

DARLINGTON LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN CONSULTATION DRAFT

Darlington Local Development Framework
January 2010



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INTRODUCTION

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/planningpolicy

1.1 WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- 1.1.1 The Council is preparing a new strategic planning document; the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options which is an important part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). It will guide the scale and distribution of new development, the use of land and buildings and the provision of infrastructure in the Borough over the next 20 years.
- 1.1.2 In order to create sustainable communities in Darlington, providing new development opportunities for housing and employment, is not sufficient. There is also a need to provide the necessary supporting physical, social and green infrastructure in the appropriate location, at the right time to meet the needs of the new community whilst ensuring that no unnecessary impacts are placed upon the Borough's existing infrastructure.
- 1.1.3 This draft Local Infrastructure Plan (LIP) is an integral element of the Core Strategy. It identifies the type of infrastructure required to facilitate the delivery of growth in the Core Strategy, when this will need to happen, who needs to deliver it and how the infrastructure will be funded. It will form a key part of the Core Strategy evidence base and will be the mechanism by which its delivery can be monitored. This LIP will identify, as far as possible:
- Infrastructure needs and costs
 - Phasing of development
 - Funding sources
 - Responsibilities for delivery
- 1.1.4 The LIP needs to set out a realistic delivery programme for the Core Strategy; it will be consistent with other Council strategies, as well as delivery plans and investment programmes from other infrastructure providers.

1.2 HAVING YOUR SAY

- 1.2.1 As part of the consultation on the Core Strategy, the Council is also seeking views on the content of this plan, in accordance with its adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.2.2 This draft Local Infrastructure Plan and the Core Strategy will be available to view at the Town Hall Reception and at all the Borough's libraries and mobile libraries during normal office opening hours. The documents can also be viewed or downloaded from the Council's website www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy. Paper copies of the documents are available on request by telephoning 01325 388644.
- 1.2.3 Please email, post or fax your comments on this draft LIP and/or the Core Strategy on the comments form provided to:

Post: Strategy Manager, Chief Executive's Department (Regeneration),
FREEPOST NEA2890, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

Fax: 01325 388616

Email: planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

Website: www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy using the on line reply form.

All written comments received will be acknowledged.

All responses must be received by the Council by Sunday 28 February 2010

1.3 NEXT STEPS

- 1.3.1 After the consultation ends, all comments received on the draft LIP, together with those made for the Core Strategy, will be considered and where appropriate the documents will be revised to take them into account. Copies of all comments received will be available to

view at the Town Hall and at www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy after the end of the consultation period.

2.0 PROVIDING INFRASTRUCTURE

2.1 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1.1 Coordinating development and the delivery of accompanying infrastructure has become more prominent in recent years. PPS12 states that to deliver sustainable communities, the Core Strategy should be 'supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed' for Darlington, taking account of its type and distribution¹. This draft LIP should also include the specific infrastructure requirements of any strategic locations which are allocated in the Core Strategy.

¹PPS12, DCLG, 2008

2.1.2 Meanwhile the 2007 Planning White Paper proposes 'a forward-looking approach' to infrastructure provision at the local level that considers 'a more strategic and holistic view, which takes infrastructure decisions on roads alongside those of...schools, hospitals, cultural and community facilities'². By identifying infrastructure requirements from an early stage, timely delivery is more likely to be achieved.

²Planning White Paper, 2007

2.1.3 Infrastructure Delivery: Spatial Plans in Practice³ recommends that infrastructure delivery requirements should be related to the broader implementation of policies. Reflecting this, each Core Strategy policy is accompanied by 'Making it Happen and Monitoring Delivery' which identifies key infrastructure requirements, their funding and delivery mechanisms (where known) for that policy. Detailed delivery details will be provided in this plan.

³Infrastructure Delivery: Spatial Plans in Practice, DCLG, 2008

2.1.4 This approach is reinforced by national planning policy:
 PPS1⁴: ensure that infrastructure and services are provided to support new and existing economic development and housing;
 PPS3⁵: provide housing in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure based on an assessment of the impact of development upon existing or planned infrastructure, and of any new infrastructure required including physical, social and green infrastructure.

⁴PPS1, ODPM 2005

⁵PPS3, DCLG, 2006

2.1.5 The Regional Spatial Strategy⁶: promotes sustainable development and the sequential approach to development in the main settlements, like Darlington to maximise the use of existing infrastructure. Necessary new or improved infrastructure and services, including transport, utilities, green infrastructure, energy supplies, provision of educational, health and other social facilities should be provided and co-ordinated with new development.

⁶Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, 2008

2.1.6 Through the LIP the Council should be able to co-ordinate infrastructure providers and the delivery of infrastructure requirements focussing on 'making better places'⁴ in Darlington. The LIP will also establish the various funding mechanisms available for infrastructure delivery, where known at this stage, including developer contributions which can have a significant role in helping to deliver infrastructure across the Borough.

2.1.7 The Council plays an important role in encouraging and co-ordinating the alignment of regional and local plans and programmes within the Core Strategy. Its various roles, for example through its scrutiny role ensures that it is accountable to its stakeholders in the Borough. The Council will also seek to ensure that the Local Development Framework, particularly two forthcoming planning documents; the Accommodating Growth DPD and the Planning Obligations SPD as well as planning applications are in general conformity with the Core Strategy, including this Infrastructure Plan.

2.2 POLICY CONTEXT

2.2.1 Some funding for infrastructure to deliver regeneration, economic development and housing will be resourced from the national level, but managed at a sub regional level. The Tees Valley Multi Area Agreement (MAA)⁷ sets a framework for the delivery of net

⁷partnership between Tees Valley Local authorities and One North East, coordinated by Tees Valley Unlimited

additional homes, maintaining the reliability of the road network, increasing the overall employment rate and increasing the gross value added⁸ from the sub-regional economy.

⁸the economic value of goods and services in a town or region

2.2.2 The Core Strategy will help address the spatial planning elements of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed⁹. This LIP will ensure that the Core Strategy is deliverable and so that the spatial elements of One Darlington and the Darlington Local Area Agreement¹⁰ can also be implemented. It focuses on how key areas of public sector investment and infrastructure delivery will make a difference on the ground, according to thematic priorities for Prosperous, Aspiring, Healthy, Greener and Safer Darlington.

⁹the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington, 2008

¹⁰the three year delivery plan of the SCS

2.3 DELIVERING TIMELY INFRASTRUCTURE IN DARLINGTON

2.3.1 Spatial planning goes further than traditional land use planning, bringing together and integrating policies for the development and use of land in Darlington with other policies and programmes that influence the nature of the Borough and its different communities and how they function.

2.3.2 The Core Strategy policies will provide the spatial direction for Darlington and need to be integrated and coordinated with a range of other national and regional plans and programmes that may influence infrastructure plans and strategies for health, education, sport and recreation and environmental infrastructure. This LIP provides a framework within which detailed infrastructure projects can be identified and prepared at a local level.

2.3.3 Darlington’s future sustainable growth and development depends on the timely funding and delivery of supporting infrastructure that reflects the scale and type of development and the needs in the locality; without it, new development may be delayed and/or there could be unacceptable adverse social, economic or environmental impacts on existing infrastructure.

2.3.4 Improved alignment of investment is critical to delivery of timely infrastructure. Whilst significant public sector funding will underpin much of the infrastructure delivery to provide the growth set out in the Core Strategy, short public sector funding cycles, can make it difficult to plan for long-term growth. Commercial and private providers operate to different investment plan cycles, and utilities providers operate to their own five year Asset Management Plans, adding to the difficulty of co-ordinating future investment and infrastructure delivery. Further work still needs to be done with the responsible infrastructure providers to ensure that the Borough’s necessary infrastructure is provided in a timely fashion. Where appropriate this information will be used to inform and update this Plan.

2.3.5 This will be particularly important in bringing forward development at the strategic locations identified in the Core Strategy¹¹. The level of infrastructure required to deliver these locations should reflect the emerging demands of the new community and/or operational uses and should ensure that there are no added pressures placed upon Darlington’s existing infrastructure.

¹¹policy CS1

2.3.6 Reflecting this, it is anticipated that particularly for the latter part of the Core Strategy plan period, infrastructure requirements will not be as precise as for the early part. However policies and proposals will not be included in the Core Strategy where this LIP cannot demonstrate that there is a contingency arrangement in place should the proposed deliverability mechanism stall.

¹²or Section 106 agreements are legally binding agreements between landowners and/or developers and the Council

2.4 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

2.4.1 Planning obligations¹² are a significant contributor to infrastructure provision in Darlington. Currently the Council requires a planning obligation either as on site provision, off site provision in the locality or as a financial contribution¹³ for a range of matters:

- Affordable and special needs housing
- Sustainable transport provision
- Road and highways improvements

¹³payments to fund works/facilities to ensure the needs arising from the development are met. Contributions should be sufficient to cover the impact of the development or other infrastructure away from the development site

- Provision and enhancement of open space and children's play areas
- Provision and enhancement of priority habitats

Other matters are secured where appropriate for infrastructure like schools, flood risk mitigation, sport and recreation facilities, improvements to the public realm and to the strategic highway. Throughout the LIP it will be highlighted where planning obligations could be sought to help deliver the infrastructure identified.

- 2.4.2 In the future it is possible that the Government will introduce alternative funding measures like the Community Infrastructure Levy¹⁴. This would provide a new approach to collecting financial contributions from developers and the matters for which they are sought. This LIP would help determine and prioritise those matters.

¹⁴draft regulations published July 2009

3.0 APPROACH

3.1 AIMS

- 3.1.1 This draft LIP is part of the LDF evidence base. It is an essential freestanding, accompanying document, setting out how the level of growth proposed in the Core Strategy: Revised Preferred Options will be delivered. This Infrastructure Plan will add value to existing and bespoke infrastructure investment plans; consultation with infrastructure providers will ensure that they are individually and collectively planning for broadly the correct level of future development in Darlington. In particular it will help coordinate infrastructure provision, funding and delivery as strategic locations are developed involving several infrastructure providers. There are 3 main aims of the draft LIP:

- To identify the existing infrastructure capacity in the Borough;
- To identify infrastructure required to support future development in the Borough over the plan period, with specific key infrastructure identified for the strategic locations; and
- To inform the future policy of infrastructure providers, to ensure their services can match demand to provide sustainable growth.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

- 3.2.1 All Infrastructure Providers are or will be planning their future infrastructure investment on the basis of the most appropriate growth forecasts for their purposes, all of which will be informed by the Core Strategy through discussions with the Council. Through continued dialogue with Darlington's infrastructure providers, including a review of their existing and emerging infrastructure plans, an accurate understanding and assessment of current infrastructure provision (type and amount) and any gaps in provision has been established for the Borough. This will help the Council and other infrastructure providers determine whether the anticipated demand for infrastructure from growth over the Core Strategy plan period can be met from existing provision.

- 3.2.2 Where existing infrastructure is not expected to be able to cope with the increased growth, this LIP will help providers identify where additional infrastructure may be required; in the short, medium or long term to enable deliverability of a policy or location. Where possible a commitment will be secured from infrastructure providers to ensure delivery.

- 3.2.3 To ensure the draft LIP covers all matters necessary for the successful delivery of the Core Strategy it includes:

- Physical infrastructure: transport and utilities provision
- Social infrastructure: healthcare, education, affordable housing, adult social care, community facilities, sport and recreation, libraries
- Green infrastructure: open space, habitat provision and public rights of way.

- 3.2.4 For each category of infrastructure a broadly similar approach will be used:
- Establish the current baseline position;

- Through consultation with infrastructure providers identify whether current capacity is already available to meet the future growth outlined by the Core Strategy;
- Where current capacity will not meet the future infrastructure requirements, identify:
 - specific strategic and local infrastructure requirements, where appropriate, identified on a phased basis;
 - who will provide the infrastructure
 - when it will be provided
 - costs and sources of funding, from the public and private sector (where known) and gaps in funding
 - delivery mechanisms
- Provision of an infrastructure schedule including infrastructure type, lead delivery organisations, delivery mechanisms, timescale and costs.
- future monitoring processes

3.2.5 An important element of good infrastructure planning is making proper provision for uncertainty. Infrastructure provision should not rely on unknown funding; the final LIP will avoid identifying a list of desired provision which is likely to be undeliverable. Contingency planning may be necessary where provision remains uncertain. It is important that the delivery of infrastructure requirements can be easily monitored to 'make better places' through the Council's Annual Monitoring Report.

4.0 CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Core Strategy policy: CS19

Context

4.1.1 Darlington is situated at the gateway to the Tees Valley City Region and the North East, benefitting from excellent transport links by road, rail and air. Located on the strategic road (A1M) and A66) and rail (East Coast Main Line) networks, with fast and efficient connections to the Tees Valley and the rest of the UK. Durham Tees Valley Airport in the south west of the Borough provides services for business and leisure travellers to UK and European destinations. Locally, an excellent road network (A66) and local branch lines connect Darlington to destinations in the Tees Valley, County Durham and North Yorkshire.

¹8.85 million bus passenger journeys started/finished in Darlington 2008-09, a decline of 1.8 million since 2001-02

4.1.2 Across Darlington there is good accessibility by road, public transport, cycling and walking. Car ownership continues to increase though the number of trips by car has fallen. Bus patronage is relatively high, but declining, in line with other parts of the UK¹. The number of walking and cycling trips continues to increase², reflecting Darlington’s status as both a Sustainable Travel and Cycling Demonstration Town³. The Borough has benefitted from increased funding from both initiatives since 2004; measures implemented have encouraged the community to alter their travel behaviour, moving towards more sustainable travel modes.

²Walking trips increased from 25% to 29% and cycling from 1% to 3% 2004-2008

4.1.3 Within the urban area, Darlington’s traditional radial road pattern and associated transport network focuses on the town centre. Congestion, from the volume of traffic, is an issue on some roads at peak times; the design or operation of some junctions can also impact on traffic flow. Currently congestion is tackled through improving the management of the road network as well as improving junctions which act as pinch points. The ongoing travel behaviour programme continues to encourage more travel by sustainable modes of transport. But in some cases, like along the Darlington bypass and some of its junctions, quality connectivity can be reduced as traffic increases. This could deter or be a restraint on future development, like access to the Airport unless action is taken to improve capacity⁴.

³brings extra Government funding for investment in innovative cycling and sustainable travel projects

⁴Regional Spatial Strategy, NE Assembly 2008

4.1.4 A central part of this transport infrastructure is the town centre and Bank Top station, identified⁴ as a Strategic Public Transport hub⁵. Hubs, particularly at railway stations should be prioritised for development of high quality interchanges and service integration between all modes of transport to increase the level of cycling and walking to them.

⁵place with high levels of public transport accessibility at a strategic level

4.1.5 Integrated demand management measures including parking standards are important to addressing congestion; parking provision for non residential developments should be linked to coordinated proposals for public transport, sustainable transport choices and accessibility improvements to reflect local circumstances. Provision in locations with good public transport access, could be reduced particularly at and near to the Strategic Public Transport hub.

Bus Services

4.1.6 Darlington experiences 8.85 million bus passenger journeys per year, but patronage is declining¹. Although 10% of all trips made in the urban area are by bus, use varies significantly, reflecting location, level of service and socio-economic characteristics; use in the south east of the urban area is higher than the north west. The national free concessionary pass scheme is likely to increase patronage by eligible groups but this may be discounted by the continuing decline in other passengers.

⁶supported services to cater for travel needs not currently being served like early morning, late night, Sunday services and areas of low demand

4.1.7 There has been significant change to the provision of Darlington’s bus services in the last two years. One operator, Arriva North East now operates all commercial services in the Borough and the Council operates a number of services under contract to areas otherwise poorly served by public transport, like rural areas and the north west of the urban area⁶.

Currently, the Council contracts eight supported bus services, including to Durham Tees Valley Airport. The network has recently been enhanced with the introduction of an hourly Sunday service to West Park Hospital, operated by Scarlet Band Bus and Coach Ltd. Some bus services cross the Borough's boundary, extending to County Durham, North Yorkshire and Teesside and may be provided by other operators like Durham County Council and North Yorkshire County Council.

⁷part funded by Town on the Move

4.1.8 To promote greater accessibility, Arriva has invested in 28 new, improved fleet vehicles including 16 low floor vehicles⁷ and improvements have also been made to Darlington's bus infrastructure; raised kerbs, shelters and real time displays have been provided, but are not yet at all bus stops.

4.1.9 A greater stability in bus service provision has been achieved; to improve punctuality and reliability, Arriva has rationalised bus services to operate on short journey lengths into the town centre from the edge of the urban area. Many are cross town services serving the radial corridors, almost all serve the Town Centre. Outside the urban area the volume and frequency of bus services is more limited, but still provides an essential service so that those without a car can access key facilities.

Rail Services

⁸ electrified high speed route between London and Edinburgh

4.1.10 Darlington is situated at a key point in the rail network; located on the East Coast Main Line (ECML)⁸ providing fast access to Edinburgh, York and London as well as to trans Pennine destinations. Also on the Tees Valley line local access is provided to Bishop Auckland, Saltburn, Middleton St George and Durham Tees Valley Airport. Within the Borough access to the rail network is from Bank Top Station (ECML), North Road, Dinsdale and Heighington stations (Tees Valley lines).

4.1.11 Network Rail own, operate and maintain the rail network through Darlington with a range of companies operating trains on the network.

East Coast Main Line (ECML) – Route 8

4.1.12 Since the 1970s the ECML has been progressively renewed, the northern section was completed in the early 1990s; the newest assets like signalling, electrification, switches and crossings are generally in the north. Major renewals at Darlington South Junction to improve performance and capacity have recently been completed.

⁹ECML RUS, Network Rail, 2008

4.1.13 The ECML currently has 18,300 long distance, high speed passenger journeys operating Darlington–York and 17,400 Darlington–Durham every weekday; equivalent to 2-3 trains per hour at peak times, 2 trains per hour at non peak times, this is continuing to rise⁹. The route also provides a significant interurban connection between regional centres on the North Cross-Pennines route, linking the North East and the North West. There is also an hourly train linking Darlington to Manchester Airport. Bank Top Station situated on the ECML has seen an increase in patronage by 13% between 2001-2005¹⁰.

¹⁰Operated by National Express

4.1.14 National Express East Coast (NXC)¹¹ operate most of the services on the ECML and have recently completed an extensive train refurbishment programme. Northern Rail, and First TransPennine Express (TPE) operate local services between Doncaster-Edinburgh, York-Newcastle and to Manchester Airport.

¹¹franchise holder for ECML until 31 March 2015

¹² DB Schenker Rail (UK) Limited, Fastline Freight, Freightliner Limited, Freightliner Heavy Haul, Direct Rail Services (DRS) and First GBRf

4.1.15 A range of freight train operators¹² carry significant heavy tonnages of freight traffic along the ECML; 40-50 freight trains⁹ a day between sources of production through Darlington to Scotland or to the east coast ports and container terminals.

4.1.16 A combination of high speed passenger trains and frequent freight services, with varying stopping patterns, means that at peak times, the ECML can experience capacity constraints; trains can be over capacity from Darlington–Durham/Newcastle. With few viable diversionary routes the mix of services makes it difficult to contain delays on the two track sections.

Northern Routes – Route 9

- 4.1.17 The Darlington-Saltburn route provides a frequent regional and local train service; 2 local passenger services operate per hour with stops at Heighington, North Road and Bank Top stations. A substantial volume of freight traffic also uses this route¹³.
- 4.1.18 At peak times, passenger travel has grown by almost 5% per year over the past six years but off peak there is low usage, reflecting the comprehensive bus network in the area, which penetrates closer to key areas of demand. Overall there is insufficient demand to justify provision of a new service or to separate the Darlington–Bishop Auckland and Darlington–Saltburn services¹⁴.
- 4.1.19 The Community Rail Partnership helps operate the Darlington-Bishop Auckland Heritage line via North Road and Heighington. One of its long term objectives is to encourage further integration with the national rail network and improve patronage alongside the promotion of tourism and heritage.

¹³Passenger Operators include Northern Rail, First TPE, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, Community Rail Partnership; Freight operators include DB Schenker Rail (UK) Limited, Direct Rail Services, Freightliner Limited and Freightliner Heavy Haul

¹⁴North East Routes, Route Plan, Network Rail 2008

Cycling Infrastructure

- 4.1.20 Darlington’s generally flat topography together with the close proximity of many shops and services to each other means that almost 50% of all journeys are less than two miles; an easy cycling distance, helping to contribute to increasing levels of cycling across the Borough². Reflecting this, cycling offers the greatest potential to reduce car based travel.
- 4.1.21 The Borough has a good network of strategic and local on road and leisure cycle routes, including connections to the Sustrans¹⁵ National Cycle Network linking Darlington to Stockton and the regional network running along the southern edge of the Borough from Croft on Tees to Low Dinsdale. Within the urban area the cycle network (see Appendix 1) includes a range of advisory routes, traffic free paths, on road routes, rough bridleways and cycle lanes to provide seven radial routes linking the urban fringe to the town centre. A circular route links the radial routes through a network of parks, nature reserves and green corridors bringing cyclists safely from residential areas into the town centre, where possible, using signal crossings to cross major roads and junctions.

¹⁵UK’s sustainable transport organisation

- 4.1.22 Darlington has been a Cycling Demonstration Town since 2005; associated Cycling England¹⁶ match funding has helped encourage the community to cycle more often, more safely; there has been a 57% increase in cycling levels in the first three years of the project¹⁷. This match funding has helped accelerate delivery of quality schemes in the Local Transport Plan as well as implement detailed schemes identified as part of the initiative:

¹⁶independent, expert body, established by the Department for Transport

¹⁷Cycling Demonstration Town surv. 2009

- Completion of a cycle route alongside McMullen Road and an improved light controlled crossing at its junction with Haughton Road/River Skerne;
- Safer Routes to School have provided improved footpath/cycle route links at Haughton Education Village, Whinfield Primary School, Branksome Secondary School and Cockerton Primary School. Cycle parking has been provided in 9 schools;
- Completion of a new cycle route from the town centre to Bank Top Rail Station included a new segregated cycle route along St Cuthbert’s Way and a new toucan crossing over the Inner Ring Road; and
- Provision of a sealed surface on the Black Path, bringing it up to adoptable standard

Highways

- 4.1.23 Between 2004 and 2008, there was a 13% reduction in vehicle mileage by residents contributing to an observed decrease in traffic levels on local urban roads of 6% in peak hours and 5% over 24 hours¹⁸. But with 90%¹⁹ of travel to work trips to Darlington daily being by car from the Tees Valley and County Durham, traffic congestion occurs at peak hours at some junctions on the main routes in and out of, and around Darlington. Key junctions, particularly with radial roads experience difficulties at:
 - West Auckland Road/Cockerton Green;
 - North Road/Whessoe Road;

¹⁸comparing annual average traffic volume data for 2005/6 and 2008/9, Independent research into the impact of Local Motion (March 2009)

¹⁹15,700

- North Road/Salters Lane junction; and
- Haughton Road/McMullen Road junction.
- A66(T) Blands Corner/Yarm Road/Stockton Road junctions.

Congestion at these junctions due to capacity constraints leads to delays there and at other junctions in Darlington for all road users, including bus passengers and pedestrians as the roads become congested and harder to cross.

Strategic Road Network

²¹Government agency

4.1.24 The Highways Agency²¹ are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the strategic road network²², the A1M and the A66 T, and have responsibility for management of traffic and congestion, including any potential improvements to the network.

²²motorways and trunk roads, bridges and other structures

4.1.25 The recent development of the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor was successfully achieved through partnership working with the Highways Agency. Traffic has been reduced in Haughton Village and on Yarm Road, with new crossing points provided on the A66(T) for pedestrians, cyclists and horses.

²³A66 (T) TV Gateway Study 2004 NE Assembly, Highways Agency and DBC.

4.1.26 Congestion and potential safety implications on the single carriageway A66 can restrict the effective operation of the road. The preferred option is to upgrade the section north of the A67 Yarm Road junction to dual carriageway, partly by providing a bypass of the Great Burdon roundabout²³. The Tees Valley authorities and the Highways Agency have developed an Area Action Plan for the A66/A19/A174, and a number of traffic models have been developed to test development scenarios and potential solutions to ensure that the strategic road network and secondary road network operate effectively, minimising vehicle delay.

The Borough’s Road Network

²⁴on completion of a development the developer can hand over the maintenance of a highway to the Council to maintain at public expense

4.1.27 The rest of the adopted highway network²⁴ is managed by the local highway authority; the Council has responsibility for maintaining and improving adopted highway including roads²⁵, footpaths, traffic signals, bridges and street lights in Darlington.

4.1.28 An ongoing programme of works improves the network where appropriate to address safety concerns, to increase capacity or to accommodate new development. Recent improvements to the highways network include:

²⁵A, B, C, & unclassified roads and back lanes

- Installing a mini roundabout at Salters Lane South/Haughton Road junction, designating parking areas and providing a new toucan crossing near to the Stockton Rd roundabout;
- Resurfacing the A6072 Coatsay Moor Lane between Darlington and Heighington;
- Extending the Firthmoor 20mph zone to incorporate St Teresa’s School, Harris Street and adjoining side roads to Yarm Road;
- Resurfacing the carriageway from Piercebridge to High Coniscliffe.

Car Parking

4.1.29 Darlington’s car parks are needed to help make residents and visitors experience of shopping, services and employment in the Borough easier. A range of Council owned short and long stay car parks exist in and around the town centre as well as at Bank Top Railway Station and Durham Tees Valley Airport. Complementing these are several privately owned and operated car parks in and around the town centre, and smaller car parks at district and local centres and villages.

