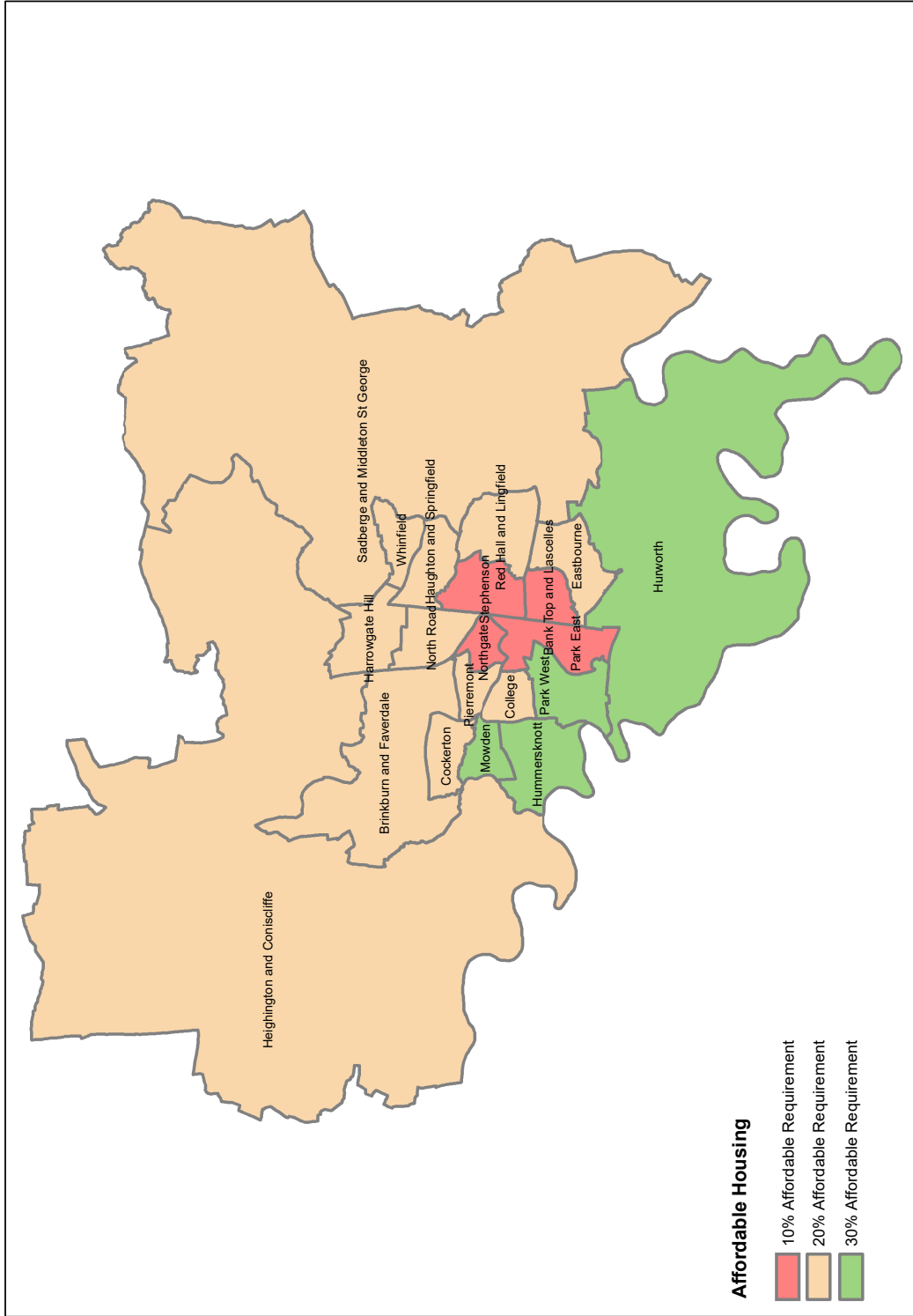
D CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY SAFEGUARDING

APPENDIX D CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY SAFEGUARDING



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS E

## APPENDIX E AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENTS



## F TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES

### APPENDIX F TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES

The Darlington Local Plan (2016 - 2036) will upon adoption replace all saved policies within the Darlington Local Plan 1997 (Incorporating Adopted Alterations 2001) and the Darlington Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

The following table sets out the local planning policies that will be superseded and no longer saved upon the adoption of the Darlington Local Plan (2016 - 2036).