²⁶2491 short stay and 828 long stay spaces

4.1.30 In and around the Inner Ring Road, there are 3,694 public car parking spaces; 56% are Council owned; the main exceptions are car parks at the Cornmill and Sainsbury’s. 1685 short stay spaces are within the ring road²⁶. Council owned car parks have 89% occupancy at peak times (177 empty spaces on Saturdays)²⁷.

²⁷Darlington Parking Strategy, DBC, 2009

4.1.31 Outside the ring road, Darlington has 828 long stay car parking spaces to the north and east of the town centre in 10 Council owned and operated car parks²⁷. Use is uneven with

Chesnut Street and Park Lane car parks having the lowest levels of use. Chesnut Street has recently been refurbished whilst Park Lane has a limited market, serving Bank Top Station.

- ²⁸265 car parking spaces
- 4.1.32 A new temporary short stay surface car park²⁸ has been completed on the former Feethams bus depot bringing the number of car park spaces in Darlington town centre to 1950; close to Darlington's target figure for spaces within the ring road. Use of this facility and the existing permanent car parks alongside any need for improvements will be addressed through the Parking Strategy Action Plan²⁹.

²⁹Darlington Parking Strategy Action Plan DBC, 2009

Air Travel

- ³⁰www.durhamteesvalley.com
- 4.1.33 Durham Tees Valley Airport helps connect the Borough with other parts of the UK, Europe and beyond. The Airport is situated within an hour drive of 2.7 million potential passengers from Darlington, the Tees Valley, North Yorkshire and Durham. In recent years, the airport has handled up to about 100,000 passengers per month³⁰.

³¹Eastern Airways, Ryanair, Wizz Air and tour operators First Choice, Airtours, Thomas Cook, Thomson

- 4.1.34 A wide range of airlines and tour operators³¹ fly from Durham Tees Valley Airport to over 20 scheduled and tour holiday destinations in the UK and Europe. KLM provides an important service to Amsterdam providing ongoing connections worldwide. There are no restrictions on aircraft size; the airport is capable of handling any wide bodied 4 engine type aircraft.

³²DBC and Stockton on Tees Council retain the 25% share

- 4.1.35 Peel Holdings is the strategic partner for the airport, with a 75% share³²; a significant three year £15m investment plan began in 2004 to ensure the airport is capable of capitalising on the growing demand from passengers and the commercial sector in Darlington and the Tees Valley. To date, the access road to the terminal and car parking has been improved.

4.2 UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

Context

- 4.2.1 Darlington's utilities provide a network of overhead and underground cables, wires and pipes that supply essential services like water, electricity, gas, telecommunications, as well as removing waste water through the sewerage system and day to day refuse, to help ensure that Darlington's residents have a decent, warm, safe and clean environment to live and work in. Utilities are provided by a range of private companies and the Council; including those who own and operate the network and others who distribute the service to the community.

Gas Infrastructure

- 4.2.2 National Grid has a duty to develop and maintain the efficient, coordinated and economical transportation of gas across Britain. It owns and operates the National Transmission System including the high pressure mains pipeline network, compressor stations and power stations. This transports gas to the twelve Local Distribution Zones that contain lower pressure pipes to supply the customer.
- 4.2.3 Northern Gas Networks have responsibility for the safe and efficient running of the North Zone including Darlington's gas distribution network, including asset management and replacement. Operational activities including maintenance and repair have been contracted to United Utilities Operations.
- 4.2.4 New gas transmission infrastructure like pipelines are periodically required to meet increases in demand and changes in patterns of supply. Recent works to improve gas mains in the Haughton area has seen over 1km of old metal mains replaced with modern plastic pipe, at a cost of £151,000.

Electricity Infrastructure

- ¹Under the Electricity Act 1989
- 4.2.5 National Grid holds the licence to transmit electricity¹ across England and Wales, with a statutory duty to distribute electricity from generating stations to local distribution companies. CE Electric UK distribute electricity through a network of towers, substations,

overhead lines and underground cables to homes and businesses across the Borough, through its subsidiary company Northern Electric Distribution Ltd (NEDL).

Water Supply, Waste Water Treatment and Sewerage Services

4.2.6 Darlington's water supply and the majority of its waste water treatment and sewerage services are supplied by Northumbrian Water Ltd (NWL) through a network of water pipes, sewers, water and sewage treatment works and pumping stations. Some rural communities have private water supplies and waste water disposal.

Water Supply

4.2.7 Darlington's water supply comes from the Kielder supply zone and is treated at Broken Scar Treatment Works², which supplies 150 million litres/water per day to households and businesses in Darlington and Teesside. In general, NWL consider that water availability is not an issue in the North East.³

²Coniscliffe Road, south west Darlington

³www.nwl.co.uk

Waste Water Treatment

4.2.8 Stressholme is Darlington's main waste water treatment works, treating wastewater from 100,000 people in Darlington. A £17m improvement plan is currently underway to upgrade the capacity at Stressholme so it can treat up to 70 million litres/wastewater per day. NWL expect the work to be completed in 2010³.

4.2.9 Following growth in the Middleton One Row catchment, NWL have also invested a further £4m to upgrade facilities at Middleton One Row sewage transfer works; a new pumping station and storm water storage tank will help transfer wastewater to Stressholme.

Sewerage Services

4.2.10 The sewerage system takes both waste water and surface water⁴ to the treatment works. But with the average age of Darlington's sewerage system being around 65 years old, its sewers were not designed to accept the flows that can occur from the increase in new development or from heavy rainfall. In recent years, this has increased the level of runoff entering the sewerage system, particularly from hard standing potentially causing significant flooding from overloaded sewers.

⁴rainfall flowing from roofs, roads, patios

4.2.11 In recent years, NWL has invested £3m to upgrade a sewer and provide a new combined sewer⁵ overflow in Brinkburn Denes. In heavy rainfall, this should reduce the amount of rainwater entering the sewerage network and reduce the risk of flooding to dwellings in the Pierremont Crescent area.

⁵collects sanitary and stormwater runoff

Telecommunications

4.2.12 British Telecommunications (plc) (BT) provides communications services including networked IT services, local, national and international telecommunications services and broadband and internet services.

4.2.13 Openreach is one of four parts of BT's business; it owns, maintains and develops the local access network⁶ including manholes, distribution points, joint boxes, telegraph poles and green cabinets. In Darlington, Openreach gives more than 410 Communications Providers⁷ equivalent access to the local access network and backhaul networks, enabling them to provide their customers with a range of services including telephone lines, calls packages, high speed broadband connections and networked IT solutions.

⁶the wires and fibres that connect homes and businesses to local telephone exchanges

⁷retailers who sell communications to the community

Waste Management

4.2.14 The Council has contracted household waste and treatment to the John Wade Group, from April 2009, as part of an 11 year contract. Household waste is collected and disposed of outside the Borough at the John Wade Aycliffe Landfill and Materials Recycling Facility where a new Mechanical Biological Treatment plant is being constructed. This new plant makes it easier to remove recyclable material like tins and plastic from household waste for recycling and speed up waste decomposition. Kerbside recycling collection will continue to collect glass, paper and for the first time, cardboard.

4.2.15 Across the Borough there are a range of waste management facilities including the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Whessoe Road, managed by John Wade Group and 17 recycling banks (bring sites) distributed across the Borough at supermarkets and the Town Hall.

Renewable Energy

4.2.16 Currently only a small proportion of Darlington’s energy is generated from renewable, decentralised or low carbon sources⁸. The only major source is from Stressholme sewage treatment works which includes a 340 kilowatt biogas generator. The RSS⁹ requires all new major developments to provide at least 10% of its energy supply from these technologies. It is anticipated that the provision of renewable or low carbon technologies to help meet the Borough’s energy demand, from heat and electricity, will grow and evolve as technologies develop and costs reduce.

⁸renewable: wind, biomass; decentralised: district heating; low carbon: solar, ground source and heat source pumps

⁹Regional Spatial Strategy, NE Assembly 2008

¹⁰independent Government agency

Flood Management

4.2.17 The Environment Agency¹⁰ has principal responsibility for flood risk management in England and Wales including provision, improvement and maintenance of flood defences along maintained river channels, raised embankments, floodwalls and culverts as well as the sluices, outfalls, floodgates, pumps and barriers which reduce flood risk from rivers, groundwater and surface water.

4.2.18 Recent works by the Agency include the removal of 55 tonnes of silt which had built up at Cocker Beck, Westbrook Terrace to remove the risk of flooding, at a cost of £31,000.

4.3 HERITAGE

4.3.1 The subtleties of the Borough’s distinctive built environment are found in a combination of heritage sites, landmarks and townscapes that reflect its development as a market town with an influential industrial and railway heritage, Victorian suburbs and agricultural settlements.

4.3.2 Darlington benefits from a wide range of heritage assets; national legislation protects over 500 listed buildings¹ like the recently grade II* listed St Clare’s Abbey and 21 scheduled ancient monuments², like the archaeological remains of a Roman fort at Piercebridge. Of the 500 listed buildings 31 are identified as being ‘At Risk’ because of a combination of factors like lack of a regular maintenance, vacancy of the building, with the subsequent vandalism, theft of architectural features or arson, that may follow.

¹Designated by the Government as a building or structure with special historic or architectural interest

²designated by the Government as sites of national importance

4.3.3 At a local level Darlington’s characteristic older heritage areas are protected through its 16 Conservation Areas³ including the Town Centre. Conservation Area Character Appraisals protect and enhance the historic, archaeological, architectural, spatial and natural components that contribute most to each Conservation Area’s character. Character is defined not only by listed buildings, but importantly by locally distinctive buildings and intrinsic characteristics like historic road and path layouts, building and paving materials, public and private spaces, greens and trees which contribute to the valuable character of each unique area. Currently there are seven in the Borough⁴. Locally distinctive buildings and structures with high historic and architectural value are retained and redeveloped, where possible.

³an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance

⁴Coatham, Denton, Northgate, Embakment, Piercebridge, Mundeville, Bishopton, Victoria, Cockerton,

4.3.4 Darlington also has two Parks of Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Both South Park and West Cemetery are grade II parks identified⁵ to encourage their protection and conservation.

⁵English Heritage

5.0 CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Context

- 5.1 Darlington’s extensive and varied social and community infrastructure network provides a range of essential services that help ensure that the Borough’s community has a high quality of life; access to health care and a range of sport and leisure facilities help reduce health inequalities; access to childcare, education, lifelong learning and library facilities ensure that Darlington’s residents continue to reduce the gaps in educational attainment that may exist. Provision of warm, decent homes and quality adult social care ensure that all the community, whatever their age and ability can remain in a comfortable environment that meets individual and family needs. This network is supported by the emergency services. A range of public and private sector organisations, including the Council provide the infrastructure needed to ensure that the services continue to meet the community’s growing and changing needs and aspirations.

5.2 HEALTH CARE PROVISION

- 5.2.1 Darlington’s population experiences significant health inequalities; large variations in life expectancy exist¹, resulting from inequality in opportunity, like low household income levels and low educational attainment levels as well as poor lifestyle choices like high rates of smoking, low levels of physical activity, increasing incidents of obesity and poor diet choices².

¹males: difference between best and worst wards is 14.4 years, females 10.1 years

- 5.2.2 The Borough also has an increasingly ageing population, with the proportion of over 65 year olds predicted to rise from 17.1% in 2004 to 19.4% of the total population by 2015. Accessibility to health care facilities can be a concern for the Borough’s rural residents as well as for those who experience deprivation in the urban area².

²NHS County Durham Five Year Strategy, 2008

- 5.2.3 Separate but complementary quality health care is provided by the NHS Darlington Primary Care Trust (PCT), the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust and several private providers.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

- 5.2.4 The Trust provides major acute services to 130,000 people living in Darlington and South Durham from the Darlington Memorial Hospital as well as secondary health care from Bishop Auckland General Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham.

- 5.2.5 The three hospitals are relatively small, serving small populations. To ensure that the hospitals continued to provide quality healthcare in the long term the Trust held a consultation with stakeholders in 2008-2009. Darlington Memorial Hospital and the University Hospital of North Durham will continue to provide main acute services³ supported by additional services at Bishop Auckland and the community hospitals. Implementation work has begun and will be ongoing to 2010. Recently completed investment programmes have also increased the number of beds and improved facilities in the coronary care unit and emergency care childrens’ unit.

³accident and emergency, acute medicine, emergency surgery, planned surgery, obstetrics, gynaecology, paediatrics, outpatients, diagnostics

Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust

- 5.2.6 The Trust manages West Park Hospital which supports people living in Darlington and south Durham with a range of acute care, mental health, learning disability and addictive behaviour services. It also provides outpatients and day care for adults and older people in Darlington with functional and organic mental health problems.

- 5.2.7 The hospital has three acute wards, a 24 bed elderly psychiatric ward for patients with both organic and functional disorders, the designated psychiatric intensive care unit for County Durham and a low secure step-down unit for longer stay patients. There is also a seven bed pre-discharge unit for adults with long-term chronic mental health problems prior to receiving care in the community.

NHS County Durham Primary Care Trust (PCT)

5.2.8 The PCT regulates the primary care activities of General Practitioners (GPs), community and practice nurses, community therapists⁴, pharmacists, optometrists and dentists. GP's, dentists, community pharmacists and optometrists are independent practitioners, with a practice contract with the PCT to deliver NHS services to patients.

⁴physiotherapists and occupational therapists

5.2.9 The Borough has a Walk In Centre at Dr Piper House near the town centre, 11 GP's surgeries, 14 dental practices, 18 pharmacies and 10 opticians. A large number of independent and voluntary sector providers also deliver healthcare in the community and from private hospitals in Darlington.

5.2.10 Over the last year the PCT has achieved 100% access to GPs within 48 hours, and a primary care professional within 24 hours for routine appointments. The walk-in-service at Dr Piper House provides access to a nurse 8.00-8.00 everyday including weekends and bank holidays. NHS dental capacity has been secured to meet the requirements of local residents⁵.

⁵monthly national Primary Care Access Survey

5.3 EARLY YEARS PROVISION

5.3.1 Each child in Darlington deserves to be able to fulfil their potential; early years experiences are important, giving young children the basis from which to take advantage of opportunities to learn and develop in later life. The Childcare Act 2006¹ requires the Council to improve outcomes of all young children² in Darlington and reduce inequalities between them, through integrated early childhood services. Strong partnership working is essential, particularly with Darlington Children's Trust, and with the Council's education, social care, health, Connexions, Sure Start, and Youth Offending Teams, and the voluntary and community sector to imaginatively meet the needs of young children and their families.

¹Sections 1-4

²children between birth and 31 August following their 5th birthday

Locality Working

5.3.2 Provision of an integrated approach to delivering equal targeted services is being achieved on a locality basis; five localities have been established (see Appendix 2), reflecting School Clusters/Children Centres. Ongoing early years provision, education and access to a range of information and services for children and their families can be provided for each locality to meet locally identified needs for all children and young people to the age of 19.

Children's Centres

5.3.3 A key element of provision are the Sure Start Children's Centres. Required to be accessible to the most disadvantaged areas of the Borough; that is those areas within the 30% most disadvantaged super output areas nationally³. Families with pre-school children living in these areas were to have access to the full range of Children's Centre services:

³DCSF requirement using 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation

- Good quality early education integrated with childcare;
- Family support and outreach to parents
- Child and family health services, including ante natal services; and
- Support for children and parents with special needs.

5.3.4 Reflecting this, by the end of 2008 five main Children's Centres had been created in Darlington at Skerne Park, Maidendale, McNay Street with an 'outreach' at Red Hall, Mount Pleasant and Dodmire. Some services are free, others are subsidised reflecting income.

Childcare Provision

5.3.5 The Childcare Act 2006 requires the Council to secure, as far as practicable, sufficient childcare to enable parents to take up or remain in work, or undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.

⁴pre-school, out of school, maintained nursery, day nursery and creche

5.3.6 There are 83 childcare providers⁴ in the Borough including 3 Council run Kids and Co facilities which provide high quality, affordable and accessible early education and childcare in the priority areas of Borough Road, North Road and Red Hall. There are also 145 active childminders operating within the Borough.

⁵Active breakfast club places equated to 5 places per 100 children aged 5-14 years (5-17 years for those young people with disabilities

5.3.7 Overall, parents resident within the Borough and those who live outside but work within the Borough are willing to travel around Darlington to access the childcare they want. Reflecting parents views on the local childcare market there is an unmet demand in the Borough for after school and holiday clubs/activities, especially for children over 8 years old⁵; and unmet demand for childcare in the Borough for disabled children suggesting there is a shortage of provision. Service flexibility can also be an issue; longer hours are required for after school provision and more flexibility is seen as important by parents who may need to change childcare delivery at short notice to fit work or training requirements⁶.

⁶Darlington Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, 2007-08

5.3.8 In addition, the Government is making ongoing changes to the current system of benefits and job seeking support; lone parents on income support who are able to work will be required to actively seek work once their youngest child is 10 years or older (7 years+ from October 2010). This may have an impact on future childcare services.

⁷eligible for free sessions from the term after their third birthday until they start school.

5.3.9 Through the Nursery Education Grant, children aged between three and four⁷ can enjoy up to five free structured learning sessions per week at private day nursery, playgroup or independent school which is registered with the Darlington Sure Start Partnership. A child attending a Council-run nursery school will automatically receive their free entitlement.

5.3.10 The facility applies for the Grant from the Council; funding is dependant upon the number of children accessing these types of provision. A termly headcount is undertaken in order to allocate funding. New provision being created across the town will continue to mean that this budget is likely to remain unpredictable until the sustainability and popularity of new provision can be measured and planned for.

5.4 SCHOOL EDUCATION

¹The Council

5.4.1 The Local Education Authority (LEA)¹ wants every pupil in Darlington to learn in an exciting, flexible environment that inspires and stimulates all users. The LEA has a statutory obligation to provide education for over 16,000 pupils between the ages of three and eighteen across its 1 nursery centre, 2 nursery schools, 30 infant, junior and primary schools, seven secondary schools and 1 special school. There are also several private schools and denominational schools within the Borough.

5.4.2 The LEA schools are based around the localities; the clusters help transition and if appropriate agendas can be aligned with Children Centre development to improve the quality of services for children and families. All Darlington's secondary schools operate under a Specialist School model to promote particular areas of the curriculum such as science and technology, language and sport.

Condition of Primary Schools

5.4.3 Since February 2003 significant large scale strategic investment has occurred in many of Darlington's primary schools; nine schools including Alderman Leach, Springfield and Harrowgate Hill primary schools have moved into new premises. Continued formulaic investment has taken place in other schools, to construct new or significantly refurbish existing premises; by September 2009 over 5500 of Darlington's primary pupils will be taught in a modern teaching environment.

²DfES Every Child Matters: Primary Capital Programme for funding

5.4.4 Darlington is a designated pathfinder authority to lead the development of the Primary Capital Programme²; an award of £6.5m was granted to build the new North Road Primary School. From 2009-2010 the Primary Capital Programme will distribute formulaic funding to the LEA; based on around 9000 primary pupils in 2009-2010, this is anticipated to be £3-4m per funding allocation round which can be used to help rebuild, remodel or improve

schools; including the mainly Victorian primary schools which struggle with the suitability of their buildings.

Sufficiency of Primary School Places

5.4.5 Traditionally, Darlington has had large numbers of surplus primary school places. But it is one of the few areas in the country with net inward migration of primary pupils combined with an increasing birth rate. This means that Darlington has a primary population greater than the primary places currently available. Data analysis³ shows that this is not anticipated to change in the near future. There is now a need to invest in the sufficiency of school places.

³DBC projections

5.4.6 Surplus places can be seen as a waste of resources, but the accepted reasonable level of surplus (above 5% but less than 10%) must be retained if parents are to have a choice of schools and the LEA is to have flexibility in the allocation of school places. In 2008, the LEA had approximately 4% of spaces as surplus, below the recommended level of 5%. Surplus places were only available in the central and south eastern parts of the Borough, with other areas more difficult to find places in and more difficult to expand existing school stock. The reception year across Darlington is effectively full, with an increase in numbers expected again with 2010 applications.

Condition of Secondary Schools

5.4.7 Over recent years investment has been secured to provide two new secondary schools; Haughton Education Village became the first education facility of its type in the UK to provide continuous learning for pupils aged 5-16 at one campus and the new St Aidan's Academy⁴ provides a quality range of classrooms and sports facilities in a modern environment.

⁴Formerly Eastbourne School, opened September 2009, developed in partnership with the DFES and C of E

5.4.8 Significant upgrades have been delivered at two schools; Carmel RC College has had a new £3m hall, technology block and a £10m Modern Learning Facility, and Hummersknott School has been redeveloped to incorporate a new built technology, science, drama, music and art facility. New sports facilities include a refurbished pool, sports hall, aerobics/dance studio and a new floodlit third generation football pitch⁵.

⁵Synthetic turf pitch

5.4.9 Only Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield schools have not experienced long term strategic capital investment. All have significant condition and suitability issues; buildings, mechanical and electrical works are in need of refurbishment and repair. The LEA has made substantial investment in all three schools in recent years through its annual DFES formulaic capital allocations; for 2009/10 the approximate allocations are £1.142m to the LEA and £1.193m direct to the schools for routine capitalised repairs and improvements to school buildings. This investment will help address priority issues but significant refurbishment is required

Sufficiency of School Places

5.4.10 Darlington's secondary schools provide 6,138 school places, with 5,745 pupils on roll; a surplus of 393 (6.4%) places⁶, but all are found at St Aidan's and Branksome schools. The impact of parental preference and local demographics indicate that there needs to be a small reduction in surplus places at Branksome and this is supported by the school. Although projections of pupil data and analysis of school census data shows that there is, and will continue to be, a need for seven secondary schools in Darlington, if population growth and migration continue, particularly at primary school level, an additional 500 secondary school places may be required in the long term.

⁶Spring 2009 School Census, Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

5.5 FURTHER EDUCATION

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

5.5.1 Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College provides a range of Advanced Level and other courses across a wide range of curriculum subjects to over 1900 students over the age of sixteen. A significant proportion come from outside Darlington.

5.5.2 Since 2000 the College has expanded to meet the changing needs and numbers of students. The West Wing has been extended to provide additional classrooms and development in the main courtyard doubled the area of the Library. A new £5m facility has provided rooms for Drama and Theatre Studies, a floor for Art & Design, new laboratories, a Sports Hall and an Atrium study area.

Darlington College

¹servicing its army personnel, their dependants and the wider North Yorkshire population

5.5.3 Darlington College relocated in August 2006 to be a key part of the Central Park regeneration scheme. The further education college serves a population of around 850,000 learners from Darlington as well as from North Yorkshire and County Durham. A second campus is located at Catterick Garrison¹.

²Learning Skills Council

5.5.4 The College provides a range of courses in 13 of the 15 LSC² sector subject areas and bespoke provision for commercial and industrial clients. Teacher training programmes are delivered in partnership with Huddersfield and Sunderland Universities. In 2007/8 1,368 learners (aged 16 to 18) and 240 adults enrolled to study full time on LSC core provision³ as well as around 6,000 part-time learners, 4,058 from the MoD partnership.

³111 full-time and 47 part-time students aged 14 to 16; 752 HE funded students; 58 apprentices, 121 advanced apprentices and 185 Train to Gain learners

Teesside University, Darlington

5.5.5 Teesside University currently operates a wide range of full time and part time higher education courses from the second floor of Darlington College. The University are temporarily using the former Eastbourne School for courses until their new facility (see section 9.5) is complete.

5.6 LIBRARIES

5.6.1 Darlington’s two libraries in the town centre and at Cockerton offer a range of services including loaning books, internet access, photocopying and a local studies centre; 584,473 books/recordings were issued to March 2009. A mobile library travels to the edge of the urban area and the rural parts of the Borough, making over 40,976 visits in the last year.

5.7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

¹eight of Darlington’s 63 Lower Super Output Areas are among the worst 10% nationally, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007

5.7.1 Darlington has recently experienced a buoyant housing market; owner occupation is the preferred housing choice for many, reflecting the Borough’s highest Gross Domestic Product per head in the Tees Valley, but it also has the lowest average wages, rising unemployment and high average house prices across all property types as well as small areas of the Borough where deprivation exists¹. This means that increasingly the housing market is denying access to those who wish to climb the housing ladder, resulting in increased demand for affordable housing. Some of the community’s housing need is met by the large private rented sector, with Central Darlington in particular providing an attractive environment for ‘buy to let’ purchasers due to the lower market prices of the early 19th century terraced housing².

²Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment

³for those whose incomes deny them the opportunity to buy houses on the open market as a result of the local relationship between income and market price

5.7.2 Before the current economic downturn, Darlington was faced with a challenging affordable housing³ target of 265 dwellings a year to December 2010, which the present economy has heightened. Even assuming lower quartile house prices 20% below the 2007 peak, there would be a shortfall of 626 dwellings per annum²; the second largest affordable housing shortfall in the Tees Valley, exceeding the Borough’s annual requirement for new housing set out in the RSS. But it does not take account of the contribution the private rented sector makes to meeting affordable housing needs.

⁴Government funded non profit organisations that provide affordable housing, include housing associations, trusts and cooperatives

Affordable Housing Need

5.7.3 Affordable housing is provided through 7,500 housing units by the Council and/or 5 Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)⁴ partners operating within Darlington; Fabric Housing, Northstar Housing Group, Home Group, Three Rivers Housing Association and Railway Housing Association. Affordable housing is provided in a range of size and type homes; apartments, two bed, three and four bed homes as well as more specialist provision like Lifetime Homes⁵ and those for older people.

⁵dwellings that can be adapted to make homes easier to adapt to people’s life changes

⁶Rural areas & south west: Heighington and Coniscliffe, Hurworth, Middleton St. George, Sadberge and Whessoe, South west: College, Hummersknott, Mowden, Park West
Centre: North Road, Northgate, Central

5.7.4 Unmet affordable housing needs are present across the Borough; it is most acute in the rural area, the south-west of the urban area and in and around the central area, High Northgate, North Road and locations close to local shops, services and places of work⁶ (see Appendix 3). A range of sizes and types of new affordable housing are needed; demand for intermediate tenure properties are likely to be required in a wider range of locations, particularly amongst first time buyers and older people who are equity rich but have limited cash reserves.

5.7.5 This challenging affordable housing target can be met in a variety of ways; a variety of public sector funding streams will be used where possible, new innovative partnerships with housing providers will be used and affordable housing will be sought on new development sites of 15 or more dwellings in the urban area or 5 or more dwellings in the rural area. Provision can either be secured on a development site, through off-site provision or through a developer making a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing elsewhere. Recent provision includes 9 new affordable apartments on Haughton Road and a new 3 unit shared living scheme at Hutton Avenue.

Improvements to Existing Housing

⁹Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy, DBC, 2008

5.7.6 Darlington has a large private rented sector; 26.6% of Darlington’s 45,100 households live in private rented sector housing⁹ but 4.4% are vacant (1801 units)¹⁰, higher than other housing stock. Persistent vacancy can be an issue in the poorest quality older terraced housing areas, particularly those constructed pre1919. Concentrations exist in the central core of the Borough; priority areas¹¹ have been identified in pockets of the Central, Northgate, North Road and Pierremont wards¹² (see below). Overall, 22% of the dwellings in this inner-area were identified as being unfit¹⁰. Long term vacancies in these areas can undermine the sustainability of neighbourhoods leaving residents at risk of becoming socially excluded.

¹⁰HSSA, 2009

¹¹Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order (England and Wales) 2002

| Ward | Private rented sector stock | % of terraced houses | Constructed prior to 1919 |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Central | 23.2% | 55% | 56% |
| Northgate | 26.1% | 73% | 83% |
| North Road | 14.4% | 52.1% | 39% |
| Pierremont | 17.2% | 72.2% | 73% |

¹²Darlington Housing Strategy 2008-2012

5.7.7 Reducing the number of vulnerable private sector households is a priority but the increasing national emphasis on affordable housing to meet demand has led to smaller budget allocations for private sector housing. The Council’s Financial Assistance Policy, in partnership with private landlords, private owners, registered social landlords and house builders helps eradicate non-decency in these priority areas to tackle non-decency and to make improvements to their own homes, bringing them up to the minimum decent and legal standard for housing. The highly successful Private Landlords Accreditation Scheme provides loans¹³ for improvements to the housing stock. In Darlington, SHIP3 funding has financed a range of projects focusing on improving thermal efficiency of private dwellings, financial assistance to tackle non decency and the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants to private properties.

¹³loan amount plus interest is not repayable until the property is sold. Average loans are £10,000.

Disabled Facilities Grants

5.7.8 These grants are accessed through referrals to the Home Improvement Agency, Care and Repair following assessment by the Adult Social Services Occupational Health team. The combined investment on private sector disabled facilities grants is £650,000 a year.

5.7.9 Darlington invest £350,000 a year on disabled facilities grants within retained Council owned accommodation. The level of investment extends beyond this as the annual internal planned maintenance programme of £3m a year incorporates adaptations like flat floor showers, level access entry, and grab rails into programmed internal planned maintenance work.

Older Persons Accommodation

¹⁴aged 50 excludes institutional care homes and nursing homes

5.7.10 There is a need to sustain independent living amongst the Borough’s increasingly elderly population¹⁴. A range of provision exists including sheltered/very sheltered housing¹⁵, close care¹⁶ and assisted living/extra care¹⁷. Darlington has three Council controlled extra care schemes at Dalkeith House, Oban Court, Rosemary Court and work in partnership with Hanover in Mayflower Court. 5 Integrated Support workers work with individuals who have been identified as needing support with rehabilitation or re-ablement to enable them to maximise their potential and remain independent in their own home. Lifetime homes, modern purpose built or easily adapted dwellings can also meet some of these needs.

¹⁵self-contained homes with communal facilities in a development, with a warden

¹⁷self contained homes for frailer people with 24 hour support from an on site care team

5.7.11 To meet the growing elderly population’s needs new purpose built sheltered housing schemes have been provided at Linden Court, Dinsdale Court and Windsor Court over the last 3 years. In partnership with Hanover Housing, 8 bungalows for the elderly have also been provided in Fenby Avenue.

5.8 ACCOMMODATING TRAVELLING GROUPS

¹definition of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are set out in Circular 01/06 and 04/07

5.8.1 Existing provision for gypsies and travelling people¹ is found at two Council owned but privately managed sites; Honeypot Lane (32 residential pitches and 24 transit pitches) and Neasham Road (with 20 residential pitches) and at other smaller privately owned sites with planning permission.

²Regional Spatial Strategy, NE Assembly, 2008

5.8.2 The RSS identifies that a total of 74 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers will be needed in the Tees Valley by 2020. The accommodation needs assessment³ showed no signs that the growth in this population will slow significantly and confirmed that at a local level there is a need for additional sites in addition to existing Council owned and private sites. Further work will be undertaken to identify the number of additional pitches required in the Borough.

³Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, 2009

5.9 ADULT AND CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE FACILITIES

¹giving people more choice and control over their lives and to have responsibility for making their own decisions about support which suits them

5.9.1 Through the integration of health and social care services, Darlington’s adult social care supports people so they can live safely and independently within their own homes. As part of this, the Government requires the provision of enhanced personalisation¹ for all users by 2011. To do this, the community will need access to the right sort of facilities and support, Borough wide.

²offering services and activities for adults who have physical or sensory disability

5.9.2 Darlington has a range of Council operated facilities including day care centres, resource centres like Harewood House² and older people’s residential care homes. Increasingly public and private sector facilities help to provide a range of social care for children, adults and older people and those with disabilities.

5.9.3 To support the ongoing provision and enhancement of social care facilities Nubeck Nursery, at Woodburn Nursery has received £50,000 of improvements by the Council for use by former Beck House clients and other members of the community with special needs to gain new skills in an authentic work environment.

³personal care, meals and accommodation for those who can no longer live independently, nursing care: personal care, meals and 24hr qualified nursing care

Registered Care Homes
5.9.4 Care homes provide two major kinds of care; residential care and nursing care³. Some care homes offer both kinds. Darlington has 30 registered Care Quality Commission homes, which meet the minimum legal standards; 1 is managed by the Council, the rest are managed by healthcare companies, trusts, private organisations and individuals.

⁵improve levels of independence; avoid unnecessary hospital admission; facilitate appropriate and timely discharge from hospital; prevent inappropriate admissions to 24hr care

Intermediate Care Services
5.9.5 For people aged 50 years or over there are a number of intermediate care services⁴ available in Darlington to support people maximise their independence:

- An 8 bed rehabilitation facility, Ventress Hall Care Home;

- DBC Intermediate Care (IC) Team in-reach into Independent Sector Homes for people receiving Short Break Care who are at risk of permanent placement and try to increase their independence to enable the person to return home.
- Darlington PCT provides IC residential beds, based at Eastbourne Care Home.

Day Care Services

- 5.9.6 Age Concern Darlington provide day care services at Bradbury House for independent people aged over 65 with a physical disability, but who would benefit from having the opportunity to join in activities that develop new skills and improve their independence. MIND provide a day care service at St. Hilda’s Day Centre for people who have dementia.

Mental Health Services

- 5.9.7 Based at 4 Woodland Road and at Hundens Lane Centre, adult social care work with the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust and other organisations to provide necessary support to ensure that people with a mental health need and their carers are able to live as independently as possible in the community.

Children’s Homes

- 5.9.8 Darlington has four Children’s Homes providing young people with stable home environments and good quality care and support. A supported lodgings scheme began in 2007 for young people leaving care.

5.10 SPORT AND LEISURE PROVISION

- 5.10.1 23% of Darlington’s adults participate in a wide range of sport and recreation activities for at least 30 minutes, three or more times per week¹. Participation varies across the Borough with lower levels experienced in the central and south eastern parts of the urban area, reflecting health inequalities in the community.

¹Sport England Active People Survey 2, 2008

Playing pitches

- 5.10.2 Darlington has 104 public, private and school playing pitches² covering 107.52 ha:
- 43 adult football pitches
 - 25 junior football pitches
 - 10 mini soccer pitches
 - 11 cricket pitches (6 main club grounds)
 - 13 adult rugby union pitches
 - 2 full sized Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)⁴³

²includes the playing surface, safety margins & wider area for repositioning the pitch

- 5.10.3 This equates to 1 pitch per every 1150 adults, 16% lower than the national average. Schools are an important pitch provider, owning 46% of pitches. Other education establishments, Parish Councils, private clubs and the voluntary sector provide the rest of the pitches³.

³Darlington Playing Pitch Strategy, PMP 2009

- 5.10.4 50% of pitches have secured community use⁴, lower than the national average, including only 9 pitches at 3 schools⁵. A further 24 pitches permit community use³ but have no formal agreements, meaning that access can be withdrawn at anytime and can impact on the amount of pitches available.

⁴a formal agreement in with the owner for use of the pitches

- 5.10.5 Pitch quality can influence the number of matches that can be accommodated; pitches should be able to take two matches a week, a good quality pitch could accommodate more than two matches but a poor quality pitch may only be able to take one match. The majority of Darlington’s pitches are average although several Council owned pitches are below average. With no changing rooms, car parking, poor drainage and overuse the number of matches pitches at North Park, Tommy Crooks Park, Glebe Road and McMullen Road can take is limited.

⁵Houghton Education Village, Harrowgate Hill, Hummersknott

- 5.10.6 Training on match pitches can also degrade the quality of the playing surface, particularly for competitive matches; a problem in parks. Mini sports⁶ also has an impact; many of

⁶rugby and football

Darlington's 19 mini soccer teams and twelve mini rugby teams use full size or junior pitches to play on. The continued growth in mini soccer will place more demand on existing adult and junior pitches, potentially reducing the quality of pitches and their capacity to cater for competitive matches.

5.10.7 This means at peak times there is a significant undersupply of junior football pitches (18.5 pitches) and there is just enough mini pitches to meet demand. Supply just about balances with demand for cricket, rugby and hockey. Increasing the capacity of football pitches and securing formal access agreements at all schools would reduce this deficit slightly, particularly for junior pitches (15.5 pitches)³. Increasing the quality of a pitch should increase its capacity and reduce the number of facilities required. Improvements to quality are likely to be as important as the provision of additional pitches.

5.10.8 Artificial pitches provide more consistent playing and practice conditions than grass pitches, so have greater capacity and also function as competitive and training venues. Darlington's two full size synthetic turf pitches (STPs) are located at Eastbourne Sports Complex⁷ for hockey and non competitive football, and Hummersknott School⁸ for football, rugby training and competitive football. Provision is equivalent to 0.02 STP per 1000 people suggesting that there is a need for an additional STP in the Borough³.

⁷fully accessible every dav. all week

⁸accessible to the community outside of school hours and at weekends

5.10.9 There has been a recent, temporary loss of pitches across the Borough. Eastbourne Sports Complex previously had ten football pitches, reduced to six through the St Aidan's Academy development. Since the Academy opened two have been reinstated at the Complex and a further two provided at the Academy itself, resulting in an overall net loss of two pitches.

Sport and Recreation Facilities

5.10.10 Darlington has a wide range of formal and informal, indoor and outdoor sports facilities including swimming pools, sports halls, community centres and village halls, health and fitness gyms, multi use games areas, tennis courts, bowling greens and an indoor rink and facilities for boxing, gymnastics, golf, athletics and down hill/four cross cycling⁹.

⁹Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy, PMP, 2009

Swimming Pools

5.10.11 Darlington's supply of nine swimming pools is well above the national and regional average. Only the Dolphin Centre has full public access, with two pools and a diving pool. Four schools provide access to clubs and the community but no casual access. Other pools are found at private health and fitness facilities. Significant variations in use exist, reflecting attractiveness, location and availability; the new pool at the Education Village, the refurbished Hummersknott School pool and the Dolphin Centre are operating at capacity, but the older Longfield School pool is only operating at 28% capacity⁹.

Sports halls

5.10.12 The Dolphin Centre is the main public sports hall, with eight courts. All of Darlington's four court sports halls are at school/colleges, and are accessible to clubs and community associations by prior booking, with the exception of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College. Other schools and community centres have one or two court halls. Longfield School does not have a four court sports hall, making it the only specialist sports college in the region without (at least) a four court sports hall. Use of halls reflects attractiveness; halls at newer schools like the Education Village are close to capacity but those at Branksome have a lower level of use. Two new four court halls opened in September 2009 at St Aidan's Academy and Hummersknott School, bringing the total to sixteen.

Community centres and village halls

5.10.13 Darlington's 27 community centres and village halls provide space for physical activities and sports development programmes. During 2008/09, the Extended Services programme invested £43,000¹⁰ for activities and sports to meet the needs of localities, like dance mat sessions and the 'Junior One Life' clubs⁴⁹ at these facilities.

¹⁰6 – 12 week physical activity and weight management programme for parents and children (8-11yrs)

Health and Fitness Gyms

- 5.10.14 Two public health & fitness gyms are found at the Dolphin Centre and Eastbourne Sports Complex; 20% of the overall provision⁹. Seven other membership facilities exist; sufficient for a Borough of Darlington's size.

Bowls

- 5.10.15 The Borough has a good supply of indoor and outdoor bowling facilities. Nine bowling greens of mixed quality exist across eight parks and private sites. The indoor bowls rink at North Road complements this provision.

Tennis

- 5.10.16 There are 35 tennis courts at twelve sites across the Borough; the public hard surfaced tennis courts at Stanhope Park, South Park and Brinkburn Dene¹¹ are laid out with free access from the 1 May to 30 September. Quality tennis provision is found at private tennis clubs and hotels.

¹¹six courts on three sites

- 5.10.17 Darlington has no indoor tennis facilities, the nearest are in Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees equivalent to 0.016 indoor tennis courts per 1000 people across the Tees Valley. This reflects the Lawn Tennis Association's view that there is a gap in provision of key indoor sites across the North East, including Darlington¹².

¹²Tees Valley Sub Regional Facilities Strategy

Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

- 5.10.18 MUGAs are a useful facility, providing space for a variety of informal and formal sports. Darlington's MUGAs are found on 13 sites; eleven are at schools, three in parks and one at a community centre. The majority of school MUGAs are in good condition but those at North Lodge Park and Eastbourne Park are poorer quality. All are tarmac with floodlights but school MUGAs do not provide secure access outside school hours creating a demand for use in particular areas.

Specialist Indoor and Outdoor Provision

- 5.10.19 Darlington benefits from a number of specialised outdoor sports facilities including a plentiful supply of golf courses; the Council owned Stressholme Golf Centre offers play and play over 18 holes or through the 15 bay driving range. The rural area contains several private courses; the newest being at Rockcliffe Hall, near Hurworth. Other facilities include the West Park down hill/four cross cycling course, an athletics track at Eastbourne Sports Complex and a boxing gym and gymnastics club.

5.11 COMMUNITY CENTRES/VILLAGE HALLS

- 5.11.1 Community centres in Darlington provide spaces for the wider community to attend and undertake a wide range of events including parties, corporate and social events, meetings, conferences and sporting activities. Darlington's eight Council owned centres play an important part in contributing towards community vibrancy at Firthmoor, Eastbourne, Hurworth Grange, Branksome, Willow Road, The Clifton, Skerne Park, and Red Hall. Village halls exist across the rural area, providing a much needed resource for the local community.

5.12 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Durham Constabulary

- 5.12.1 Darlington's main police station is located on St Cuthbert's Way next to the town centre, but police teams cover the Borough from three main stations:
- Firthmoor Section Office: Haughton North, West and East, Sadberge and Whessoe, Lingfield, Bank Top, Lascelles, Eastbourne, Middleton St George and Hurworth;
 - Cockerton Police Office: Cockerton West, Pierremont, Faverdale, College, Park West, Mowden, Hummersknott, Park East and Heighington and Coniscliffe
 - North Road Police Office: the Town Centre, Albert Hill, Harrowgate Hill, North Road and Northgate.

- 5.12.2 Durham Constabulary provides full time and part time police officers, Special Constables and Police Community Support Officers to tackle crime and promote community safety. Police provision in Darlington is monitored on a daily basis; Police Stations operate on a fluid basis, so Officers can be relocated to meet demand in another area if required.

County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service

- 5.12.3 County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service serves a population of over 591,000 from 15 strategically placed fire stations across the wider area. Darlington's fire service is based at St Cuthbert's Way; it is a whole time station and community fire safety centre staffed by a mix of whole time and part time firefighters.

North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust

- 5.12.4 The North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust provides its service from 3 ambulance stations in Darlington; A&E station at the Memorial Hospital, Darlington Ambulance Station, St Cuthbert's Way and the Patient Transport Service¹ Station in Morton Park.

- 5.12.5 Rapid Response Units are also deployed in strategic places throughout the Trust's area. These units may be able to arrive more quickly and can provide immediate life-saving treatment, before the ambulance arrives. The efficient utilisation of this service has contributed to the Trust reaching 75% of all category A cases within 8 minutes². In 2009 patient service was enhanced; more ambulances, control staff and rapid response vehicles have been provided to access patients across the Borough quickly.

¹takes patients from their homes to outpatient clinics, day surgery units and other health related appointments

²government target for life threatening emergencies

6.0 CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Context

6.1 One of Darlington's key assets is the wide range of attractive, green spaces that are found within or on the edge of the urban area and in the main villages. Covering about 900ha¹, this extensive green infrastructure network comprises a series of multi-functional green spaces linked by green corridors, or within and between the town and villages. It includes formal parks, woodlands, river corridors, local wildlife sites², open spaces, children's play areas, allotments, the urban fringe and the countryside.

¹Open Space Strategy, DBC, 2007

²identified and designated locally, and are of local interest.

6.1.2 Parts of the Borough, like some inner areas and parts of the urban fringe, have relatively poor access to green infrastructure. Quality varies greatly and the type of provision does not always match community needs. In rural areas, like Middleton St George, Hurworth and Heighington there is good access to a range of open spaces but the quantity, type and accessibility varies.

6.2 OPEN SPACE PROVISION Green Corridors

6.2.1 The basis of the Borough's green infrastructure network are 4 strategic green corridors³ along the River Tees, the River Skerne, the River Skerne to West Park and the Darlington-Middleton St George-Stockton corridor⁴ as well as a number of feeder corridors of local significance. Totalling 20%¹ of the total open space provision, the strategic and local corridors are central to the development of a strategic green infrastructure network linking Darlington's otherwise fragmented local networks of parks, woodland and green spaces in the urban area to the wider countryside by footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways.

³linear space with a footpath, cycleway or bridleway in the urban area

⁴Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Plan, 2008, Tees Valley JSU

6.2.2 Each corridor has different but complementary features; the River Skerne links Darlington's historic South Park with the town centre; to the north parts of the corridor have been enhanced through the successful River Skerne restoration project. The River Tees Corridor provides a continuous green network between town and country, forming part of the Teesdale Way Long Distance Footpath along the southern boundary of the Borough. Both are strategic wildlife corridors providing opportunities for enhancing and connecting sites of wildlife interest and providing accessibility for the community from the urban area, into the surrounding countryside.

6.2.3 The other strategic corridors are more fragmented but have considerable potential to expand and be enhanced; the River Skerne-West Park/Faverdale corridor incorporates the former Darlington-Bishop Auckland track bed; in the long term this could be extended into the town centre. Similarly the Darlington/Middleton St. George/A66/A67 Corridor to Stockton has the potential to become a major corridor linking the River Skerne Corridor in Darlington and the Sustrans route at Middleton St. George and Durham Tees Valley Airport, with the strategic gap between Darlington and Stockton, and the River Tees Corridor in Stockton.

6.2.4 Many green corridors run through green wedges⁵ and strategic gaps⁶ which help reinforce the different neighbourhoods within the urban area and the different identities of the town and surrounding villages.

⁵locally defined spaces that separate distinct neighbourhoods in the urban area
⁶spaces between the town and surrounding villages

Parks and Gardens

6.2.5 There are 12 parks in Darlington, including four strategic facilities at South Park, North Park, West Park and the Denes; each provides a range of formal and informal sport and recreation opportunities, including biodiversity provision and children's play for the community and visitors. With the exception of Sugar Hill Park all are high value but the quality is variable.

⁷English Heritage designation

6.2.6 South Park has been identified as an Historic Park and Garden⁷ and is the only one of Darlington’s parks to have Green Flag status⁸. From 2003-2005 South Park underwent a £3.9 million Heritage Lottery Fund regeneration project which has helped create a stimulating and safe, high quality environment for the community and visitors.

⁸Nationally recognised award for well managed parks and open spaces

6.2.7 West Park is the newest of Darlington’s parks, provided as part of the West Park community. As a hilltop park it provides a unique environment for wildlife and visitors. Facilities enhance provision in the Borough including a sculpture park, downhill/four cross cycling track as well as walks and informal open space.

Informal Open Space and Landscape Amenity

¹⁰provide a noise, visual or wind buffer or enhances the image of an area

6.2.8 101 informal recreation spaces provide space for activities like dog walking and jogging across the Borough; though distribution and size of sites varies; parts of Bank Top, College, Park West, Mowden and Harrowgate Hill are not within 300m of informal open space¹. Quality varies; a third of spaces are low quality but 97% have unlimited access¹ providing valuable space at a neighbourhood level. Most of the 21 Landscape Amenity sites are important spaces that help enhance the attractiveness of an area, particularly near employment and retail areas or along road corridors but less than 50% are below average quality¹.

Cemeteries

¹¹includes churchyards and burial grounds

6.2.9 Cemeteries¹¹ are an important part of the Borough’s green infrastructure network, not only as a burial ground and a place of quiet reflection but for landscape and biodiversity value. Darlington’s 17 cemeteries include 3 public cemeteries in the North, East and West; totalling 76% of this space. West Cemetery is also designated as a park or garden of special historic interest. Most are high quality with only two being rated less than 3* quality. All have unlimited public access.

Children and Young People’s Provision

¹²equipped play areas, kicabout areas, fishing and skateboarding facilities

6.2.10 Children’s and young people’s provision¹² can be found at 34 sites across the urban area; 65%¹ are part of another open space type, like parks. Accessibility is varied; parts of the urban area like the West End and Neasham Road have limited doorstep provision within a 9 minute walk from home¹.

¹³part of Groundwork Trust, works with communities to deliver cleaner, greener, safer spaces

6.2.11 Play provision across the Borough has significantly improved over the past two years. In partnership with Groundwork West Durham and Darlington¹³, the Council has provided new play areas at Pensbury Park, Eggleston View/Newton Lane, Fryers Crescent and North Park and has refurbished and/or extended The Denes, Lascelles/Fenby Avenue, Minors Crescent and Springfield Park.

6.2.12 Funding for these works has been secured from LAA funding, commuted sums from new development, whilst the Countryside Agency’s Doorstep Greens initiative funded improvements at Holgate Moor and the Heritage Lottery Fund contributed to works at North Lodge Park. The Playbuilders initiative continues to fund the provision of new and improvements to existing play provision.

6.3 BIODIVERSITY PROVISION

¹⁴Nationally important biodiversity sites designated by Natural England under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

6.3.1 The Borough has an extensive, but fragmented, network of biodiversity sites including:

¹⁵designated by the Council under national legislation for wildlife and the enjoyment of wildlife

- four nationally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)¹⁴ covering 8.29ha at Neasham Fen, Hell Kettles, Newton Ketton Meadows and Redcar Field; all are in a favourable or recovering condition.
- eight Local Nature Reserves¹⁵,
- areas of ancient woodland¹⁶, like those along the River Tees
- 50 Local Wildlife Sites²
- 64ha of community forestry¹⁷; native trees will continue to be planted at Skertingham, Merrybent and South Burdon around the urban fringe.

¹⁶continuous woodland since 1600 with a diverse range of range and unusual species

¹⁷combines conservation, new planting, access to the countryside with rural development objectives

6.3.2 Darlington’s watercourses also have important biodiversity value. In addition to the Rivers Tees and Skerne, the river and stream environments of Cocker Beck, Baydale Beck, Neasham Stell and West Beck including the river banks, ponds, wetland and wet woodland areas support species like water voles and particularly in the Skerne, the European otter. New wetland areas, like at Rockcliffe Hall and as part of sustainable drainage systems, like at West Park, can provide new habitats for many other priority species, like Great Crested Newts.

6.3.3 The Environment Agency recently contributed £20,000 for the improvements to the new nature reserve at Red Hall that was created alongside the Darlington Eastern Transport corridor. In addition, the Agency and County Durham Environmental Trust have contributed £50,000 and £28,000 respectively for a project at Cocker Beck to improve biodiversity, particularly providing new backwaters and better water quality through the introduction of a controlled amount of fresh water.

6.3.4 These sites together with a range of other undesignated sites and areas of natural and semi natural greenspace¹⁸, support a diversity of wildlife habitats including many rare and declining priority species¹⁹ of flora and fauna including Lowland meadow, Lowland calcareous grassland, reed beds, rush pastures and the Pipistrelle Bat. 55% of primarily natural and semi natural greenspace areas are average quality or above; strategic sites like Drinkfield Local Nature Reserve are good quality. Overall accessibility to the Borough’s biodiversity provision is good; 90% of the urban population is within a 15 minute walk of a nature site; however access is more limited to larger sites from Bank Top east and to smaller sites in the College, North Road and Harrowgate Hill wards¹.