**Table F.1**

<b>Current Document</b>	<b>Superseded Policy Ref</b>	<b>Superseded Policy Name</b>
Darlington Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)	CS1	Darlington's Sub-Regional Role and Locational Strategy
	CS2	Achieving High Quality Sustainable Design
	CS3	Promoting Renewable Energy
	CS4	Developer Contributions
	CS5	The Provision of Land for Employment Uses
	CS6	Vibrant Cultural and Tourism Offer
	CS7	The Town Centre
	CS8	Additional Retail Provision
	CS9	District and Local Centres and Local Shops and Services
	CS10	New Housing Development
	CS11	Meeting Housing Needs
	CS12	Existing Housing
	CS13	Accommodating Travelling Groups
	CS14	Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness
	CS15	Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity
	CS16	Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety
	CS17	Delivering a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Network
	CS18	Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities

## TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES F

Current Document	Superseded Policy Ref	Superseded Policy Name
	CS19	Improving Transport Infrastructure and Creating a Sustainable Transport Network
Darlington Local Plan 1997 (Incorporating Adopted Alterations 2001)	E2	Development Limits
	E3	Protection of Open Land
	E4	New Buildings in the Countryside
	E5	Change of Use of Buildings in the Countryside
	E9	Protection of Parklands
	E12	Trees and Development
	E13	Tree Preservation Orders
	E14	Landscaping of Development
	E17	Landscape Improvement
	E18	The River Skerne
	E20	Sites of Nature Conservation Importance
	E21	Wildlife Corridors
	E22	Local Nature Reserves
	E36	Designation of Further Conservation Areas
	E37	Enhancement of the Built Environment
	E38	Alterations to Business Premises
	E39	Advertisements in Built-up Areas
	E40	Advertisements in the Countryside
	E41	Poster Hoardings
	E42	Street Furniture
	E43	Vacant Upper Floors
E51	Broken Scar Development Limitation Zone	
E53	Satellite Antennae	
H5	New Housing Development Sites	
H7	Areas of Housing Development Restraint	

## F TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES

Current Document	Superseded Policy Ref	Superseded Policy Name
	H10	Affordable Housing in the Rural Area
	H12	Alterations and Extensions to existing dwellings
	H13	Backland Development
	H17	Concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation
	H18	Houses in Multiple Occupation in other areas
	H19	Special Care Accommodation
	R3	Provision of Public Facilities in New Buildings
	R4	Open Space Provision
	R11	Artificial Turf Playing Pitch
	R12	Access to Open Land and Countryside
	R14	Recreation Development in the Countryside
	R15	Horse-Related Development
	R16	Stressholme Golf Course
	R23	Off-Road Motorcycle Facility
	R27	Sites for New Community Facilities
	R28	School Provision at Brinkburn
	R29	Village Community Halls
	R30	West Cemetery Extension
	EP2	Employment Areas
	EP3	New Employment Areas
	EP4	Haughton Road
	EP6	Prestige Employment
	EP7	<u>Office / Business Park Development</u>
	EP8	Reserve Employment Site
	EP9	Teesside Airport Employment Land – North
	EP10	Teesside Airport Employment Land - South

## TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES F

Current Document	Superseded Policy Ref	Superseded Policy Name
	EP11	Central Area Development Sites
	EP12	Office Development Limits
	S3	Abbots Yard Development
	S4	Town Centre Service Uses
	S5	Town Centre Food and Drink Uses
	S6	Non-Retail Uses
	S7	Mechanic's, Clark and Buckton's Yards
	S8	Window Displays
	S9	Fringe Shopping Areas
	S10	Safeguarding the District and Local Centres
	S11	New Development in the District and Local Centres
	S15	Shopping Trolleys
	S19	Amusement Centres
	S20	Sale of Large Items
	S21	Petrol Filling Stations
	S22	Garden Centres
	S23	Sales from Factories
	T5	Environmental Appraisal of Major Road Schemes
	T6	Safeguarding Major Road Schemes
	T7	Traffic Management and Main Roads
	T8	Access to Main Roads
	T9	Traffic Management and Road Safety
	T10	Traffic Calming – Existing Roads
	T11	Traffic Calming – New Development
	T14	Private Car Access to Town Centre
	T15	Improvements for Pedestrians
	T17	Rear Servicing



## F TABLE OF SUPERSEDED POLICIES

Current Document	Superseded Policy Ref	Superseded Policy Name
	T18	Collection / Distribution Centre
	T19	Multi-Storey Car Parks
	T20	Town Centre Surface Car Parks
	T21	Public Use of Private Car Parks
	T22	Priority in Central Car Parks
	T23	Albert Road Car Park
	T26	Town Centre Fringe Parking
	T27	On-Street Parking Control
	T28	Residents Parking Schemes
	T29	On-Street Short Stay Parking
	T32	Feethams Bus Station
	T35	Taxi Offices
	T36	Cycle Route Network
	T40	New Development and Lorries
	T41	Overnight Parking at Chestnut Street
	T42	Lorry Parks
	T43	Residential Areas and Lorries
	T44	Passenger Railways
	T46	North Road Railway Station
	T47	Road / Rail Freight Depot
	T49	Teesside Airport
	T50	Overhead Lines
	T51	Location of Services
	T52	Drainage Infrastructure
	T55	Broken Scar Water Treatment Works



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