¹⁸spaces that promote biodiversity

¹⁹habitats and species with environmental and conservation protection identified in the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan

6.4 URBAN FRINGE

6.4.1 Parts of Darlington’s largely agricultural urban fringe now have limited biodiversity value, as natural and semi-natural habitats, such as hedgerows, have been lost or fragmented making it progressively difficult for many species to survive and in the long term climate change will increasingly make it hard for species to adapt. The urban fringe is an important biodiversity resource; provision and enhancement of suitable habitats within the urban fringe can allow species to move to and from town to country. Community forestry is a valuable resource within the urban fringe; planting at Skerningham, South Burdon and Merrybent provides space for habitats and species to establish to ensure that sites in the urban area, urban fringe and the wider countryside are increasingly linked to maximise the value of each site.

6.5 ALLOTMENTS

6.5.1 With about 20 plots per 1000 households¹, Darlington’s allotment provision is consistent with national guidelines². There are 26 allotment sites identified in the Borough, across 15 of the 24 wards; Central, Cockerton West, College, Eastbourne, Haughton East, Mowden, Park West, Pierremont and Sadberge and Whessoe do not have allotment sites. The majority of sites tend to be concentrated around the more urban and more densely populated areas where traditionally demand existed.

¹Draft Darlington Allotments Strategy, Groundwork Durham and Darlington, 2010

²National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners

6.5.2 The Council has 15 sites, all in the urban area; approximately 800 plots are tenanted. Six varies; some are large with more than 150 plots, and others are small with 3 plots. Some plots are let to the same people, with as many as 5 plots under the same tenancy at some sites. Quality is mixed; a few sites have plots that are not let due to their unsuitability, mainly as a result of poor drainage¹. Plot size varies³; the average plot size is 250 sqm¹; half plots exist at some sites, for people who say they cannot manage a full plot.

³standard size is 25m x 10m

6.5.3 Currently six sites are self managed; each has their own committee, lease the site from the Council and have secured additional funds to improve their site. Where appropriate the Council would like to create more self managed sites. Rents for plots on Council managed sites in 2009 was £44 whereas rents at self managed sites range from £22 - £43¹.

6.5.4 Until recently the combination of Council run, parish run and privately run sites has been sufficient to cater for demand. Recently there has been an increase in allotment provision and the Council's waiting list (which varies from site to site) is over 400 people; turnover is very low, there can be a five year wait for an allotment¹.

6.6 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY/GREEN LEISURE ROUTES

6.6.1 Darlington has 305km of Public Rights of Way (PROW) which provides a comprehensive network between and within the urban area, the villages and the wider countryside. 30km is found in the urban area including along several important historic routes like the old Salters' Lane, the original Great North Road and several dismantled railways like the original route of the 1825 Stockton to Darlington Railway.

6.6.2 Quality and accessibility varies; the north and north east of the Borough are well served by public bridleways, although they do not link particularly well, the west has a comprehensive network but with the exception of the Teesdale Way and paths close to High Coniscliffe and Piercebridge is underused. To the south and east the network is severed by the A66, but the remaining countryside is well served mainly with footpaths, particularly around the main villages of Hurworth and Middleton St George. The more remote parts of the Borough have good PROW coverage but use is very low. The urban PROW is comprehensive and generally well used, with over 60 paths providing useful links for access, recreation and sustainable movement around the town¹.

6.6.3 There has been a great deal of success in adding large areas of urban fringe access to the network; the community forestry at South Burdon, Skertingham and Merrybent provides a network of paths connecting to the PROW network in close proximity to the urban area.

6.6.4 Through the Cycling Demonstration Town initiative and the 2LTP funding has helped improve green leisure routes, allowing people to move around the town and access the urban fringe and the countryside easily;

- Creation of a new leisure route next to Cocker Beck;
- Construction of a new national cycle route¹² and pedestrian route alongside the new Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor to access a new Local Nature Reserve and South Burdon Community Forestry;
- Provision of a new cycle/pedestrian bridge across the A66 linking the urban area to Hurworth, Neasham and Middleton St George;
- Provision of a sealed surface along the Faverdale Black Path at a cost of £117,000
- Resurfacing of Nunnery Lane to make it suitable for cycling at a cost of £20,000

6.6.5 Increased access and use can lead to deterioration in quality; some paths like the network of unsealed surfaced paths in the Local Nature Reserves can require more frequent maintenance to bring them back to an acceptable standard.

¹Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, DBC, 2007

²NCN14

7.0 FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The spatial planning approach that underpins the Core Strategy has encouraged the development of a far better understanding of the infrastructure requirements needed to support delivery of planned levels of growth.
- 7.2 The previous section has identified the current, baseline infrastructure provision in the Borough. From this it is possible to determine whether there is sufficient infrastructure available in each category to meet the level of growth set out in the Core Strategy. The next section, will identify where known infrastructure provision will be provided for each of the infrastructure categories. This may help reduce gaps in provision or ensure that no additional infrastructure is required for a particular infrastructure type. Alternatively it may show that there is still a gap in infrastructure provision which will need addressing before the Core Strategy can be shown to be fully deliverable. Planning obligations may be used in these cases.
- 7.3 The level of detail within this Future Infrastructure Capacity Assessment is a function of the time. Those measures that need to be implemented in the early stages of the Plan period have been developed to more detail, whilst those required for later stages of the Plan period are less well defined at this stage. The overview of the requirements provides the context within which detailed proposals will need to be developed. Details of costs, where known will be identified, but these will be confirmed over time as part of the implementation process.
- 7.4 The Plan does not and cannot set out a detailed investment programme for the later stages of the plan period; many infrastructure providers investment plans do not run that far ahead. As the Core Strategy progresses and as more information becomes available, this LIP will be updated.
- 7.5 Through consultation with Infrastructure Providers a broadly similar approach will be used for each infrastructure category:
- Identification of future infrastructure provision
 - Identification of delivery mechanisms and funding programmes
 - Timescales for delivery
 - Discussion will continue with the Provider to assess whether their planned investment will continue to meet long term future needs;
- 7.6 The results of this process will be presented in an infrastructure schedule. It will provide a summary of each infrastructure category including details of the location of the infrastructure, lead delivery organisations, delivery mechanisms, timescale and costs.
- 7.7 Each strategic location identified in Core Strategy policy CS1 is detailed; specific infrastructure requirements, where known at this stage have been identified. This follows ongoing consultation with key infrastructure providers.

Core Strategy Policy: CS1, CS2, CS4, CS16, CS18

8.0 FUTURE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Context

8.1.1 Darlington benefits from excellent strategic transport links by road (A1M and A66T), rail (East Coast Main Line) and air (Durham Tees Valley Airport) providing fast and efficient connections within the sub region and to other parts of the UK. Excellent local road links exist (A66) and there are local train services to the Tees Valley, County Durham and North Yorkshire.

¹Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, 2008

8.1.2 'Improving connectivity and accessibility'¹ across the Borough and within the Tees Valley and the North East is essential to delivering sustainable development and movement, promoting access to employment, housing and services. Congestion is an issue on some roads at peak times due to the volume of traffic and also the design or operation of some junctions. New development in Darlington will generate more trips; sites that are well served by sustainable travel modes will have a reduced impact on the levels of traffic on the roads, but inevitably other locations will experience increased traffic levels. To minimise this impact, further investment will be required to:

²Darlington Transport Strategy 2006-2030, DBC 2006

- Improve junctions which act as pinch pints on the highway network;
- Better management of the highway network to optimise its use; and
- Promote the travel behaviour programme to encourage more travel by sustainable travel modes².

³brings extra Government funding for investment in innovative cycling and sustainable travel projects

8.1.3 Darlington will continue to use its status as both a Sustainable Travel and Cycling Demonstration Town³ to encourage the community to exercise more choice in their travel behaviour, to encourage further shifts towards more sustainable travel options. This will be helped by good accessibility to facilities in the Borough by road, public transport, walking and cycling. Building on proposals already delivered through these programmes, this will ensure that transport infrastructure proposals have been assessed against evidenced needs. They will be accompanied by marketing and information provision initiatives that maximise their contribution to outcomes.

⁴being prepared to cover the period 2011-2026

8.1.4 The emerging Third Local Transport Plan (3LTP)⁴ will set out the priorities for transport in terms of outcomes for both people and place; an emphasis on carbon reduction is anticipated, in line with national policy, continuing to provide a sustainable basis for new development. It is not possible to detail all the transport infrastructure proposals that will be brought forward during the lifetime of the LDF; implementation plans for the 3LTP will be approved following a consultation process at the end of 2010 and will be informed by Government decisions over funding levels in the year and the likelihood of funding from other sources, like planning obligations.

Bus Services

8.1.5 Darlington has over 8 million bus journeys per year; 10% of all trips made in the urban area, but patronage is declining. Further improvements to the bus network will be supported; in the short term, North Road, Haughton Road, Woodland Road and Yarm Road will be promoted as key public transport corridors with Coniscliffe Road, the Eastern Transport Corridor and Grange Road being secondary public transport corridors.

⁵Tees Valley City Region Business Case, 2008

8.1.6 The Council will continue to seek, with Arriva and other bus operators, to improve operational conditions for buses, especially along key and secondary public transport corridors. As well as junction improvements set out through the Tees Valley Bus Improvement scheme⁵ discussed in 8.1.33 the Council has committed a share of £9.14m (£7.44m DFT grant) to improve the quality of local bus travel by 2013; new bus stops, improving existing ones and expanding the real time information system will be implemented throughout the Borough. The Council has also committed funds to provide selective vehicle detection equipment at 7 signal controlled junctions throughout the urban area. £204,000 has been budgeted for the necessary physical works by 2013. Implementing traffic management measures, such as bus lanes and the introduction

⁶parking is controlled by the Council rather than the Police and abuse of parking regulations becomes a civil offence

of civil parking enforcement⁶ will improve the reliability and punctuality of local bus services.

- 8.1.7 The funds will also deliver a travel behaviour programme of information, motivation and incentives in the Borough, with the objective of increasing trips made by bus. Close working with Arriva and other local bus operators has resulted in the creation of a multi-operator ticket scheme to improve travel for people who need to use buses of more than one operator. The Council also provides marketing and information services as part of its work on travel behaviour, as well as a generous concessionary fare travel scheme.

Smart Ticketing

⁷card which stores information on a microchip about the user's pre purchased travel entitlements.

- 8.1.8 The North East Smarter Ticketing⁷ Initiative aims to create a fully accessible computerised system to enable public transport users to load their regular tickets onto smartcards and 'pay as you go', so encouraging more frequent, easier use of buses, providing an attractive alternative to the private car. Initially for use by local bus operators, there is potential for the initiative to be applied to rail travel across the North East.

⁸funding allocation from the Department for Transport

- 8.1.9 £10m of capital funding has been secured from the North East Regional Funding Allocation⁸ to deliver the scheme. Darlington has also secured an additional up to 270,000 Euros to invest in smart ticketing, available up to December 2011, from its partnership in the 'Boosting Advanced Public Transport Systems' project⁹. It is planned to use this funding to invest in additional ticket machines at bus stops and elsewhere and to market smart ticket products provided by transport operators. The system is scheduled to be fully operational by 2013 when all buses will be equipped. Estimated operating costs are expected to be £500,000-750,000 across the region, with Darlington's share being £20,000-£30,000 a year. It is intended that these costs would be paid by the users of the tickets at no cost to the Council.

⁹European funded North West Europe Interreg IVB Programme

Rail Services

¹⁰Tees Valley and Tyne and Wear

- 8.1.10 Rail travel is an important element of Darlington's transport network; in a highly accessible location within the rail network, situated on two strategic regional rail corridors, the East Coast Main Line and the Tees Valley rail line provide access to the Borough, the sub region, between the North East's two city regions¹⁰ and beyond to Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds and London. These strategic routes are where major transport investment should be focused. Improvements to these services would provide public transport alternatives which would help relieve congestion on the A1 and A66 as well as improving rail services on the Tees Valley line and East Coast Main Line.

East Coast Main Line

¹¹eight trains per hour
¹²six trains per hour

- 8.1.11 To ensure that the ECML remains accessible and well used, more long distance high speed services to/from London in the short-medium term, peak¹¹ and off peak¹² will be provided for the route, allowing better segregation of flows. Further reductions in journey times between London, the North East and Scotland¹³ will enhance Darlington's position. Growth in more frequent, reliable commuter journeys to Leeds and Newcastle would be added benefits as this strategy is delivered, supporting rail travel as an important sustainable transport mode from the Borough across the Tees Valley sub-region, the North East and beyond for employment and leisure.

¹³ECML RUS, Network Rail, 2008

- 8.1.12 In the long term, the strategy¹³ identifies increasing train lengths and seating capacity through the Intercity Express Programme. The operation of a standard hour timetable to make best use of capacity for passenger and freight operations will also be implemented. Greater opportunities for commuting into Darlington by rail will be created by standard pattern services for trains from Edinburgh and Newcastle via Leeds¹³.

Other rail services

¹⁴NE Route Plan 2008, Network Rail

- 8.1.13 Investment will be made over the next 10 years on the Darlington-Saltburn line to provide more rolling stock and bring unused network capacity into use in order to accommodate a predicted level of growth per year of up to 4%¹⁴. Lengthening of trains serving

Middlesbrough will be implemented to address commuter growth, supported by changes to the time at which trains are run.

¹⁵stakeholders on the Darlington-Bishop Auckland line who participate in the development of a quality rail service that responds to community needs

- 8.1.14 Darlington-Bishop Auckland 'Heritage' Line Community Rail Partnership has appointed an officer to increase patronage on this section of the rail network. An application for Community Rail Partnership designation has been submitted to the Department for Transport; if approved the Partnership will be eligible to make funding bids to implement its action plan. This will include marketing, information, improvements to stations and in the longer term improvements to rolling stock and service frequency.

Bank Top Station Travel Plan

¹⁶franchise holder responsible for managing the Station ¹⁷station land owner ¹⁸Darlington's bus operator ¹⁹highway management

- 8.1.15 Darlington's Bank Top Station has been chosen to be part of the national station travel plan pilot programme, expected to run up until 2010/11. Together with key partners National Express¹⁶, Network Rail¹⁷ and Arriva North East¹⁸, through the Travel Plan, the Council¹⁹ aims to improve rail passenger use and satisfaction of the station and increase the share of passengers using public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing accessing the station, reducing traffic levels and the impact traffic congestion would have on the surrounding highway network.

- 8.1.16 The Travel Plan sets out a number of proposed actions to be delivered by key partners over the next two financial years (see Appendix 4). The Council's actions will be funded through existing budgets, including the Local Transport Plan capital programme, Interreg European funding⁹ and from the Cycling Demonstration Town programme. Other measures are dependent upon securing funding from the rail industry or other sectors. Timescales for securing this additional funding are at present uncertain, depending on the progress of land use plans for the surrounding area, particularly between the Station and the Town Centre.

Tees Valley Metro

- 8.1.17 The provision of a high quality, fast and reliable rail based metro system for the Tees Valley may, in the longer term, help to redress the balance to more sustainable transport use, assist regeneration and help reduce congestion. The proposal being developed by Tees Valley Regeneration focuses on the Darlington-Saltburn heavy rail corridor¹.

- 8.1.18 Feasibility work shows that the preferable option is to improve the existing heavy rail train service, using better, conventional trains, with increased frequency and with improved or new station facilities. Depending on the design and future operating regulations, tram like vehicles may be able to operate in the longer term on both the existing railway line and on tracks laid into road surfaces.

- 8.1.19 The Metro will operate on Network Rail land so must be assessed through their Guide to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP); £1.25m has been obtained through the Regional Transport Board for a GRIP 4 feasibility study²⁰ to assess detailed designs and provide cost estimates. The study is expected in summer 2010.

²⁰expected summer 2010

- 8.1.20 The Darlington-Saltburn line would generate the most cost/benefits using conventional trains. Despite the wider economic benefits, it is unlikely that the project would secure DfT funding in one package²¹. To make it easier to attract funding, delivery should be carried out in three phases with the first phase to be delivered by 2012 to coincide with the new local train franchise, due to start in 2013. A phased delivery plan would allow the benefits to be assessed to support the case for further funding:

²¹reflecting major scheme funding criteria

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Phase 1 of Metro 2009-2012 | Estimated cost £33.9m |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New platform at Darlington station; • Relocation of station at Durham Tees Valley Airport; • Refurbished, higher specification trains operating four times an hour between Darlington and Saltburn during the day. | |
| Phase 2 of Metro | Estimated cost £60m |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and signalling work, concentrating on the Darlington to Saltburn line; • New stations at Morton Palms, Central Park, Teesside Park and Middlehaven; • Refurbishment of other stations; and • New trains. | |
| Phase 3 of the Metro | Estimated cost £130m including a planned Network Rail signal renewal scheme |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and signalling work; • Refurbishment of stations; and • New trains | |

8.1.21 The Interim Regional Transport Board has allocated £9.4m to Darlington Station (2009/12) for changes to Darlington South Railway Junction; provision of a two line local platform to the east of the ECML as a discrete facility for the service to Saltburn. Improvements would be made to Garbutt Square Footbridge to improve connectivity with Bank Top Station. These improvements will ensure Saltburn trains no longer have to cross the ECML and avoid being delayed by main line trains. £5m has been allocated to relocate Durham Tees Valley Airport station (2010/12). Further work is being undertaken to assess car parking options and local transport links, as well as the wider economic impacts of the proposal, paid for by Single Programme funding²² of £80,000.

²²One North East funding

8.1.22 The estimated Council contribution for Phase 1 is £800,000. Other sources of funding continue to be investigated but funding could be sought from 3LTP; it is currently projected that 3LTP funding could be in the region of £3m per year, with £1.5m project for the Integrated Block. Funding for Phases 2 and 3 has not been identified; the Regional Funding Allocation²³, the new franchise for local train services, developer contributions, the 3LTP and Network Rail investment plans could all contribute.

²³funding allocation from the Department for Transport

8.1.23 The funding process for improvements to Darlington Station is different to the other smaller works, reflecting the scale and likely cost. A separate business case will be submitted to the DfT for approval in spring 2010. This option will be investigated in the GRIP4 work funded from the regional programme.

Cycle Routes

8.1.24 Improvements to sustainable transport choices like cycling and walking will continue to be supported, where appropriate with improvements and extensions to the national, regional and local networks. Improving connectivity across the Borough, particularly to shops, schools, employment and services and between public transport facilities is essential, particularly between the town, villages and across the A1 and the A66. Improvements to the road network should encourage ease of cycle movement to promote greater use; high quality, safe routes, particularly those that provide connections to other routes and crossings will be supported.

Cycling Demonstration Town

8.1.25 Darlington has been a Cycling Demonstration Town since 2005, benefitting from associated funding which has seen the Borough’s cycle network improve in terms of accessibility, quality and length. Match funding of up to £500,000²⁴ a year, until March 2011, has been secured or identified in order to deliver the Cycling Demonstration Town programme. This funding continues to be invested in the network (see para 8.1.26). An opportunity to secure additional funding from the DFT was sought in November 2009 for two additional projects in Darlington: a Workplace Cycle Challenge (£40,000) and SMART card activated cycle store (£30,000). Both must be completed by March 2010.

²⁴Cycling England funding to accelerate the delivery of schemes in the Local Transport Plan programme as well as additional initiatives detailed in the bid and agreed work programmes

Cycle parking

8.1.26 Further investment in cycle parking is proposed at four schools²⁵, at the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College and at Bank Top Station. To encourage more frequent cycling access to the Sixth Form College a secure, covered cycle compound is proposed to protect up to 80 bikes, with a smartcard entry/exit system which only allows access to registered users.

²⁵Total of 120 spaces

A similar secure area of cycle parking, with smart card access is proposed at Bank Top Station. Funding for this is from the Local Transport Plan and Cycling England.

Work Place Cycle Challenge

- 8.1.27 Following the successful CTC²⁶ Challenge for Change behavioural change programme in 2009, additional Cycling England funding has been secured to run a new challenge encouraging more people to cycle more often in 2010.

²⁶UK's National Cyclists' Organisation

Planned Improvements to Darlington's cycling infrastructure

- 8.1.28 A range of improvements are proposed to the Borough's cycling infrastructure in the short and long term. Identified projects include:
- Completion of North Road cycle network, Harrowgate Hill; £80,000 LTP budget, 2009/2010
 - Creation of a surfaced route along the South Park showfield connecting Henderson Street/Bedford Street; £40,000 Cycling Demonstration Town budget, 2009/10
 - Resurfacing Polam Lane; £110,000 LTP budget, 2010/11
 - Advanced Stop Lines and Priority Crossings for cyclists; £30,000 LTP programme, ongoing
 - Ongoing legal and technical work to complete the strategic cycle route from Harrowgate Hill to the town centre, between Albert Road/John Street; £10-15,000 Cycling Demonstration Town funding may be required 2009/10
 - Provision of Harewood Terrace/Blackwell Lane cycle link, Great Burdon to Sadberge walking/cycle link £260,000 LTP funding to secure £185, 000 Cycle Demonstration Town match funding, 2009/10
 - Implementation of schemes identified as part of the completion of the radial routes and rural routes potentially John Street, Mill Lane, Baydale Beck, Hurworth and Sadberge £328,000 Cycling Demonstration Town funding, 2009/10

Highways

- 8.1.29 Everyone who lives or works in or visits Darlington should be able to have good, safe access to employment, shops and services by a wide range of transport, including those who are unable to access sustainable transport. The use of the Borough's highway network, including the strategic road network can lead to congestion, particularly at peak times at certain pinch points across the town; improving junction capacity whilst making better use of the existing network alongside the continued promotion of sustainable transport promotion should help reduce this impact.

Strategic Road Network

- 8.1.30 The Council considers that the A66(T) Darlington bypass should be upgraded to a dual carriageway to reflect its importance as a key part of the local, sub regional and regional movement network. Unless capacity improvements are implemented, the RSS¹ acknowledges that the Darlington bypass and some of its junctions could deter or be a restraint on future development in Darlington, to the airport and outside the Borough at Teesport, unless its capacity is improved. To support the growth of the airport, surface access could be improved, with a priority being to consider improvements to the surrounding network including the A66¹.

²⁷Highways Agency, the Tees Valley authorities and the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

- 8.1.31 The Tees Valley Area Action Plan study²⁷ modelled existing developments and their potential impacts and determined that some improvements to the A66 would be required. A package of trunk road and associated local interventions will be prepared to ensure that the Tees Valley's transport networks are capable of facilitating the planned regeneration of the sub-region over the next 20 years, to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. In Darlington, three schemes have been identified as being potential solutions to minimising traffic congestion, delivering infrastructure and improvements on the strategic road network in the long term. Funding has been requested for these schemes through the Regional Funding Allocation:

- A66/Yarm Road Junction: major remodelling of the junction to provide larger diameter and circulatory carriageway to improve capacity in advance of A66 Gateway Improvements scheme below
- A66 Great Burdon and DETC roundabouts: signalisation of the roundabouts to provide enhanced capacity to complement the A66/Yarm Road scheme
- A66 Darlington bypass: new dual carriageway section of A66 between Yarm Road and Great Burdon providing grade separation at existing roundabout on this section, post 2019.

8.1.32 A VISSIM transport model of the A66 Darlington bypass has been developed by the Highways Agency and JMP Consultants, to enable scenario testing of future residential, commercial and retail development impacts on the A66 and secondary road network in more detail. This work is now being taken forward as part of the Tees Valley City Region: Connectivity and Accessibility Study. This will evaluate the region's transport strategy and programme in the context of DaSTS²⁸ and prioritise schemes for funding from the Regional Funding Allocation or other funding sources.

²⁸Delivering a Sustainable Transport System, DfT 2008

The Borough's road network

8.1.33 Across the sub region, the strategic bus network lacks coordination, has inconsistent service quality and coverage and suffers from a lack of priority and poor marketing in some areas. The proposed Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Scheme²⁹ will by 2013 significantly improve this, partly by funding better infrastructure on core route corridors³⁰. The delivery schedule means that the following key junctions in the town's road network will be improved by the end of 2013:

²⁹Tees Valley City Region Business Case, 2008

³⁰a section of road served by one or more bus routes

- North and Whessoe Roads
- Cockerton Green
- Brinkburn and West Auckland Road
- Milbank and Woodland Road
- Junctions in the Bondgate-Stonebridge section of the inner ring road, including the widening of Freeman's Place to reflect the new traffic patterns created by the opening of the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor.

8.1.34 The Council has committed funding worth £9.203m proposed to be spent in Darlington on physical improvements to increase the capacity of the road network, so reducing average delays to bus services. This funding comes from three sources; the Department for Transport (£7.983m), the Local Transport Plan (£1.121m) and from secured developer contribution (£0.099m).

8.1.35 An extensive and varied programme of highways works is proposed in the Borough as part of the ongoing delivery of the 2LTP (2006-2011) including network management, speed management and sustainable travel including walking and cycling. The Council will continue to manage the highway network through its Transport Asset Management Plan³¹ during the lifetime of the LDF. Data collection is continuous; spending commitments are made on at least an annual basis in order to respond effectively to change.

³¹ ensures that assets are safe to use, fit for their intended purpose and are efficiently maintained

Car Parking

8.1.36 Car parks and parking facilities such as information and payment options will be improved. As the Town Centre Fringe is developed the aim is to provide a smaller number of larger, better located, purpose designed car parks to meet modern standards, better served to meet the needs of the town centre, its businesses and customers. Improvements to the layout of some existing car parks will continue in 2010.

8.1.37 In the longer term, plans for 'The Oval' shopping centre in the north west of the town centre will see the replacement of the long stay car parks at Kendrew Street East and West with a new multi-storey 800 space short stay car park. This will significantly improve the car parking offer for short stay users. Redevelopment proposals exist for sites currently used as car parks elsewhere in the town centre at Beaumont Street and the Town Hall.

Durham Tees Valley Airport

- 8.1.38 Planning permissions are in place to support further growth at the Airport which would improve the quality of facilities enabling the airport to handle up to three million passengers a year, as well as higher levels of freight through the creation of a new cargo and maintenance village.
- 8.1.39 Proposals for improving rail infrastructure at the airport are included in Phase 1 of the Tees Valley Metro proposals. Priorities will be to improve rail integration with the main terminal buildings and promote greater use of the airport railway station to provide regular train connections with Bank Top Station and the sub region. Bus service improvements to Darlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Durham City will also be promoted. Improvements to the A66 around Darlington would improve surface access to the Airport.

Core Strategy Policy: CS1, CS2, CS3, CS4, CS16

8.2 FUTURE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

Context

8.2.1 Utilities provision is an essential element of Darlington’s infrastructure network, helping to ensure that all homes and businesses have a good supply of clean water, with the right kind of energy to keep the community warm and safe, whilst providing regular connections to the wider world through modern technology. Waste and waste water should also be disposed of efficiently and safely to protect the environment and residents. These services are provided by a range of public and private organisations as well as the Council.

¹Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, NE Assembly 2008

8.2.2 Enhanced infrastructure provision to accommodate new housing, employment, shops and services should be coordinated with development provision and integrated within the initial design of a scheme¹. Depending on the infrastructure requirement, it can either be provided by the provider itself, its contractor or by the developer, or as a partnership provision.

National Grid

8.2.3 National Grid confirms that a robust transmission system exists for gas and electricity in Darlington. The level of development and the locations proposed in the Core Strategy will not have a significant effect on gas and electricity transmission; additional demand will be met through the existing system.

Gas Provision

8.2.4 Northern Gas Networks have the responsibility for the safe and efficient running of the gas distribution network, including asset management and replacement across the Borough. Maintenance works have been contracted to United Utilities Operations. Overall, the providers confirm that a robust infrastructure network currently exists within the Borough. Network developments to provide supplies from the local gas distribution network are usually as a result of overall demand growth rather than site specific developments. With the exception of any future strategic locations to the east and north west of the Borough (see section 10), the existing gas infrastructure is able to meet the magnitude of growth proposed by the Council.

Electricity Provision

8.2.5 CE Electric UK distributes electricity to homes and businesses across the Borough through a subsidiary company Northern Electric Distribution Ltd. Overall, the providers confirm that a robust electricity distribution network currently exists within the Darlington. Network developments to provide supplies from the primary electricity distribution network are as a result of overall demand growth rather than site specific developments. With the exception of any future strategic locations to the east and north west of the Borough (see section 10), the existing electricity network is able to meet the magnitude of growth proposed by the Council.

Water Supply, Waste Water Distribution and Sewerage Network

8.2.6 The Council has had ongoing discussions with Northumbrian Water Ltd, the provider of the majority of Darlington's water, sewerage and waste water treatment facilities, during the preparation of this Core Strategy. When consulted on the Core Strategy 2008, they noted that even following provision of major investment at Stressholme Waste Water Treatment Works and at Middleton Sewage Treatment Works, Darlington's planned growth to 2021 would be a significant increase which may exceed the proposed capacity of these works.

²Investment plan

8.2.7 NWL operate within a five year Asset Management Plan (AMP)²; the next plan starts in 2010 and was being finalised at the time of writing with Northumbrian Water and other providers preparing bids to Ofwat³. This process will determine the price levels that can be charged to fund investment programmes and also the content of those programmes. At the time of consultation it was difficult for Northumbrian Water to commit to providing additional capacity to serve the strategic locations beyond the current AMP period.

³water industry regulator

8.2.8 During the consultation process for Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2009 NWL stated that in general, growth from infill sites could be accommodated in the existing infrastructure network, with some local reinforcement of the water and sewerage supply network depending on a capacity check. NWL has stated that their consultation responses to the SHLAA should be used to reflect their position for all strategic locations; a detailed growth assessment will need to be undertaken to reflect migration, household size, employment and development to help identify what new infrastructure may be required.

8.2.9 Consultation with Northumbrian Water will continue and all information provided will be used to inform and update this Plan.

Telecommunications

8.2.10 In terms of future capacity, the licence under which BT Openreach operate requires them to provide network capacity upon request only. Each new development will have a telecommunications access network designed to meet its communications needs in the short and long term.

Waste Management

8.2.11 Household waste is collected and disposed of outside the Borough at the John Wade Aycliffe Landfill and Materials Recycling Facility where a new Mechanical Biological Treatment plant is expected to open mid 2010. This new plant makes it easier to remove recyclable material like tins and plastic from household waste for recycling and speed up waste decomposition. It will also allow businesses to dispose of commercial waste at the site, using the same process. All new development should incorporate space for appropriate refuse collection.

Renewable Energy

8.2.12 A planning application was submitted in November 2009 for 10 wind turbines at Moorhouse in the north east part of the Borough. If permitted, this would generate 30MW installed capacity. Subject to a S106 agreement, planning permission exists for 5 turbines at Royal Oak in the north west of the Borough, which would generate an installed capacity of 6.5MW.

8.2.13 Ongoing negotiations through the planning application process will ensure that all new major developments provide at least 10% of their energy supply from renewable, decentralised or low carbon sources¹. Strategic locations will be expected to secure at least 20%⁴. This will be secured via a planning condition. Where it is not feasible to incorporate provision on site a S106 agreement will be used to secure contributions to a carbon management fund; developers will be expected to make an appropriate financial contribution to help provide off site provision to improve energy efficiency for existing dwellings in the area.

⁴Darlington Renewable and Low Carbon Study, Entec 2009

- 8.2.14 Information on future development of, and demand for renewable and decentralised or low carbon technologies will be discussed with infrastructure providers and used to update and inform this Plan.

Flood Management

- 8.2.15 The Environment Agency confirms that no new flood defence schemes are planned in Darlington within their current investment period to 2012. Maintenance of existing flood defences will be ongoing and this will not affect the current level of flood protection in the Borough.

8.3 HERITAGE

- 8.3.1 The Borough's listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments will continue to be protected through national legislation, whilst buildings, their settings and features of historic and archaeological local importance will be protected at a local level through Conservation Areas.
- 8.3.2 Conservation Area Character Appraisals exist for seven of the Borough's Conservation Areas. Their guidance, as well as those contained within forthcoming appraisals, will help guide negotiations in relation to appropriate development within a Conservation Area. The Appraisal for the Town Centre is currently being consulted upon with stakeholders and the wider community. Once adopted this will inform development proposals within the Town Centre. Funding has been secured to implement a Conservation Management Plan for the proposed Parkgate Conservation Area.
- 8.3.3 More detailed changes that affect the character or appearance of a listed building or a conservation area will be considered through the planning application process, and are likely to require Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area consent respectively. Where a proposal might affect a scheduled ancient monument, above or below ground, written consent must be obtained from the Government before any work can begin.
- 8.3.4 In the long term locally important buildings, features and landmarks may be placed on the local list; providing local protection. Similarly buildings that are locally important but are not in good condition may be placed on the local 'at risk' register, as being priorities for improvement either through investment, redevelopment or reuse.

9.0 FUTURE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Creating sustainable communities will help ensure that the social needs and aspirations of the community are addressed locally; health and mental well being care will be provided, educational needs and aspirations for children, young people and adults will be provided whilst provision will be made to help ensure that everyone has a decent, safe, sustainable affordable place to live.

9.2 HEALTH CARE PROVISION

9.2.1 Darlington has a range of healthcare services; strategic facilities will continue to be provided and appropriately enhanced at Darlington Memorial Hospital, West Park Hospital and Darlington's Walk In Centre. Health care will continue to be provided locally by the Borough's GP's, dentists, pharmacies and optometrists. Equality of access to these services will help reduce the health inequalities that are evident across the Borough; efforts will be made to improve provision where there is an identified need.

9.2.2 The Borough's healthcare needs will continue to be provided by a range of separate but complementary organisations including County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust and Darlington PCT.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

9.2.3 In September 2009 the Trust committed to investing £26m into Darlington Memorial Hospital; part of this funding will be used for essential works to renew the hospital's primary engineering infrastructure, including a new Energy Centre. Work is expected to be completed in May 2012.

9.2.4 The Trust will continue to be consulted as part of the Core Strategy consultation process. Any information provided will be used to inform and update this Plan.

Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust

9.2.5 The Trust has been contacted for future infrastructure requirements. When this information becomes available it will be used to inform and update this Plan.

NHS County Durham PCT

9.2.6 The Trust have stated that a comprehensive needs assessment will be undertaken in Darlington to ensure that access to health care services are equitable across the town. Consultation will continue with the PCT; all new information will be used to inform and update this Plan.

9.3 EARLY YEARS PROVISION

9.3.1 Providing access to an holistic, inclusive, flexible, early years and childcare service¹, accompanied by parent and family support that responds to the needs of families in each locality will ensure each child has a good start to life, improves their achievements and reduces the inequalities between them. The continued availability of this support network through a child's life strengthens provision in a coordinated, integrated manner, tailored to meet the community's needs.

9.3.2 The Early Years Outcome duties² require the Council to narrow the gap between children. Darlington has an identified unmet demand for after school and holiday clubs/activities, especially for children over 8 years old; and unmet demand for childcare for disabled children³. To help address these local priorities various funding streams will be used to help strengthen and shape the childcare market to meet Darlington's local needs.

Early Years Capital Funding

9.3.3 Darlington has been allocated £1,319,520 Early Years Capital Grant⁴ (2008-11), to be used to improve the quality of, and access to, Private, Voluntary and Independent early

Core Strategy Policy:
CS1, CS2, CS4

Core Strategy Policy:
CS1, CS2, CS4, CS17,
CS18

¹including out of school
and holiday activities for
young people up to the
age of 14 years/17 years
for disabled young people

²Government requirement

³Childcare Sufficiency
Assessment, DBC, 2007
Early Years and
Childcare Strategy, DBC,
2008

⁴Government funding

⁵government expects the majority of this capital to be used in the Private, Voluntary and Independent sectors, but spending on the maintained sector is not precluded

⁶children are eligible for 5 free sessions from the term after their third birthday until they start school at private day nursery, playgroup or independent school registered with the Darlington Sure Start Partnership.

⁷in the 30% most disadvantaged super output areas nationally, 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation

⁸Skerne Park, Maidendale, McNay Street with an 'outreach' at Red Hall, Mount Pleasant and Dodmire

⁹DCSF

¹⁰Government capital fund

years and childcare settings⁵ so that all children can access a range of quality services and benefit fully from them. Government priorities for this grant are:

- to improve the quality of the early years learning environment to support the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly improving outdoor play, physical activities and ICT resources;
- to ensure all children, including disabled children are able to access provision; and
- to enable Private, Voluntary and Independent providers to deliver the extension to the free offer⁶ for 3 and 4 year olds to 15 hours by September 2010 and 25 hours by September 2011, and to do so flexibly.

9.3.4 Settings in Darlington were invited to submit a bid for funding; 115 settings submitted bids, 86 were approved. Allocations range from £1,000 to £30,000. Each childcare setting will also be provided with Resource Boxes to support the play and learning development of children, including for outdoor, ICT and indoor resources.

Darlington’s Children’s Centres, Phase 3, 2008-2011

9.3.5 The DCSF has released £789,148 further capital funding (2008-11) (Phase 3) so that the Council can ensure that all children under 5 and their families have access to Children’s Centre services should they wish to do so.

9.3.6 Children’s Centre services developed in Phase 1 (2004-06) and Phase 2 (2006-08) were to be accessible to the most disadvantaged areas of the Borough⁷. By the end of Phase 2 Darlington had five main Children’s Centres⁸, another main Children’s Centre serving less disadvantaged areas is in development in the Haughton area. By the end of Phase 3 these six Children’s Centres will ‘reach’ a total of 5,605 pre-school children in the Borough. The remaining 645 pre-school children resident in the more advantaged areas of the Borough should be covered by Phase 3.

9.3.7 Phase 3 Centres ‘will offer a less intensive level of support than Phase 1 and Phase 2 Centres’⁹. Overall requirements are:

- better, integrated access, with accessible services delivered through the main Children’s Centre;
- Provision of a focal point for parents, with staff able to offer information and advice to families about services which are relevant and appropriate for local families.

9.3.8 In Phase 3 the Council has greater flexibility to decide what services should be provided; centres are not required to provide integrated early learning and full day care, their opening hours can be flexible and services should meet local needs. Reflecting this no major new build will occur in Darlington in Phase 3. Existing Children’s Centres will be enhanced; refurbishment or extension will enable their ‘reach’ to be extended. A new ‘West End’ Centre with a main base at George Dent Nursery School will be provided to ‘reach’ the remaining 645 children and their families.

Co-Location Fund

9.3.9 Heathfield School, Hurworth Primary School, Dodmire School and Borough Road Nursery successfully submitted a bid, through the Council, with the support of The Children’s Trust to the Co-Location Fund¹⁰, to create an Integrated Centre for Well Being at a re-modelled Heathfield Primary School. Three Community Well-Being hubs will be provided at the other three schools sharing facilities with statutory, voluntary and commercial partners.

9.3.10 Together these partners will provide a programme of integrated solutions so health, social care, early years, education, voluntary sector and mental health staff can co-work to improve access, service delivery and inclusion for children and their families in this part of the Borough.

9.3.11 The Well-Being Centre will include programme rooms, parent and child gymnasium, specialist education facilities including a Nurture Room, specialist SEN facilities, an information library, specialist disability provision for ‘after school care’ and facilities to

support Extended Services. Community hubs will provide programme rooms, specialist education facilities including a Nurture Room, childcare and crèche facilities, after school care targeting children with disabilities and their families, hot desk facilities and a Well-Being clinic area.

9.3.12 £2.725m has been sought from the Co-Location Fund and will be paid to the Council as per the fund's requirements. £4,550,000 has been committed via the Council's Primary Capital Programme and the schools Devolved Funding Capital, with the Council contributing the land value. Ongoing revenue funding of the project has been committed through NHS Darlington PCT and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in excess of £150,000 a year for a sustainable period. The bid committed the project to be completed by September 2010.

¹¹ approx £250,000

Core Strategy Policy: CS1, CS2, CS4, CS18

9.4 SCHOOL EDUCATION

9.4.1 A child's education is vital to ensuring that all children and young people have a good start in life, have aspirations that can be met and can go on to have fulfilling lives. Enjoying a wide ranging curriculum within a quality school environment, within an acceptable class size, close to home helps ensure all aspirations can be achieved.

Condition of Primary Schools: Primary Capital Programme (PCP)

9.4.2 Following significant investment, high quality environments exist at many of the Borough's primary schools to meet modern curriculum needs. In line with national aspirations, Darlington's Primary Capital Programme¹ focuses on addressing the ongoing condition and suitability of schools in a fair and equitable manner; strategic investments can be made in the primary school building stock to reflect the schools with greatest need. As a small LEA it is presumed that Darlington will not receive significant funding allocations in the future so this approach will provide an opportunity to review the priorities at each school and address projects that can be funded in the latter part of the plan period.

¹DCSF funding to support significant capital investment to remodel and refurbish primary schools

9.4.3 The first wave of funding (2009-11) aims to support significant capital investment to remodel and refurbish up to 17 primary schools across Darlington to provide sufficient school places for those 'in line'² for primary school education (see Appendix 5). To enable the PCP to deliver significant outcomes for children and to support as many projects as possible, the initial Government allocation has been supported by additional funds. Each school directly receives Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) funding³ to support them in addressing the priority capital needs of the educational built environment. Schools can decide how to spend this funding, but are required to prioritise investment in line with Government and LEA priorities. Overall, approx £12.544m is available to support the PCP process to 2011. A summary is set out below:

²children who naturally require a primary school place. Does not include children from new housing developments

³annual government grant allocated to each school, based on school type and pupil numbers. Can be drawn down up to three years in advance to enable larger projects to be funded

| Funding Source | 2009-10 (£000's) | 2010-11 (£000's) | TOTAL |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| PCP Allocation | £3000 | £5378 | £8,378 |
| Modernisation ⁴ | £600 | £600 | £1200 |
| Basic Need ⁵ | £773 | £773 | £1546 |
| Devolved Formula Capital | £710 | £710 | £1420 |
| TOTAL | £5083 | £7461 | £12,544 |

⁴government funding allocated to LEA based on number and type of schools and total pupil numbers for larger scale capital works ⁵allocated to meet required basic need of additional number of school places

Sufficiency of Primary School Pupil Places

9.4.4 The PCP will continue to be used to create spaces for pupils 'in line' for current places². But over the last 4 years the Borough has experienced an unpredicted increase in birth rates, large amounts of immigration and families moving into the Borough's new housing developments. This has generated an immediate need for at least an extra 300 primary school places; the LEA envisage that the impact of future housing development will continue to create a need for investment in primary school pupil places.

9.4.5 The supply of school places will be a key priority over the next 5 years. The LEA has no other funding sources available so it is anticipated that developers will be expected to

address the impact new housing development will have on school places via a S106 agreement. Education requirements for the strategic locations are in section 11.

Condition of Secondary Schools

9.4.6 Darlington’s seven secondary schools reflect the diversity of its population in terms of aspiration, achievement, healthy lifestyles and experiences but also reflect the disparity in outcomes for young people across the Borough. Significant investment has been made at four of Darlington’s secondary schools⁶ in recent years to create quality, modern teaching and learning environments. However, at the three remaining schools; Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield, facilities fall short of those required; their asset management plans identify a need for major renewal:

⁶Hummersknott, Carmel RC, St Aidan’s Academy and Haughton Education Village

| Secondary Schools lacking investment | |
|---|--|
| Name of school | Proposed works |
| Branksome Comprehensive | Major remodelling and new build on existing site to include specialist facilities and additional community facilities. Reduce roll numbers from 900 to 750. |
| Hurworth School, Maths & Computing College | Major remodelling and new build of school on existing site, to include training facility and Maths /ICT facility which will be shared with the community. Capacity to remain at 652. |
| Longfield School | Major remodelling and new build of school on existing site, with improvements to sports facilities to be used by the community. Capacity to remain at 900. |
| Secondary schools with investment | |
| Carmel R C College | Improve ICT facilities and facilitate work on engineering diploma. |
| St Aidan’s C of E Academy | Following completion nothing further required. |
| Haughton Education Village | Further ICT required. |
| Hummersknott School and Language College | Further ICT and community access required. |

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

9.4.7 Building Schools for the Future⁷ provides an opportunity to address condition and suitability issues; through £57.6m funding, modern, innovative, learning environments will be created at Branksome, Longfield and Hurworth. The three schools will either be rebuilt or have a full refurbishment. All of Darlington’s secondary schools will benefit from improved ICT facilities. Work is expected to begin in 2010/2011 academic year.

⁷Government funding programme

9.4.9 BSF will also enable the enhancement of the extended schools and community based facilities at each of the three schools; facilities should be made available to the wider community outside of school hours for sports, recreation and community activities.

Sufficiency of Secondary School Places

9.4.10 Unlike primary schools, secondary schools have a 4.85% surplus of places, although these are in two schools, St Aidan’s and Branksome. Population trends indicate that secondary entry numbers will reach their lowest level in 2013/14 then increase by 20% by 2019. As births are projected to rise further from current levels, expectations are that secondary entries will continue to rise, post 2019. This supports the case for maintaining the existing seven secondary schools, which are well located throughout the Borough, with a slight reduction in capacity at Branksome, to meet needs in that locality. But, if population growth and in migration continue, particularly at primary school level, an additional 500 secondary school places may be required in the long term.

Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS2

9.5 FURTHER EDUCATION

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

9.5.1 Queen Elizabeth is a popular sixth form college, guaranteeing a place for all applicants who live in the Borough; the college hopes to continue this policy in the future. In the last 5 years the College has made the most of its site; improved facilities and educational services have been provided to accommodate a growing number of students. But accommodation pressures mean that there is currently a limit on the number of new places offered each year to students from outside the Borough.

9.5.2 New development in the Borough alongside a growing population could potentially increase the number of students by up to 100 each year, equivalent to an increase in total college 16-19 roll of 180 (10% growth). A proportionate increase in college space would need to be provided to accommodate an increase in the numbers of students wishing to study at the college.

9.5.3 The College are actively seeking to redevelop and expand their site to accommodate any increase in numbers but recent funding opportunities have proved unsuccessful. The national capital works arrangements for sixth form colleges are uncertain¹. Under any new arrangements the College would expect a contribution for new accommodation from the body who takes over responsibility for Sixth Form College capital. Other opportunities to bid for capital funding in the future will be secured where appropriate. Provided recurrent funding was guaranteed for extra students then provision of some additional accommodation could partly be funded by the college.

¹new Machinery of Government arrangements may transfer sixth form colleges to the Council or another body

Darlington College

9.5.4 Since relocating to Central Park, Darlington College has continued to expand the range of courses offered, particularly for Further and Higher Education. The future development of Teesside University adjoining the College will help deliver a step change in higher education activity within Darlington, providing a quality higher education learning environment.

9.5.5 The College has been contacted for future infrastructure requirements. When this information becomes available it will be used to inform and update this Plan.

Teesside University

9.5.6 Planning permission has been approved, subject to a S106 agreement, for a new university building to be developed next to Darlington College. The new building will be a high quality, five storey undergraduate and postgraduate teaching facility¹; a range of courses will be offered², a suite of programmes will also be tailored to employers in the public and private sectors³. The range of Higher Education provision will expand as the demand from different markets grows.

¹approx 4,000 sq m gross floor area

²leadership and management, health and social care, media and journalism and arts and humanities courses

9.5.7 The University development is estimated to cost around £13m; the University will fund £10.5m, One NorthEast will fund up to £2m and the Council will contribute £500,000. Work is expected to start in April 2010 and be completed by September 2011.

³business and financial services, education, engineering, logistics and hospitality sectors

9.6 LIBRARIES

9.6.1 The Library Service has been involved with the preparation of this LIP. When their future infrastructure requirements are known then it will be used to inform and update this Plan.

9.7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

9.7.1 Affordable housing is a significant issue for Darlington. Despite 7500 units being in the control of the Council or Registered Social Landlords, even by assuming lower quartile house prices 20% below the 2007 peak, there would be a shortfall of 626 dwellings per annum in the Borough¹, the second largest affordable housing shortfall in the Tees Valley. This exceeds the Borough's annual requirement for new housing set out in the RSS², but

Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS2, CS4, CS11, CS12

¹Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment

²Regional Spatial Strategy, NE Assembly, 2008

this does not take account of the contribution the private rented sector makes to meeting affordable housing needs.

9.7.2 A range of sizes and types of new affordable housing are needed in different locations, to address the differing needs in the community. Two bed homes and Lifetime Homes and needed for older people and those with physical disabilities, 2 bed homes are required for first time buyers and young people and 3-4 bed family homes are required for those on low or moderate incomes not able to access accommodation locally. Unmet affordable housing needs exist across the Borough, but the problem is most acute in the rural areas, and in the south-west of the urban area.

9.7.3 Pressure on the affordable housing stock is predicted to remain at a very high level in the short-medium term because of lower rates of turnover and vacancy in the social rented stock and reduced levels of mortgage lending to those that could not otherwise afford to buy a home. The Borough's 3144 private rented sector³ dwellings are anticipated to continue to meet some of the unmet affordable housing needs, but the quality of some of this stock may limit its long term contribution.

³Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy, DBC 2008

9.7.4 Traditionally a range of affordable housing provision has been promoted in Darlington including social rented accommodation⁴ and intermediate housing⁵. But in the current economic climate, affordable housing is out of the reach of many residents. A sustained higher demand for intermediate affordable housing is expected. It is likely affordable housing provision will continue to change to reflect economic conditions in future.

⁴owned and managed by a RSL/Council, at a rent which those on lower incomes in housing need can afford

⁵The definition of intermediate affordable housing is given in Annex B of PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2006).

Tees Valley Growth Point

9.7.5 Darlington has been successful in securing Tees Valley Growth Point funding from the Government's Community Infrastructure Fund 2 (2009-11). This commits the Borough to accelerating housing growth to 2016. Coordinated by Tees Valley Unlimited, the funding will help bring forward housing sites requiring infrastructure investment to make them viable, as well as enabling intervention in the private and affordable housing market for previously identified housing sites that have either been suspended or delayed by the economic downturn.

9.7.6 In Darlington, sites which had been planned to incorporate housing but had not yet started, but with the injection of funding, would have the potential to deliver new housing, including affordable housing were identified at Central Park and the Former Beaumont Hill School sites. Sites must start within a two year period. Darlington has been allocated £849,000 (2009-11), split into £447,000 (2009/10) and £402,000 (2010/11) to help deliver housing on these sites.

Central Park

9.7.7 Central Park's development agreement was signed in April 2009 but because of the economic downturn, falling house prices and reduced developer returns, development has not commenced. Housing is one part of the overall scheme, but, the scheme will not be viable unless housing development takes place. The Growth Point funding will enable housing to proceed, including the affordable housing provision, in partnership with Nomad Housing and Yuill Homes.

Former Beaumont Hill School sites

9.7.8 Approximately half of the Tees Valley growth funding was allocated to remove barriers to development at the Beaumont Hill sites. Further funding has also been secured for housing delivery at these sites from the Homes and Communities Agency Kickstart Round 2 programme and Fabrick Housing's borrowing. The scheme is expected to start on site in March 2010 and funding is conditional on all the units being built out by 2011.

9.7.9 Fabrick Housing, a registered provider have developed an innovative housing scheme of approximately 112, 2 and 3 bedroomed properties; 32 will be new affordable units for rent and the remainder units for sale on all 3 sites. The remaining properties would be for sale,

⁶rented on short-term leases at affordable rents, so tenants can save up for deposits and eventually buy the properties without the need to move to enter the "owner occupied" sector and the cost

but all sale units within the scheme can initially be let to customers who eventually can afford to buy, under the Intermediate Rental Model⁶. Initial nomination rights will need to be agreed between the Council and Fabrick. The scheme will also provide accessible housing to meet the needs of some physically disabled people, reducing the budgetary pressure on Disabled Facilities Grants.

New Build Council Housing

- 9.7.10 The Council recently secured £3m Home and Communities Agency Local Authority New Build funding to support the development of up to 65 affordable properties to rent across four Council owned sites to increase the net affordable housing provision in the Borough:
- surplus land adjacent to Linden Court;
 - surplus land adjacent to Dinsdale Court;
 - part of the old Springfield school site; and
 - former garage site at Richmond Close.

9.7.11 The overall development costs total £6.5m, the additional £3.5m finance will be borrowed through the Council’s annual Housing Capital Investment Programme. The Council will be able to charge ‘market rents’⁷ to finance the Council borrowing of the capital works.

⁷slightly higher than existing Council rents

9.7.12 The Council will design and build the new affordable rented accommodation and the completed units will form part of the Council’s portfolio of existing dwellings. All new affordable housing dwellings must be completed no later than March 2011. A condition of the funding is that any new affordable properties will be eligible for ‘Right to Buy’ but that 100% of any capital receipts can be retained by the Council and reinvested to deliver more affordable housing locally.

Affordable housing provided as part of new development

- 9.7.13 The Council will continue its policy of securing affordable housing provision and/or lifetime homes on all new housing developments of 15 or more dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more within the urban area and 5 dwellings (0.2ha) or more outside to achieve a 80%:20% social rented. On site provision is preferred as part of the development scheme but exceptionally where this is not feasible equivalent off site provision or a financial contribution towards provision elsewhere will be secured through a S106 agreement. Three committed schemes, where affordable housing has been agreed as part of private developments are:
- 13 units at West Park
 - 20 units at Snipe House Farm
 - A capital sum from the developers of Hopetown Studios to contribute to affordable housing in the locality

Financial Assistance Policy

9.7.14 Although private sector housing stock contributes significantly to the Borough’s affordable housing stock, much is poor quality. Significant inward investment is required to rejuvenate, remodel or improve poor private sector housing stock. A number of options are being assessed to maximise inward investment while recognising that the Borough is not identified as a priority for private sector housing market renewal⁸ within the sub-region (2008-11).

⁸does not exhibit such extreme deprivation to qualify for many traditional funding opportunities

9.7.15 Unfortunately the change in focus towards the increased supply of affordable housing has reduced funding allocations for private sector housing from the Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP3) 2008-11⁹. Four priority wards have been identified³ at Northgate, North Road, Central and Bank Top where private sector rented housing shows higher levels of non-decency than the remainder of the Borough. The Council’s Financial Assistance Policy prioritises these areas and aims to help homeowners improve, repair and adapt their homes and encourage private landlords to bring empty properties back into use through:

⁹Capital grant through the Regional Housing Board for private sector investment for the Financial Assistance Policy

- Capital and Interest Repayment Loans (discretionary)
- Decent Homes Assistance Grants (discretionary)
- Disabled Facilities Grants (mandatory)

- Disabled Facilities Grant Top Up Loans (mandatory)

9.7.16 The availability of discretionary loans and grants are subject to the availability of funding, which may vary on an annual basis depending upon funding allocation. To complement these grants a number of innovative options to maximise inward investment outside of the many traditional funding opportunities are being sought including recycling Section 106 commuted sums, 'pooling' commuted sums or other 'off-site' affordable housing provision to assist in improving or regenerating poor private sector housing stock. A new Regional Loans product will be available from April 2010 but financial assistance will continue to be targeted at the wards exhibiting the highest levels of non-decency. Grant assistance will be re-introduced for qualifying households who are unable to finance loan assistance but still exhibit non-decency within their homes.

9.7.17 A private sector housing stock condition survey⁹ has provided updated information which will be a key driver in Darlington seeking funding for private sector renewal in 2011-12 within the sub-region.

¹⁰DBC, 2009

Planned Repairs to Council owned housing

9.7.18 The Council makes ongoing improvements to its housing stock from a range of funding pots and other grants when they become available. The nature of works varies each year to respond to local needs; they can either be to individual properties, groups of houses or particular parts of the Borough. In the long term, maintaining Council housing involves:

| Scheme | Over the next 5 years | Over 30 years |
|--|-----------------------|---------------|
| works to ensure properties meet the 'Decent Homes Standard' | £27.300m | £104.700m |
| maintaining the external fabric of Council houses | £9.800m | £16.300m |
| tackling unfitness in private sector housing and providing disabled facilities | £7.500m | £34.300m |
| improving the environment of estates and communities | £2.200m | £9.500m |
| delivering disabled adaptations for council tenants | £1.400m | £8.300m |

Core Strategy policies: CS2, CS13

9.8 ACCOMMODATING TRAVELLER GROUPS

9.8.1 Indications are that the growth in the Gypsy and Traveller population will not slow and at a local level there is a need for additional sites in addition to the existing Council and private sites. Further work will be undertaken to identify the additional number of pitches required in the Borough.

9.8.2 Where appropriate the Council will, with partners bid for grants and funding programmes for sites with planning permission for the development of new sites and for the refurbishment of existing, including the remodelling and extension of existing sites.

Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS2

9.9 ADULT AND CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE FACILITIES

9.9.1 Through the integration of health and social care services, Darlington's adult social care supports people so they can live safely and independently within their own homes. To do this a range of facilities like Registered Care Homes, Intermediate Care facilities, day care and mental health services will continue to be provided by the Council and its partners at appropriate locations across the Borough. Equally important will be the continued provision of health and social care facilities for children and young people.

9.9.2 Adult Services have been involved in the preparation of this Plan. Ongoing consultation will continue; all new information will be used to inform and update this LIP.

Core Strategy policies:
CS1, CS2, CS4, CS18

9.10 SPORT AND RECREATION

9.10.1 Maintaining and enhancing the Borough’s supply of playing pitches and sports facilities, including quality, quantity and accessibility improvements where necessary are essential to help encourage the community actively participate in sport and recreation, and help reduce health inequalities across the Borough.

Playing Pitches

¹Playing Pitch Strategy,
PMP 2009

9.10.2 There is an identified deficit of playing pitches in the Borough¹, some a temporary loss through new development. Two pitches have been lost as a result of St Aidan’s Academy at Hundens Park and a further two will be lost through the new University development adjoining Darlington College, which is expected to start development in September 2010. Any further loss of playing pitches will generally not be acceptable; in exceptional circumstances any pitches lost, will need to be replaced elsewhere in the Borough and be operational by the time development commences.

Blackwell Meadows

²one full-sized and one
training pitch

9.10.3 The proposed Teesside University development on land to the rear of Darlington College will mean the loss of 2 football pitches² which will need to be relocated elsewhere in the Borough. Land adjacent to Darlington Rugby Club at Blackwell Meadows has been identified as the best solution to replace these playing fields; the area has the further potential to contribute to an additional longer term provision of pitches including a commitment to replace playing fields lost as a consequence of the St Aidan’s Academy development. An alternative solution might be the use of Council land to the north of the Darlington Football club off Neasham Road.

9.10.4 Sport England has confirmed that playing field replacement at Blackwell Meadows has the potential to satisfy both the land lost at the College and at St Aidan’s Academy. There is potential to create five pitches on this land and add to the quantity of playing fields across the Borough. The Rugby Club indicates that they are willing to explore the creation of additional playing pitches adjacent to their site and explore extensions to their existing changing and car parking facilities to enable the new playing fields to be properly serviced. At this stage this has not been fully investigated and costed.

9.10.5 If the Rugby Club are unable to agree to the facilities in its ownership being extended then the parking and changing provision could be provided on Council owned land immediately adjacent to the Rugby Club.

9.10.6 The College will cover the development costs of replacing its lost playing fields, the provision of any ancillary accommodation and will establish a maintenance and management regime. The College are currently investigating funding sources for this work.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

9.10.7 Building Schools for the Future provides an opportunity to create innovative, new learning environments, including for sport and recreation curriculum needs. The added benefit of improving sports and recreation provision at Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield Schools is that it will their enhance the extended schools and community based facilities. This will ensure that modern facilities are available to the wider community outside of the school day, year round for a range of sports and recreation activities.

Core Strategy policies:
CS1, CS2, CS18

9.11 COMMUNITY CENTRES/VILLAGE HALLS

9.11.1 The Council is currently undertaking a review of community buildings. Once the findings of this review are available, the information will be used to update and inform this Plan.

Core Strategy policies:
CS1

9.12 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Durham Constabulary
County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service

- 9.12.1 Both service providers have been contacted for future infrastructure requirements. When this information becomes available it will be used to inform and update this Plan.

Darlington and Durham North East Ambulance NHS Trust

- 9.12.2 The Trust state that it is difficult to predict increases in demand for its ambulance services but indicate that the level of growth proposed may have an impact in the long term. Any funding for resources to mitigate any potential impacts would be made to Darlington PCT to maintain performance targets. The Trust has no plans to relocate the existing ambulance station in Darlington or establish a new one before 2012¹.

¹the end of their planning period

- 9.12.3 The Trust will continue to be consulted on this Plan, any further information they provide will be used to inform and update this LIP.

Core Strategy policies: CS2, CS4, CS14, CS15, CS16, CS17

10.0 FUTURE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 10.1 Darlington’s green infrastructure network provides a network of complementary spaces, all have value; some are important as national and local sites for biodiversity and priority habitats and species, others have sport, recreation and leisure value for formal and informal pursuits. Some have national and local heritage value as spaces themselves or as settings for the built environment, whilst others provide important breathing space within the built up area for the community to relax.
- 10.2 Reflecting its importance as a key asset in the Borough, the existing green infrastructure network will be protected and improved, appropriately. Opportunities to create new spaces as part of new development like the green corridor and nature reserve next to the Eastern Transport Corridor will reinforce the extent of the green infrastructure network across the Borough, improving its accessibility to all. Priority habitats and species will be a requirement in all new development; even small scale development like bird boxes can improve the quality and extent of the Borough’s biodiversity provision, providing links to reinforce species movement.

10.2 OPEN SPACE PROVISION Playbuilder scheme

¹DCSF funding

- 10.2.1 The Council has received a capital grant from the Playbuilder scheme¹ to create challenging environments for children to play, learn about assessing risk, use their imaginations and learn about the natural world. The landscape should be designed to become an integral part of the play experience alongside more traditional play equipment like slides and swings. £1,128,558 has been allocated to develop eleven sites a year; £530,535 (2009-2010) and £598,023 (2010-2011). For most schemes the Playbuilder funding will be used to improve existing play facilities or will be part of a bigger programme of improvements for the individual sites. As part of the programme, two new sites will be developed at West Park and in the Springfield area.
- 10.2.2 Groundwork Durham and Darlington will deliver the design, project management and community engagement for the Playbuilder projects. Year 1 sites are:

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| West Park | North Park |
| Albert Hill | Cocker Beck |
| Eastbourne Park | Bensham Park |
| Lascelles | Bushel Hill Park |
| Eastbourne Sports Complex | Green Park |
| | Red Hall |

Other play areas are being developed at Grass Street, The Denes and Broken Scar, but are not included in the Playbuilder scheme.
- 10.2.3 Some work has already taken place on developing and designing the Year 1 sites. Work is expected to commence on the rest of the Year 2 sites in Spring 2010, with implementation required prior to March 2011 at:

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| North Lodge Park | Beech Wood |
| Tommy Crooks Park | South Park |
| Darrowby Drive | Hurworth |
| Springfield, Green Lane | Middleton St George |
| Auckland Oval | Springfield area |
| Fryers Crescent | |
- 10.2.4 The Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of 21 of these sites; Middleton St George Parish Council will take responsibility for the maintenance of the improvements to their existing play area. As the majority of the Council sites are for replacement or improvement to existing play areas, it is estimated that the maintenance costs of £10,000 a year can be contained within existing budgets.

Brinkburn Denes

- 10.2.5 Parks for People is a Heritage Lottery Fund programme to help regenerate public parks of national, regional or local heritage value; Brinkburn Denes has been identified as an appropriate location for future investment. A £45,200 Development Grant has been secured for physical works to improve the park and help the Council bid for an additional £878,727 to help increase the use of the park, conserve and improve its heritage value and improve management and maintenance. Successful bids will be notified in March; if successful work is expected to start in summer 2010 on physical improvements to paths and bridges, followed by environmental improvements to enhance biodiversity provision in the park.

Feethams Public Square

- 10.2.6 The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) are relocating their offices from Mowden Hall to the Feethams area of Darlington. The move provides an opportunity to create a new multifunctional public square in the mid level of the current Beaumont Street car park. The proposal would also improve pedestrian links to and through the site to the Market Square, to Houndgate and Sainsbury's and would enhance the overall attractiveness of the Beaumont Street area making it a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 10.2.7 A specific requirement of the DCSF relocation was the provision of a square that would link with their building. It is anticipated that the new public square and the other required public realm works would be funded via the land receipt from the DCSF development. An initial budget framework to design and construct the public square by the Council is £426,753. Estimated maintenance costs are £7,000 a year and will be funded from the Council's revenue budget. The DCSF are funding highways improvements up to the value of £15,000.

North Lodge Park bandstand

- 10.2.8 The Grade II listed bandstand in North Lodge Park has required refurbishment for some time, but securing funding to undertake the works has proved lengthy. Refurbishment of the bandstand will improve the attractiveness of the overall park environment providing a focal point with the green space. A specification has been developed to align with the total funding package available:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Heritage Lottery Fund | £103,000 |
| Fair Share Trust | £ 17,500 |
| Garfield Weston (Friends) | £ 5,000 |
| Big Lottery Community Spaces | £ 49,500 |
| Darlington Borough Council | £ 41,000 |
| TOTAL | £216,000 |

- 10.2.9 The Council will receive the funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Community Spaces. Funding from Fair Share and Garfield Weston (Friends) is being paid directly to the Friends of North Lodge Park. The ongoing revenue costs for maintenance will be minimal and met from existing Streetscene repairs and maintenance budgets.

10.3 BIODIVERSITY PROVISION

- 10.3.1 Currently much of the management and maintenance of biodiversity provision is from the Council's own resources, approx £120,000 revenue is used to support a programme of physical improvement works on an ongoing basis. Where appropriate other funding sources will be identified to supplement this provision.

Maidendale Nature Reserve

The Council has secured £131,000 from the Reaching Communities Programme for the development of a range of environmental improvements to the Maidendale Nature Reserve to improve biodiversity value. Additional wetland areas will be provided and the path network will be improved to provide more amenable access. The Maidendale Trust, in partnership with the Environment Agency and the Council have employed a full time and a part time ranger to carryout these works. Work must be completed by 2011.

¹Big Lottery Fund

10.3 URBAN FRINGE

Skerningham Countryside Site

- 10.3.1 A long term aspiration of the Council is the continued development and use of land at Skerningham to the north of the urban area as a strategic countryside site, providing multifunctional space for access for recreation and leisure, community forestry and biodiversity provision in close proximity to the urban area. £80,000 has been secured through developer contributions for the creation of species rich grassland at Skerningham to enhance provision of priority habitats in the area. Contributions from development could also lead to improvements to the access path to the community forestry.

10.4 ALLOTMENTS

- 10.4.1 Although Darlington has about 20 allotment plots per 1000 households consistent with national guidelines, all providers have experienced a recent surge in demand, with 466 people currently on the Council's and self managed sites waiting lists. With only 800 plots in total, the Council's provision will not be able to reduce the waiting list very significantly with only between 20 or 30 people leaving their tenancy each year. This indicates an unmet need for additional allotments, and a need to make the most of existing allotment space¹.

Ridgeway allotments

- 10.4.2 Where opportunities arise for low value open space sites to be transferred into more beneficial use it may be possible for additional allotment provision to be created in the Borough. A small site is proposed for land to the rear of houses on The Ridgeway, which has been identified to expand allotment provision in the Harrowgate Hill Ward. Owned by the Council, the land has little positive use but has the capacity to provide approximately eight half plots. Glebe Road Allotments Association are intending to look at their waiting list and identify potential tenants.
- 10.4.3 The various costs of the appropriation procedure, unlikely to exceed £1,200, will be shared between the Council and the Association. Glebe Road Allotment Association will be offered the opportunity to manage the new site as an extension of their site. There are also two new community allotments projects in development in the Borough.
- 10.4.4 Where appropriate, new provision could be secured on a new development site, like at Lingfield Point or the developer may provide a financial contribution to support provision elsewhere. To allow more people to have allotments provision of half plots will be encouraged in appropriate locations.
- 10.4.5 It may be possible to transfer the management of some allotment sites to a self managed association; this provides increased opportunities for securing external funding not available to the Council for improvements to allotment sites. Poor drainage may lead to some parts of allotment sites being unsuitable and not let; funding could help reduce this.

10.5 PROVISION THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 10.5.1 To provide valuable support to these resources, planning obligations are used to mitigate the impact new development can have on the Borough's green infrastructure network. All developments of 5 or more dwellings are required to provide open space as part of the new development¹. The type, scale and nature of the provision will reflect needs in the locality. Provision can range from the new park provided at West Park to the smaller scale where developers either provide open space on site, on suitable land off site or provide a financial contribution to provide or improve open space in the locality.

- 10.5.2 Developments of 10 or more dwellings are required to make a contribution to the provision or enhancement of equipped children's playgrounds in the locality³ like at Middleton St George. Developers are also required to provide a financial contribution towards 10 years maintenance of play equipment and any areas of open spaces within the development that they want the Council to adopt.

¹Draft Allotments 2010 Darlington Strategy

¹Open Space Strategy, DBC 2007

²SPG Commuted sums from new housing to enhance existing equipped play areas, DBC 2001

10.4.3 Priority habitats can be achieved through good design, with features such as green roofs, living walls, bat and bird boxes and sustainable drainage incorporated as part of new developments of 5 or more dwellings⁴. Where this is not feasible a financial contribution may be sought to provide, enhance or maintain spaces in the locality.

³Design of New Development SPD, DBC 2001

10.4.4 As opportunities arise open spaces that are of low value and are not required to meet any identified needs will be considered for disposal, with any money raised from sales helping to support the management and maintenance of remaining valued open spaces.

10.6 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY/GREEN LEISURE ROUTES

10.6.1 Darlington's extensive rights of way network has a dual purpose; it provides sustainable access around the Borough for walkers, cyclists and horse riders as well as providing access from the town centre and urban area through the urban fringe to the wider countryside for leisure and recreation.

10.6.2 Whilst it is not possible to provide an extensive list of future rights of way/green leisure route schemes at the moment because of the nature of the funding streams, several schemes are proposed in the short term, through 2LTP and Cycling Demonstration Town funding to improve green leisure routes for cyclists, pedestrians and leisure, linking residential areas to open space and the countryside:

- Improvements to Green Lane, to improve duct and install lighting to form a useful link between Harrowgate Hill and Whinfield on the northern fringe of the urban area; £100,000 Cycling Demonstration Town budget 2010/11
- The Skerne corridor is being opened up as a major corridor into the town centre with funding of £130,000 from the LTP.
- Merrybent Community woodland is a relatively new area of community forestry on the eastern edge of the urban area; access is limited outside the immediate locality. £60,000 has been secured to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists to the countryside away from the road network through the 2LTP/CDT for a new access route to connect an existing right of way and open space with the woodland and the existing bridleway that runs between Coniscliffe Road/Staindrop Road.

Draft Infrastructure Schedule

| Topic | Infrastructure Provision | Delivery Agency | Cost | Funding Sources | Status | Phasing |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---------------------|---|
| Transport Infrastructure | | | | | | |
| North East Smart Ticketing Initiative | Accessible computerised system to enable public transport users to 'pay as you go' | DBC, Arriva, other local bus operators | £10m capital funding 270,000 Euros | NE Regional Funding Allocation BAPTS | Committed | Fully operational by 2013 |
| Bus infrastructure | new bus stops improving existing stops real time information system travel behaviour programme | DBC | Part of £9.14m | ? DFT | Committed | 2013 |
| | Physical works to enable selective vehicle detection equipment at 7 signal controlled junctions throughout the urban area | | £204,000 | DBC | Committed | 2013 |
| Rail services | More long distance high speed services to/from London on ECML | Network Rail National Express | | | Under investigation | |
| | More frequent commuter trains to Leeds and Newcastle on ECML | Network Rail National Express | | | Under investigation | |
| | Increasing train length and seating capacity on the Intercity Express Programme | Network Rail National Express | | | Under investigation | |
| | Investment in Darlington-Saltburn line | Network Rail Train operators | | | Under investigation | 2020 |
| | Lengthening of Middlesbrough trains | Network Rail Train operators | | | Under investigation | |
| Bank Top Station Travel Plan | new cycle parking at main entrances cycle hire scheme smart card operated cycle parking improving ambience of footways on Parkgate Improvements to Pensbury Street back lane by Station entrance Parkgate ramp improvements to footway Neasham Road/Garbutt Square refurbish footbridge Improved access to Garbutt Square car park via new footbridge Direct access to Central Park via pedestrian/cycle bridge across Parkgate Major improvements to Victoria Road and entrance including bus interchange and bus loop Shuttle bus-Parkgate entrance to/from Town Centre | TOC TOC/DBC TOC/DBC DBC/NR DBC TOC/NR DBC LA/TOC/NR LA/TOC/NR DBC DBC/Bus Operator | £20-30,000 £5,000 start up £10,000 Dependent on options identified £20,000 £2M £2-3m £1-2M | TOC/LTP/ERDF/CDT TOC/ERDF/CDT ERDF/CDT LTP/NR LTP/ERDF/Other TOC/NR/LTP TOC/NR Central Park/other | Committed | 2010 2011 2011 2011 2010-2011 2011 2012 |
| Tees Valley | Network Rail's Guide to Railway Investment | Network Rail | £1.25m | Regional Transport | Committed | 2010 |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Metro | Projects feasibility study | | | Board | | |
| | Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New platform at Darlington station; • Relocation of station at Durham Tees Valley Airport; • Refurbished, higher specification trains operating four times an hour between Darlington and Saltburn during the day. | | Estimated £33.9m £800,000 | DFT DBC potentially from 3LTP | Under investigation | 2009-2012 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes to Darlington South Railway Junction; • provision of a two line local platform to the east of the ECML • improvements to Garbutt Square Footbridge | Network Rail National Express | £9.4m | Interim Regional Transport Board | Committed | 2009-2012 |
| | Works to DTVA Station | | £5Mm | | | 2010-2010 |
| | Assessment of car parking options and local transport links | | £80,000 | Single Programme ONE | Committed | 2010 |
| | Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and signalling work, concentrating on the Darlington to Saltburn line; • New stations at Morton Palms, Central Park, Teesside Park and Middlehaven; • Refurbishment of other stations; and • New trains. | | Estimated £60m | Unidentified | | |
| | Phase 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and signalling work; • Refurbishment of stations; and • New trains | | Estimated £130m | Unidentified | | |
| Cycling Infrastructure | Cycling Demonstration Town initiatives | DBC | £500,000 match funding a year | Cycling England | Committed | March 2011 |
| | Workplace Cycle Challenge | DBC, employers | £40,000 | DFT | Committed | March 2010 |
| | SMART card activated cycle store | DBC, LEA, school governing bodies | £30,000 | DFT | Committed | March 2010 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of North Road cycle network • surfaced route along the South Park showfield • Resurfacing Polam Lane • Improvements to Green Lane • Advanced Stop Lines and Priority Crossings for cyclists | DBC | £80,000 £40,000 £110,000 £100,000 £30,000 | LTP CDT LTP CDT LTP | Committed Committed | 2009/2010 2009/2010 2010/2011 2010/2011 Ongoing |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing legal and technical work to complete the strategic cycle route between Albert Road/John Street • Harewood Terrace/Blackwell Lane cycle link, • Great Burdon to Sadberge walking/cycle link • completion of the radial routes/rural routes | | £10-15,000 | CDT | | 2009/2010 |
| | | | £260,000 | LTP to secure CDT match funding | | 2009/2010 |
| | | | £185,000 | | | |
| | | | £328,000 | CDT | | 2009/2010 |
| Highways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major remodelling A66/Yarm Road Junction • Signalisation of A66 Great Burdon and DETC roundabouts • New dual carriageway section of A66 between Yarm Road and Great Burdon | Highways Agency, developers, DBC | | RFA funding request | | ? ? Post 2019 |
| | <p>Key junctions improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North/Whessoe Roads • Cockerton Green • Brinkburn/West Auckland Road • Milbank/Woodland Road <p>Junctions in the Bondgate -Stonebridge section of the inner ring road, including the widening of Freeman's Place</p> | DBC | TOTAL £9.203m £7.983m £1.21m £0.99m | DFT LTP Developer contributions | | End 2013 |
| Car Parking | New multi-storey 800 space short stay car park 'The Oval' shopping centre | Private developer | | | | |
| Utilities Infrastructure | | | | | | |
| | None identified | | | | | |
| Social and community infrastructure | | | | | | |
| Darlington Memorial Hospital | Renew the hospital's primary engineering infrastructure | County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust | £26m | County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust | Committed | 2009-2012 |
| Primary health care | Further health care facilities - Comprehensive needs assessment will be undertaken | Darlington PCT | | | Under Investigation | |
| Early years and childcare settings | Improve the quality of, and access to, Private, Voluntary and Independent early years and childcare settings | DBC | £1,319,520 Early Years Capital Grant 86 settings will receive a grant £1000-£30,000 | DCSF | Committed | 2008-2011 |
| Children's Centres | Ensure that all children under 5 and their families have access to Children's Centres | DBC | £789,148 capital funding | DCSF | | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| | services | | | | | |
| Co-Location Fund | Creation of an Integrated Centre for Well Being and three community hubs | Heathfield School, Hurworth Primary School, Dodmire School and Borough Road Nursery, Children's Trust, LEA, NHS Darlington and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | £2.725m £4,550,000 £250,000 land value £150,000 Ongoing revenue funding | DCSF PCP/DFC DBC NHS Darlington and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | Committed | Sept 2010 |
| Primary Capital Programme | Improvements to condition and suitability of schools | LEA, schools governing bodies | £12.544m | DCSF, Schools governing body, DBC | Committed | 2009-2011 |
| Building Schools for the Future | Create innovative, new learning environments at Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield Schools. Improve ICT at Carmel, Haughton and Hummersknott | LEA, schools governing bodies | £57.6 million | DCSF | Schemes under investigation | Work expected to begin 2010/2011 academic year |
| Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College | Providing sixth form education for a growing number of students | | opportunities have been unsuccessful – awaiting new government arrangements for sixth form colleges | Body who takes over sixth form capital, College | | |
| Teesside University | 5 storey university undergraduate and postgraduate teaching facility | Teesside University | TOTAL £13 m £10.5m up to £2m £500,000 | University One North East DBC | Committed | April 2010 - September 2011. |
| Tees Valley Growth Point | Delivery of housing, including affordable housing at Central Park and Beaumont School Sites | DBC, Registered Provider, developers | £849,000, £447,000 £402,000 | Government Community Infrastructure Fund 2 | Committed | 2009 – 11 2009/10 2010/11 |
| Kickstart programme | Deliver affordable housing at Beaumont School site | DBC, Fabrich Housing Group | £206,000 | HCA Kickstart programme 2 | Committed | Start on site March 2010, built out by 2011 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|--|
| New build Council housing | Development of 65 affordable properties to rent across four Council owned sites | DBC Registered Provider | £3m £3.5m borrowed through the Council's annual Housing Capital Investment Programme | Home and Communities Agency Local Authority New Build funding DBC | Committed | March 2011 |
| Financial assistance policy | improve and maintain healthy and safe living conditions within existing housing stock | DBC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital and Interest Repayment Loans • Decent Homes Assistance Grants • Disabled Facilities Grants • Disabled Facilities Grant Top Up Loans | DBC | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Planned repairs to Council owned housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • works to ensure properties meet the 'Decent Homes Standard': • maintaining the external fabric of Council houses: • tackling unfitness in private sector housing and providing disabled facilities: • improving the environment of estates and communities: • to deliver disabled adaptations for council tenants: | DBC | £104.700m and £27.300m and £16.300m and £9.800m. £34.300m and £7.500m. £9.500m and £2.200m. £8.300m and £1.400m. | Government, DBC, developer contributions | Ongoing | over 30 years & over 5 years |
| Sport and recreation | Provision of Blackwell Meadows for the relocation of at least 2 football pitches | Darlington College | Unknown at this stage | Darlington College | Under investigation | By Sept 2011 |
| Building Schools for the Future | Create innovative, new learning environments including sport and recreation facilities at Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield Schools. | LEA, schools governing bodies | £57.6 million | DCSF | Schemes under investigation | Work expected to begin 2010/2011 academic year |
| Green infrastructure | | | | | | |
| Open space provision | Playbuilder initiative Creation of challenging natural children's play | Groundwork Durham and | £1,128,558 £530, 535 | Government | Committed/Further | 2009-10 2010-2011 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|--------------------------|---|
| | areas | Darlington DBC | £598,023 | | appraisal work needed | |
| | Creation of a new multifunctional public square, Beaumont Street car park | DBC | £426,753 £7000 £15,000 | DCSF land receipt DBC DCSF | | |
| | Refurbish North Lodge Park Bandstand | DBC Friends of North Lodge Park | £216,000 £103,000 £ 17,500 £ 5,000 £ 49,500 £ 41,000 | Heritage Lottery Fund Fair Share Trust Garfield Weston (Friends) Big Lottery Community Spaces Darlington Borough Council | | |
| | Provision of Ridgeway allotments | DBC Glebe Road Allotment Association | £1,200 | DBC Glebe Road Allotment Association | Committed | |
| | Maidendale Nature Reserve environmental improvements | Maidendale Trust, Environment Agency, DBC | £131,000 | Big Lottery funding | Committed | 2011 |
| | Cocker Beck improvements | DBC | £50,000 £28,000 | Environment Agency County Durham Environmental trust | Ongoing | |
| | Brinkburn Denes improvements to environment and biodiversity value of the park | DBC | £45,200 £878,727 bid | Heritage Lottery Fund | Bid being assessed | Commence summer 2010 if bid successful |
| | Skerningham countryside site to plant species rich grassland | DBC | £80,000 | Developer contributions | Committed | |
| Public rights of way/green leisure routes | Merrybent Community Woodland | DBC | £60,000 | Cycling Demonstration Town/LTP | | |
| | Skerne Corridor improvements | DBC | £130,000 | LTP | | |

11.0 STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

¹CS1 Darlington's sub regional role and locational strategy

²PPS12, DCLG, June 2008

11.1 The Core Strategy's Strategic Locations¹ will have a leading role in the growth and redevelopment of the Borough over the plan period. PPS12² states that 'infrastructure planning for the Core Strategy should also include the specific infrastructure requirements of any strategic sites which are allocated in it.' This section will provide more detail on specific infrastructure requirements for the six strategic locations set out in the Core Strategy (see map overleaf):

- Darlington Town Centre
- Town Centre Fringe
- Central Park
- North Western Urban Fringe
- Eastern Urban Fringe
- Durham Tees Valley Airport area

³When permission is granted, it is accompanied by conditions that need to be complied with. Compliance with the conditions will be verified appropriately by a Planning Officer.

⁴legally binding agreements between landowners and/or the Council

11.2 At this stage the strategic locations are identified as broad locations for growth and not specific site allocations; site allocations will be considered through the forthcoming Accommodating Growth DPD. Infrastructure to support the delivery of these specific sites will be discussed in that DPD. However, within the broad locations identified, sites exist with planning permission for new development. Information provided reflects the broad content of the infrastructure requirements of the planning permission. Where planning permission exists, utilities providers will have been consulted on the application and their concerns, if any, should have been resolved. Alternatively the provision of the infrastructure will be identified as a planning condition³ or in a S106 agreement⁴ which must be fulfilled as part of the development. Utilities provision for such sites is not set out in this LIP.

11.3 In those cases where a planning permission has been approved for an outline scheme the details may change as reserved matters are submitted; infrastructure requirements may subsequently change to reflect the detailed design of the scheme. Where this affects specific, key infrastructure this plan will be revised accordingly.

11.4 The approach to strategic locations will look at each category of infrastructure provision, for each location in more detail. Securing and coordinating infrastructure for these locations can be complicated; several public and private infrastructure providers may need to be involved, using different funding streams. However this approach has been successful in Darlington in recent years; Morton Palms is an example of a partnership between the Council, private developers and other public sector partners, where infrastructure was appropriately provided to deliver a high quality commercial scheme. This section of the LIP will help infrastructure providers and the Council coordinate infrastructure provision accordingly.

11.5 Ongoing consultation with all infrastructure providers will be necessary to ensure that specific infrastructure requirements are identified at an early stage. This information will then be fed into the preparation of the Accommodating Growth DPD to ensure that sites allocated for new development have sufficient infrastructure, in the right location, at the appropriate time to meet the needs of the development.

11.6 DARLINGTON TOWN CENTRE

Darlington Town Centre is a distinctive, vibrant market town; the fifth largest shopping destination in the North East with around 100,000m² gross shopping floorspace it provides 300 shops and 100 ancillary professional, financial and bars and restaurants in the main shopping area. As a major sub regional centre it not only provides shopping but a range of sport and recreation, entertainment, employment and business services to the local community and residents of the Tees Valley, Durham and North Yorkshire. Opportunities exist to strengthen retail, employment and service provision; the Commercial Street and Feethams areas are identified as having the potential to add quality development and provision to the town centre.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

- **Retail:** 20,000-23,000sqm gross retail comparison floorspace by 2011 to include the retail led scheme at Commercial St, approximately 10,000m² comparison retail floorspace in the Borough by 2016 within the town centre or if not possible adjacent and well connected to the primary shopping area
- **Employment:** approximately 17ha of offices to be provided in the Town Centre/Town Centre Fringe
- **Tourist attractions and hotels**
- **Residential**
- **Car parking**

The town centre will continue to be the locational focus for the development of retail, office, leisure, entertainment and other main town centre uses needed within the Borough. It is expected to be able to accommodate the additional retailing needs of the Borough for much of the Core Strategy plan period.

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- Planning permission has been granted for an extension to the Queen Street Shopping Centre for new retail and leisure uses at Commercial Street car parks, the construction of a pedestrian bridge over St. Augustine's Way and a 900 space multi-storey car park, 26 apartments and a shop unit at Kendrew Street car park (07/00869/FUL). Discovery Properties Ltd has been selected as preferred developer by the Council to take the development forward.
- Planning permission has been granted for a 5 storey office building for the DCSF at East Beaumont Street Car Park (09/00471/FUL)

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- Commercial Street Development: Planning and Highway Requirements
- Feethams Planning and Development Brief

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

The Connections Study³ makes several recommendations to improve infrastructure in and to the town centre, particularly from the Town Centre Fringe. Where appropriate new development should consider:

- Providing pedestrian and cycle facilities along and across the Ring Road;
- Providing junction improvements along the Ring Road;
- Developing an integrated transport network between the town centre, Central Park and the Town Centre Fringe to support more compact development and expansion of core uses, ensuring that more sustainable trip patterns are generated;
- Improving the public realm to provide attractive environments for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Maintaining two lanes per direction along the Ring Road, with an additional bus lane on some sections;
- Providing bus priority measures (lanes and signals) at junctions where possible;
- Designing all junctions as attractive, safe and convenient public spaces for all road users.

³Connections Study, Urban Initiatives 2009

⁴Commercial Street Development: Planning and Highway Requirements, DBC 2001

Commercial Street development⁴

The development must provide good pedestrian links from its car park and shopping centre to the main streets of the town centre, like Northgate and the Queen Street/Bondgate/Prospect Place area. The key transport infrastructure requirements agreed in the planning permission for this scheme are the provision of:

- The existing pedestrian link from the town centre to Kendrew Street should be retained and improved, a parallel cycle link and associated surface crossings of the ring road should be provided.
- pedestrian bridge from the development over St Augustine's Way;
- new signalised junction into the car park from St Augustine's Way and
- pedestrian crossing over St Augustine's Way linking the car park and shopping centre
- 900 space car park, with appropriate levels of car, motor cycle and cycle parking provision
- new principal vehicular access and associated new junction, created at the developer's expense
- financial contribution for the provision of new or improved bus facilities and pedestrian links for passengers.

⁵Feethams Planning and Development Brief, DBC 2008

Feethams⁵

Feethams will be the primary means of access for future development with individual buildings primarily accessed via side roads and Beaumont Street except in exceptional circumstances

- Provide attractive and safe connections from Beaumont Street and Houndgate to the retail areas to the west and the wider town centre;
- Provide connections with the existing pedestrian and cycle network;
- Create a new riverside path for pedestrians and cyclists on the west bank of the Skerne, with connections to the existing network;
- Provide appropriate car parking, well related to pedestrian movements

⁶Excluding current Commercial St proposal

Utilities Infrastructure⁶

All new development across the wider area should ensure that:

Sustainable building standards

- All residential development should be constructed to the appropriate Code for Sustainable Homes standard and all non residential development to the BREEAM 'very good-excellent' standard;
- At least 20% of its energy supply should come from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Biomass/combined heat and power installations would be appropriate; potentially new development could support a district heating and cooling network⁷.

⁷Renewable and Low Carbon Study, Entec, 2009

Flood risk

The corridor adjacent to the River Skerne lies in Flood Zone 3b⁸; only water compatible uses and in exceptional circumstances essential infrastructure should be located there. Flood Zone 3b should be retained as a green river corridor with the dual use as flood storage and amenity space. Further modelling work for the Skerne corridor will start shortly.

⁸where water flows or is stored in times of flood

Surface water management

All new development should incorporate appropriate integrated surface water management techniques to achieve an infiltration capacity to meet or exceed natural or greenfield conditions.⁹

⁹Design of New Development SPD, DBC 2009

Feethams⁵

- A small part of the area within Flood Zone 2¹⁰; water compatible uses, essential infrastructure and less vulnerable and more vulnerable uses can be located there, subject to a Flood Risk Assessment;¹¹
- A full range of underground services are close to Feethams, significantly less are found to the rear of the Town Hall;
- In all new developments, surface water drainage should be separate from foul sewage, although sustainable drainage is preferred.¹²

¹⁰medium probability of river flooding

¹¹shows how flood risk from all sources of flooding to the development and to others will be managed now in future

Social and Community Infrastructure

Feethams⁵

- The use of targeted recruitment and training during the construction and occupation of new development in the area.

¹²definitions of appropriate uses are in PPS25

- At least 30% of all housing should be affordable to achieve an 80%: 20% social rented: intermediate tenure split.
- Appropriate contributions to the enhancement of leisure facilities to mitigate impact may be required.

Elsewhere social and community infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be update accordingly.

Green Infrastructure

River Skerne Corridor⁵

St Cuthbert's churchyard is a key, high quality green space, dominated by mature trees in the densely built up town centre. The River Skerne, a strategic green wildlife corridor runs along the eastern boundary.

- The River Skerne corridor should be improved through the redevelopment of the area;
- New development should provide opportunities for improved wildlife habitats, in, along the banks and along the rivers edge and elsewhere;
- A riverside walk should be created through development, promoting improvements to the landscape and ecological value of the Skerne, especially through the use of semi natural planting schemes and landscaping;
- A greenspace close to the River Skerne (no less than 2500m²) should be provided.

Feethams

- A new public square will be created next to the new DCSF offices.
- Throughout the area, public art should be provided where appropriate.

Elsewhere green infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be updated accordingly. However

- all new residential developments of 5 or more dwellings should provide open space on site, or through a financial contribution to improve spaces in the area.
- All new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to make a financial contribution to the improvement of children's play areas in the locality
- Provision of priority habitats will be required as part of new development.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

Public square: It is forecast that the capital receipt for the sale of land to the DCSF for its offices in the Feethams West area will provide the public square and will leave a substantial sum for other public realm works. The DCSF are also funding highways improvements up to the value of £15,000. An initial budget framework to design and construct the public square by the Council totals £426,753. Estimated maintenance costs of the Square will be £7,000 a year, funded from the Council's revenue budget.

Other funding streams

- Private sector funding and construction of a retail led scheme in the Commercial Street area with DBC contribution of land
- Private sector/DCSF funding, construction of offices and other non retail development in the Feethams/Beaumont Street area with DBC contribution of land
- Private sector funding and construction of retail floorspace
- Private sector investment for provision of hotels
- Funding of phased extension of the town centre into the Town Centre Fringe including improvements to connections across the ring road
- Contributions may be sought from developers towards highway improvement works, sustainable transport improvements, affordable housing, open space, children's play, biodiversity, targeted employment and public art.

PROGRESS

- Work is expected to begin on the new offices for the Department for Children, Schools and Families at Beaumont Street in July 2010, with the DCSF expecting to open in 2012.

11.7 TOWN CENTRE FRINGE

Darlington's Town Centre Fringe provides an opportunity to regenerate a key strategic area between the town centre and the East Coast Main Line, including some of Darlington's most deprived wards. In a very accessible location, within walking and cycling distance of Darlington town centre and Bank Top Railway Station, this key brownfield regeneration site will provide high quality, sustainable office accommodation and housing as well as a new Cultural Quarter for appropriate tourism and cultural attractions. Improving links with the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods will provide a vibrant, pleasant environment, offering opportunities for integration and inclusion for the community.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

- **Mixed use development:** including shops and services
- **Employment:** approximately 17ha of offices to be provided in the Town Centre/Town Centre Fringe
- **Residential:** 750 dwellings: 300 dwellings (2016-2021), 450 dwellings (2021-2026)
- **Existing housing:** regeneration and improvement of existing housing areas
- **Darlington Cultural Quarter:** new tourist and cultural attractions, creative arts industries, new hotels

When the present town centre can physically accommodate no more major non-retail development, its defined boundary will be extended into the Town Centre Fringe and this type of development will be encouraged there. Extension will be in phases, with the initial priority direction being eastwards from the present centre towards the East Coast Main Line railway. Extension will be conditional on improvements in connections across the ring road, particularly for pedestrians and other non-car users, being in place.

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- Subject to a S106 agreement, planning permission has been approved for the development of the former Feethams Football Ground to provide 146 residential units including family housing, apartments, retirement flats, open space and access from South Terrace (09/00706/FUL)

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- The emerging Town Centre Fringe Masterplan will deliver:
 - A strategic master plan identifying key connections, frontages, development sites and opportunities within the wider context of Darlington;
 - Specific briefs and concept statements for sites that may come forward in the meantime;
 - A development procurement and land assembly strategy;
 - Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan - providing a clear framework for development, certainty and leverage for land assembly and acquisitions.
- Bank Top Station Travel Plan¹: any improvements to the Station and its immediate environment identified in its travel plan could have accessibility and environmental benefits for the Town Centre Fringe.

¹See Appendix 4

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

The Connections Study² makes several recommendations to improve accessibility to and within the Town Centre Fringe to maximise its regeneration potential. Where appropriate new development should consider:

- Retaining the existing network of streets;
- Providing pedestrian and cycle facilities along and across the Ring Road;
- Providing junction improvements along the Ring Road;
- Providing pedestrian and cycle access via a bridge across the ECML, between the Fringe, the Town Centre, Central Park and Bank Top Station.

²Connections Study, Urban Initiatives 2009

- Providing junction improvements along the Ring Road
- Improving the public realm to provide attractive environments for pedestrians and cyclists
- Continue to promote the high quality public transport service that exists along the ring road, Houghton Road, Parkgate, North Road; more intense forms of development in the Fringe area could potentially lead to greater patronage and rerouting of services.

Utilities Infrastructure

Northumbrian Water confirm that:

Sewerage and waste water

- Local reinforcement of the water supply network may be needed depending on a capacity check. Capacity checks would be needed for the waste water network as development proposals become more certain.
- Water Mains and sewers cross the area; these would need to be diverted or located within an easement.

Water supply

- There is some capacity for normal development growth; there is no known capacity problem in the drainage area or district meter zone.

Waste Water

- Darlington's planned overall growth to 2021 is a significant increase and NWL will need to undertake a detailed growth assessment to determine how the level of development proposed in the Borough can be accommodated.

Sustainable building standards

- All residential development should be constructed to the appropriate Code for Sustainable Homes standard and all non residential development to the BREEAM 'very good-excellent' standard.
- At least 20% of major new developments energy supply should come from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Biomass/combined heat and power installations could be appropriate; new development in the area could support a district heating and cooling network³.

³Renewable and Low Carbon study, Entec, 2009

Flood risk

- The River Skerne corridor lies in Flood Zone 3b⁴; only water compatible uses and in exceptional circumstances essential infrastructure should be located there.
- A small part of the area where Cocker Beck meets the River Skerne is within Flood Zone 3a⁵; only water compatible uses and less vulnerable land uses are appropriate in this location.
- Large parts of the area are within Flood Zone 2⁶; water compatible uses, essential infrastructure and less vulnerable and more vulnerable uses can be located there, subject to a Flood Risk Assessment.⁵

⁴where water flows or is stored in times of flood

⁵high probability of flooding

⁶medium probability of river flooding

Surface water management

- Directly to the west of the River Skerne, parts of the Town Centre Fringe have a history of surface water flooding and ponding. All new development should incorporate appropriate integrated surface water management techniques to achieve an infiltration capacity to meet or exceed natural or greenfield conditions⁹.

⁷definitions of appropriate uses are in PPS25

⁸shows how flood risk from all sources of flooding to the development and to others will be managed now in future

Further modelling work is being undertaken to determine the detailed impact of flood risk particularly in Flood Zones 3a and 2 and the extent of surface water flooding. This work will be used to inform and update this plan.

Gas and electricity transmission

- National Grid confirms that development proposals will not have a significant effect on gas and electricity transmission and the existing network should be able to cope with demand. It is unlikely that the extra growth will create capacity issues given the scale of the gas and electricity transmission networks.

⁹Design SPD, DBC, 2009

Local gas and electricity infrastructure

- CE Electric UK confirms that any significant urban or rural development will always require reinforcement of the network.
- United Utilities confirms that the gas infrastructure is capable of supplying the number of dwellings proposed.

- NEDL currently occupy a significant landholding adjacent to Borough Road; redundant equipment and a former power station currently occupy the site.
- Northern Gas Networks own a gasholder located in the northern part of the area. Health and Safety regulations as well as amenity considerations mean that the gasometer restricts development opportunities in this part of the Fringe. Feasibility studies are underway to establish the implications, both financial and technical of the removal of this facility.

Social and Community Infrastructure

Social and community infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be update accordingly. However in general

- At least 30% of all housing should be affordable to achieve an 80%:20% social rented: intermediate tenure split.
- Contributions will be sought to provide for any extra primary and secondary school places needed as a result of development. If a new primary school is required it should include flexible space to deliver extended services to enable secure access to parents and children out of school hours.
- Private rented accommodation exists, some poor quality in the Town Centre Fringe; a range of mechanisms are being investigated by the Council to improve the housing and immediate environments. Where appropriate the Financial Assistance Policy may be used to improve and maintain healthy and safe living conditions within existing housing stock.
- Although in close proximity to the town centre, accessibility to services and small scale convenience shops is limited in some areas of the Town Centre Fringe; new provision could be sought to support any new communities.

Green Infrastructure

The width and type of provision along the river corridor will vary to reflect the needs of the development and its location with the Fringe. Ongoing work will assess potential improvements to the River Skerne Corridor in the Town Centre/Town Centre Fringe;

- The space that lies in Flood Zone 3b could have dual use as flood storage and amenity space. Reducing the impact of the channel of the river, allowing improved amenity and better biodiversity levels could be complemented by any improved corridor width achieved through new development.
- Connections to existing green infrastructure like to Central Park could be investigated.
- Where possible this could link in with the Skerne corridor cycle route.

Elsewhere, green infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this infrastructure plan will be update accordingly. However in general

- All new residential developments of 5 or more dwellings should provide open space on site, or through a financial contribution to improve spaces in the area.
- All new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to make a financial contribution to the improvement of children's play areas in the locality
- Provision of priority habitats will be required as part of new development.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

- In November 2009, the Council secured £117,000 Single Programme capital funding to undertake a comprehensive Master Planning exercise; this will be supported by £36,000 Council revenue contribution and £50,000 Council in-kind (Urban Designer's time);
- £5000 Single Programme Funding has been secured for detailed flood risk modelling of the River Skerne and Cocker Beck;
- Bidding for and/or using Homes and Communities Agency/One North East and/or Housing Growth Point funding to bring forward sites for development in the Town Centre Fringe;
- Bidding for Single Programme funding for site acquisition sites in the TCF;
- Bidding for funding from HCA/ONE to assist with the preparation of AAP, masterplanning and site specific development briefs
- Private sector investment for provision of hotels

- Funding of phased extension of the town centre into the Town Centre Fringe including improvements to connections across the ring road
- Private sector funding and construction of retail floorspace
- Bidding for funding to assist with the removal of the Valley Street North gasholder.

PROGRESS

- Initial scoping work has commenced to inform the master planning exercise
- Detailed flood risk modelling of the River Skerne and Cocker Beck will be completed in April 2010.

11.8 CENTRAL PARK

Central Park provides an opportunity to revitalise a key strategic location near the centre of Darlington. In a very accessible location, within walking and cycling distance of Darlington town centre and the Town Centre Fringe, this key regeneration site will bring high quality residential units, modern commercial space in a distinctive, green environment. New education and community facilities have been completed; Darlington College, its sports hall and a nursery opened in August 2006 providing modern facilities for Darlington's residents as well as those from outside the Borough.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

- **Mixed use development:** (10ha) including commercial space, shops and services
- **Residential:** 350 dwellings (2011-2016), 250 dwellings (2016-2021)
- **Education:** Teesside University
- **Commercial:** New hotel and conference facilities

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- The master plan had been granted planning permission for mixed use development including residential, office, hotel and conference facilities, a range of leisure and community facilities and open space (05/00643/OUT). This permission expired in 2009 but a variation has been agreed to extend timescales for delivery.
- Planning permission had been approved for the construction of a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the East Coast Main Line to provide improved access to Darlington College (06/00739/DC). This has also expired but the application is expected to be resubmitted in Spring 2010.
- Subject to a s106 agreement, planning permission has been approved for the development of a 5 storey campus building for Teesside University (09/00530/FUL)

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- Central Park Masterplan
- Central Park Development Agreement
- Central Park Design Code: more detailed design codes should be developed to ensure that design aspirations for each individual element are maintained for of the whole development.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

The Central Park Masterplan proposes two vehicular access points; from Yarm Road and Haughton Road, to provide direct and attractive links to Darlington's strategic road network, integrating the new development with the surrounding area (see map?) These are proposed to be signal junctions with signal controlled pedestrian facilities and bus priority measures. The link between these points would form the primary route through Central Park with links created off the route, providing direct access between Central Park and adjacent neighbourhoods.

Two new pedestrian/cycle bridges are proposed: one linking Central Park across Parkgate to the Railway Station parallel to the Railway Line and the other providing a connection to the College over the ECML.

The Connections Study¹ makes several recommendations to improve accessibility to and within Central Park. Where appropriate new development should consider:

- through traffic should be managed through design with a carriageway width appropriate for the street typology.
- Streets should be a 20mph zone, with some tertiary streets and cul-de-sacs as shared spaces.
- Developing an integrated transport network between the town centre, Central Park and the Town Centre Fringe to support more compact development and expansion of core uses, ensuring that more sustainable trip patterns are generated

¹Connections Study, Urban Initiatives 2009

- Encouraging public transport use along the primary route; this may justify an increase in service frequency along Houghton Road/Yarm Road, rerouted services through the site, or potentially a new service.
- Walking and cycling routes should be direct and legible either as footways next to the carriageway, as shared space along some tertiary streets or as leisure routes through green spaces and link with the existing surrounding network of streets.
- Pedestrian crossing facilities should be provided perhaps combined with traffic calming features.
- Adequate cycle parking facilities should be provided in areas easily accessible by cyclists, in close proximity to public spaces and facilities across Central Park.

In the longer term (up to 2026) investigations will continue into the feasibility for extending the Metro proposal to Central Park.

Utilities Infrastructure

Sustainable building standards

- All residential development should be constructed to the appropriate Code for Sustainable Homes standard and all non residential development to at least a BREEAM 'very good' standard.

Social and Community Infrastructure

- At least 15% of the total housing provision should be affordable housing;
- All dwellings should be built to Lifetime Homes standards;
- New local shops and services, including a new Doctor's surgery are proposed;
- A feasibility study is due to begin for a business incubator facility to meet the start up needs of new businesses in the Borough.
 - The facility could be located at the southern entrance to Central Park at Yarm Road adjacent to Bank Top Station.
 - The site is part owned by DBC and ONE; additional acquisitions are needed to complete site assembly to increase the certainty of development commencing and the commissioning of the associated highway works (opening up the Yarm Road entrance to Central Park).
 - The Council would procure the incubator building and seek an incubator operator to manage the delivery of the incubator services through a management agreement/lease of the building.
- A new Teesside University building is proposed next to Darlington College.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure plays an important role in connecting the different mixed use elements of the regeneration scheme. A linear park, with cycleway and footpath will run from Parkgate to the new University campus. A main square will be the focus of the new commercial quarter. A park will provide children's play and informal open space provision connecting the commercial area to the residential scheme. Additional community play areas are proposed at appropriate points in the residential area, in close proximity to existing residential properties on Hundens Lane.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

- Darlington has been allocated £849,000 from the Community Infrastructure Fund 2 (2009–11); £447,000 (2009/10) and £402,000 (2010/11) to deliver housing, including affordable housing. Only part of this funding will be available for Central Park. Development must start within a two year period.
- Teesside University development is estimated to cost around £13m; the University will fund £10.5m, One NorthEast will fund up to £2m and the Council will contribute £500,000. Work is expected to start in April 2010 and be completed by September 2011.
- Single Programme Funding of £250,000 has been secured to undertake a feasibility study for a business incubator facility to meet the needs of new start up businesses.
- Single Programme Funding of £300,000 has been secured for the acquisition of key properties and property demolition to cover 100% of the acquisition and demolition costs for strategically located properties off Yarm Road/Green Street². This includes a contingency allowance for unforeseen conditions and for resolution of maintenance/management issues that are expected prior to demolition. It is understood from Sanderson Wetherall, that all of the property owners/occupiers are willing to sell at this point in time.

²where it is financially viable and in line with current market rates and valuations

- Single Programme funding of £2.2m for acquisitions of property
- Bidding for funding from the Homes and Communities Agency and/or One North East to bring forward sites for development
- Private sector funding to enable provision of a hotel and conference facilities at Central Park

PROGRESS

- A development agreement was signed in 2009 between One North East, the Council (as the freehold owners) and Keepmoat Limited, Cecil M Yuill Limited and Commercial Estates Group Ltd as the preferred developers of Central Park.
- The future development of the site will be phased.
- As part of the development, the Council depot will be relocated from the site.
- Subject to the completion of the S106 agreement, work is expected to begin on the new Teesside University building in April 2010, with the University expecting to open in September 2011.

11.9 NORTH WESTERN URBAN FRINGE

The North Western Urban Fringe provides an opportunity to extend the urban area from West Park and Faverdale along the A68 Woodland Road. A key strategic housing site will provide a new sustainable community, complemented by ongoing business, industrial and logistics premises. Taking advantage of its location, a new strategic tourism attraction will bring visitors from outside the Borough, whilst providing employment for the community.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

- **Residential:** 100 dwellings (2016-2021), 500 dwellings (2021-2026).
- **Employment:** about 50ha for business, industrial and logistics, a further 125ha of employment land will be made available at Faverdale Strategic Reserve (with Heighington Lane)
- **Tourism:** a strategic tourism opportunity will be promoted adjoining the A68/A1(M) interchange

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- An outline planning application has been submitted for B1(C), B2 and B8 development including 2 access roads at the proposed Faverdale Business Park, Samian Way (08/00778/OUT)

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

No plans and strategies exist; on adoption they will be used to inform and update this plan.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

The Connections Study¹ makes several recommendations in relation to future access to this strategic location. Where appropriate new development should consider:

- Access to West Auckland Road and Newton Lane potentially linking further to Jedburgh Drive and Malvern Crescent, to ensure that traffic is dispersed across the network rather than concentrated on West Auckland Road/Woodland Road.
- Extending access from West Auckland Road to West Park Hospital to connect into Newton Lane.
- High quality walking and cycling access along these main routes; improvements should be made to Woodland Road/West Auckland Road and Newton Lane to provide safe, easy access for pedestrians and cyclists along and across the street.
- Assessing junction capacity to define whether capacity improvements will be required at Cockerton, West Auckland Road/Newton Lane.
- The provision of a new high frequency bus service using a new access link between West Park and Newton Lane, alongside the continued promotion of Woodland Road as a key public transport corridor.
- Linking new sustainable transport routes along West Auckland Road and former Barnard Castle railway path.
- Providing connections with the existing street network to provide sustainable access to local shops and facilities.

An assessment has shown that additional development is expected to have an impact on the West Auckland Road and potentially on the A1(M). More detailed assessment work is required, in partnership with the Highways Agency to identify impacts on junctions and potential mitigation measures.

Utilities Infrastructure

Northumbrian Water confirms that:

Sewerage and waste water

- Local reinforcement of the water supply network may be needed depending on a capacity check. Capacity checks would be needed for the waste water network as development proposals become more certain.

¹Connections Study, Urban Initiatives 2009

- Water Mains and sewers cross the area; these would need to be diverted or located within an easement.

Water supply

- There is some capacity for normal development growth; there is no known capacity problem in the drainage area or district meter zone.

Waste Water

- Darlington’s planned overall growth to 2021 is a significant increase and NWL will need to undertake a detailed growth assessment to determine how the level of development proposed in the Borough can be accommodated.

Sustainable building standards

- All residential development should be constructed to the appropriate Code for Sustainable Homes standard and all non residential development to the BREEAM ‘very good-excellent’ standard.
- At least 20% of new developments energy supply should come from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Biomass/combined heat and power installations could be appropriate; new development in the area could support a district heating and cooling network².

²Renewable and Low Carbon study, Entec, 2009

Flood risk

- A small part of the proposed Faverdale Reserve site alongside West Beck is within Flood Zone 3b³; only water compatible uses and in exceptional circumstances essential infrastructure should be located there.
- Parts of this floodplain are within Flood Zone 2⁴; water compatible uses, essential infrastructure and less vulnerable and more vulnerable uses can be located there, subject to a Flood Risk Assessment^{5, 6}.

³where water flows or is stored in times of flood

⁴medium probability of river flooding

Surface water management

- All new development should incorporate appropriate integrated surface water management techniques to achieve an infiltration capacity to meet or exceed natural or greenfield conditions⁷.

Gas and electricity transmission

- National Grid confirms that development proposals will not have a significant effect on gas and electricity transmission and that the existing network should be able to cope with demand. It is unlikely that extra growth will create capacity issues given the scale of the gas and electricity transmission networks.

⁵shows how flood risk from all sources of flooding to the development and to others will be managed now in future

Local gas and electricity infrastructure

- CE Electric UK confirms that any significant urban or rural development will require reinforcement of the network.
- United Utilities confirms that the gas infrastructure is not capable of supplying the number of dwellings shown. Some reinforcement of the exiting infrastructure would be required

⁶definitions of appropriate uses are in PPS25

⁷Design SPD, DBC, 2009

Social and Community Infrastructure

Social and community infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be update accordingly. However in general:

- Contributions will be sought to provide for any extra primary and secondary school places needed as a result of development. If a new primary school is required it should include flexible space to enable out of school care to deliver extended services to enable secure access to parents and children out of school hours.
- The nearest health provision is in Cockerton. Further investigations in partnership with the PCT are required to determine whether additional healthcare facilities should be provided.
- At least 15% of all housing should be affordable to achieve an 80%:20% social rented: intermediate tenure split.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be update accordingly. However in general:

- Where appropriate, new development should link into the existing green infrastructure network, like the Barnard Castle trackbed cycle/footpath and West Park.
- all new residential developments of 5 or more dwellings should provide open space on site, or through a financial contribution to improve spaces in the area.

- All new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to make a financial contribution to the improvement of children's play areas in the locality
- Provision of priority habitats will be required as part of new development.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

- Investment decisions of the Council and Bussey & Armstrong for residential development
- Private sector funding and construction of employment space
- Private sector funding and construction of retail floorspace
- Private sector funding for tourism related development
- Contributions may be sought from developers towards highway improvement works, sustainable transport improvements, affordable housing, open space, children's play, biodiversity and public art.

PROGRESS

- Covering 49ha West Park provides a range of high quality homes, alongside its 12ha hill top park, supported by a local shopping centre, Alderman Leach Primary School and nursery. West Park Hospital serves the needs of the wider community.
- West Park is being provided with key partners; Bussey & Armstrong Projects, the Council, County Durham & Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust, Northern Arts, Bellway and Tees Forest.
- A further 400 dwellings are committed to be developed (2011-2016) to complete the community. Mowden Rugby Club is also expected to relocate to the development in that time.

- Faverdale East Business Park covers 35ha for new commercial, industrial and warehousing units opposite the established Faverdale Industrial Estate. The site development will be phased; Phase 1 will see the development of approx 10 hectares of land, including the Argos Distribution Depot and 4 warehouses.

11.10 EASTERN URBAN FRINGE

The Eastern Urban Fringe provides an opportunity to extend the urban area along the Eastern Transport Corridor; good accessibility will be provided along the corridor and through adjoining neighbourhoods for sustainable transport as well as those who wish to travel by car. To the south of the Corridor the redevelopment of Lingfield Point will provide a sustainable mixed use community of high quality residential development, employment uses, served by new shops, services, a school and sports facilities. High quality employment provision is planned with other commercial development and a hotel. To the north provision will be made for a further 200 houses, in close proximity to the wider countryside.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

Southern site

- **Lingfield Point:** mixed use development including about 15ha employment, housing: 400 dwellings (2011-2016), 400 dwellings (2016-2021) and 400 dwellings (2021-2026), a primary school, sports facilities, community and arts facilities, energy centre, allotments and open space.
- **Employment, commercial, hotel and pub/restaurant**

Northern site

- **Residential:** 200 dwellings (2021-2026)

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- Subject to a S106 agreement, outline planning permission was approved for Lingfield Point in 2009 for a mixed use regeneration scheme including residential development, school, care home, B1 commercial/office space, energy centre, wind turbine, community and arts facilities, local retail facilities, parking, landscaping, sports facilities, allotments and public open space (08/00638/OUT)
- Planning permission has been granted for a link road from Lingfield Point to the Eastern Transport Corridor (08/00290/FUL)
- Subject to a S106 agreement, outline planning permission has been approved for the development of B1/B2/B8 employment uses, ancillary commercial development, including Hotel, Pub/Restaurant and provision of access (07/00041/OUT)

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

A masterplan has been drawn up for Lingfield Point.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

Northern site

The Connections Study¹ makes several recommendations in relation to transport infrastructure. Where appropriate new development should consider:

- Connecting to the high frequency bus service on Coombe Drive and the feasibility of partnerships to support new services on the DETC.
- Provision of new connections to the DETC footpath and cycleway,
- Creating additional pedestrian and cycle links to Red Hall and Haughton.

Southern site

Lingfield Point

The Connections Study¹ makes several recommendations in relation to transport infrastructure. Where appropriate the development of Lingfield Point should consider:

- Providing good connections between each phase of the scheme and to adjoining neighbourhoods, like Allington Way and Yarm Road industrial area to the South, existing transport infrastructure and services.
- Providing direct, viable walking and cycling routes provide to new local facilities and bus stops.

¹Connections Study, Urban Initiatives 2009

- Providing clear separation of local and through traffic, with adequate trip dispersal onto the surrounding network to the south and west.
- Focussing bus services to the proposed north-south route with appropriately located bus stops.

Employment site

- A financial contribution for highway improvements and for sustainable transport measures before the respective parts of the development were commenced.

²Excludes Lingfield Point

Utilities Infrastructure²

Northumbrian Water confirms that:

Sewerage

- There is limited sewerage and/or water infrastructure in the vicinity. A feasibility study would be needed to assess options to provide the infrastructure.
- Water Mains and sewers cross the area; these would need to be diverted or located within an easement.

Water supply

- There is some capacity for normal development growth; there is no known capacity problem in the drainage area or district meter zone.

Waste Water

- Darlington's planned overall growth to 2021 is a significant increase and NWL will need to undertake a detailed growth assessment to determine how the level of development proposed in the Borough can be accommodated.

Sustainable building standards

- All residential development should be constructed to the appropriate Code for Sustainable Homes standard and all non residential development to the BREEAM 'very good-excellent' standard.
- At least 20% of new developments energy supply should come from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Potential exists in the northern site to connect to the Lingfield Point Energy Centre or to provide district heating network with nearby employment areas³.

³Renewable and Low Carbon study, Entec, 2009

Flood risk

- There is no known flood risk in this area.

Surface water management

- All new development should incorporate appropriate integrated surface water management techniques to achieve an infiltration capacity to meet or exceed natural or greenfield conditions⁴.

⁴Design SPD, DBC, 2009

Gas and electricity transmission

- National Grid confirms that development proposals will not have a significant effect on gas and electricity transmission; the existing network should be able to cope with demand. It is unlikely that extra growth will create capacity issues given the scale of the gas and electricity transmission networks.
- One of National Grid's high pressure underground gas transmission pipelines runs along the eastern edge of the urban boundary. Specification for Safe Working in the Vicinity of National Grid High Pressure Gas Pipelines and Associate Installations and Gas Transmission Underground Pipelines must be referred to.

Local gas and electricity infrastructure

- CE Electric UK confirms that any significant urban or rural development will require reinforcement of the network.
- United Utilities confirms that the gas infrastructure is not capable of supplying the number of dwellings shown. Some reinforcement of the exiting infrastructure would be required

Social and Community Infrastructure

Northern site

Social and community infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this LIP will be update accordingly. However, in general:

- Contributions will be sought to provide for any extra primary school places needed as a result of development.
- Private rented accommodation, some poor quality, exists in Red Hall; a range of mechanisms are being investigated by the Council to improve the housing and immediate environments. Where

appropriate the Financial Assistance Policy may be used to improve and maintain healthy and safe living conditions within existing housing stock.

- At least 15% of all housing should be affordable to achieve an 80%: 20% social rented: intermediate tenure split.
- Health provision for Lingfield area is limited. Further investigations with the PCT are required to determine whether additional healthcare facilities should be provided.

Southern site

- A new primary school will be provided to meet the needs of Lingfield Point. It should include flexible space to deliver extended services to enable secure access to parents and children out of school hours.
- Allotments, a football pitch and cricket pitch, a climbing wall and MUGAs, as well as an outdoor performance area are also proposed.

Green Infrastructure

Northern site

Green infrastructure needs are uncertain as provision should reflect the type and level of development proposed. As plans become more certain this infrastructure plan will be update accordingly. However in general:

- Where appropriate, new development should link into the existing green infrastructure network, like the Stockton and Darlington trackbed cycle/footpath.
- all new residential developments of 5 or more dwellings should provide open space on site, or through a financial contribution to improve spaces in the area.
- All new residential developments of 10 or more dwellings will be required to make a financial contribution to the improvement of children's play areas in the locality
- Provision of priority habitats will be required as part of new development.

Southern site

Lingfield Point will create 13.75ha of open space; 7.4ha linear park runs across the site incorporating semi natural space, children's play areas and woodland to complement and improve connectivity to the wider green infrastructure network and the urban fringe. Biodiversity value will be enhanced through the introduction of several priority habitats and species to the site.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

- Investment decisions of Marchday at Lingfield Point
- Investment decisions of developers to provide residential and employment development
- Private sector investment for provision of hotels
- Private sector funding and construction of retail floorspace

PROGRESS

- The S106 agreement for Lingfield Point is currently being drawn up.
- The S106 agreement for employment land provision is being prepared.

11.11 DURHAM TEES VALLEY AIRPORT

Situated south east of Darlington, Durham Tees Valley Airport has a large catchment; 2.7 million potential passengers in the North East and North Yorkshire are within an hours drive of the airport.

In 2008 the airport served over 670,000 passengers, offering flights to a wide variety of scheduled and tour holiday destinations across the UK and Europe through a number of airlines and tour operators which fly to over 20 destinations. KLM also offer a key service into Amsterdam to connect to a range of worldwide destinations.

Continued investment in Durham Tees Valley Airport will ensure that it is capable of capitalising on the growing demand, both from passengers and the commercial sector, at the airport itself and the adjoining business and employment areas.

PROPOSED APPROPRIATE USES

- **Employment:** About 25ha of airport related employment uses
- **New hotel provision**

KEY PLANNING PERMISSIONS

- Planning permission has been granted for B1 office development for 11 units and car parking at the proposed Durham Tees Valley Airport Business Park ((08/00703/FUL)
- Planning permission has been granted for a 130 bedroom hotel with car parking (08/00615/FUL)
- Planning permissions are in place to support further growth at the Airport which would improve the quality of facilities enabling the airport to handle up to three million passengers a year, as well as higher levels of freight through the creation of a new cargo and maintenance village.

SITE SPECIFIC PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- Durham Tees valley Airport Masterplan

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

Transport Infrastructure

- Modelling of the A66 Darlington bypass has enabled scenario testing of future development impacts on the A66 and secondary road network. This work is now being taken forward to help prioritise schemes for funding from the Regional Funding Allocation or other funding sources¹.
- A feasibility study is underway to assess detailed designs and provide cost estimates for the relocation of the station at Durham Tees Valley Airport, which in the longer term could provide for the Tees Valley Metro².

¹VISSIM transport model of the A66 Darlington bypass, Highways Agency and JMP Consultants

²Network Rail GRIP 4 feasibility study

Utilities Infrastructure

- All non residential development to be developed to at least a BREEAM 'very good' standard.
- At least 20% of the site's energy supply should come from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources

Community and Social Infrastructure

The proposed uses do not require provision of social and community infrastructure at this time. However providers will be consulted and where necessary this plan will be updated.

Green Infrastructure

The proposed uses do not require provision of green infrastructure at this time. However providers will be consulted and where necessary this plan will be updated.

MEANS OF DELIVERY: FUNDING

- Investment decisions from Peel Holdings at DTVA
- Private sector investment for provision of hotels
- £1.25m has been obtained through the Regional Transport Board for a GRIP 4 feasibility study to assess detailed designs and provide cost estimates for the potential Tees Valley Metro.
- Investment decisions from the Highways Agency for the A66

PROGRESS

- The partnership agreement between Peel Holdings, the Council and Stockton Council will lead to investment in the Airport, which will be spent improving the terminal and infrastructure, to achieve the Airport's projectable growth target of 3 million passengers per year by 2015.

12.0 RISKS

- 12.1 As the last two to three years has shown, the amount of new development that is delivered cannot be predicted with any certainty, particularly over the Core Strategy plan period, not least because delivery of most new development is dependent on market conditions.
- 12.2 One of the most significant risks is that the necessary infrastructure to enable housing development is not provided. Infrastructure providers have provided information based on best possible current knowledge, and the strategic locations have been phased accordingly, but future provision will inevitably rely on funding for such works. Equally negotiation of a range of planning obligation matters should be undertaken in a transparent and flexible manner to ensure that new development places no unnecessary impact on the community's existing infrastructure.
- 12.3 There will remain a need for planned levels of growth to be supported by investment in additional infrastructure capacity. However, within the context of a more clearly defined financial framework at both the regional and local level, the nature of that investment may need to change. More certainty may be required from the public sector funding alongwith maintaining and potentially increasing the nature and scope of private sector contributions.
- 12.4 Increasing the alignment of investment programmes and decisions is essential to achieving a co-ordinated and timely delivery of infrastructure. Many decisions are taken at a national level or through nationally regulated industries over varying timescales and investment cycles. There is a need for better coordination with the statutory planning framework at the local level. The utilities in particular are provided by the private sector within a regulatory framework overseen by an independent regulator who discourages the utility from investing speculatively in anticipation of future growth; the emphasis is on certainty, so utilities providers are unable to carry out advance provision of services, which can making planning for growth difficult.

13.0 FLEXIBILITY AND CONTINGENCY

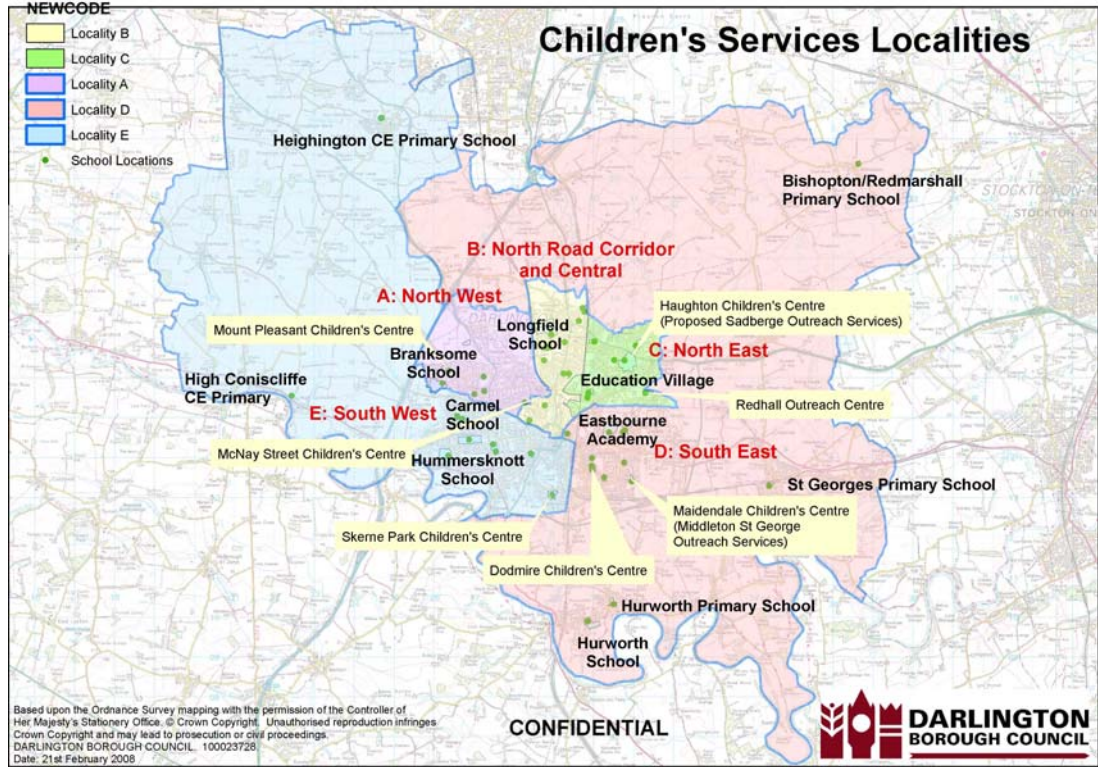
- 13.1 It is important that this LIP provides a flexible approach to the implementation and delivery of the Core Strategy. Some policies also make reference to viability tests, which also allow for flexibility through the pre-application process. The Council's adopted Affordable Housing SPD and Design SPD already allows for affordable housing provision and provision of decentralised and renewable or low carbon technologies to be waived or reduced in exceptional circumstances, and identifies project viability as one of the circumstances that could trigger this. Provision of additional infrastructure requirements will continue to allow for viability and while the Council will not impose onerous infrastructure requirements on developers, they must demonstrate that a range of infrastructure provision is not viable or feasible on a site. All planning applications are subject to negotiation, for example in relation to planning obligations, to meet the specific infrastructure needs of each development.
- 13.2 Knowledge of the type and level of infrastructure likely to be required will help address infrastructure constraints early in the plan making process, enabling appropriate assessments, feasibility studies and modelling to be undertaken to determine that the infrastructure is capable of accommodating the level of growth or whether additional infrastructure is required.

14.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

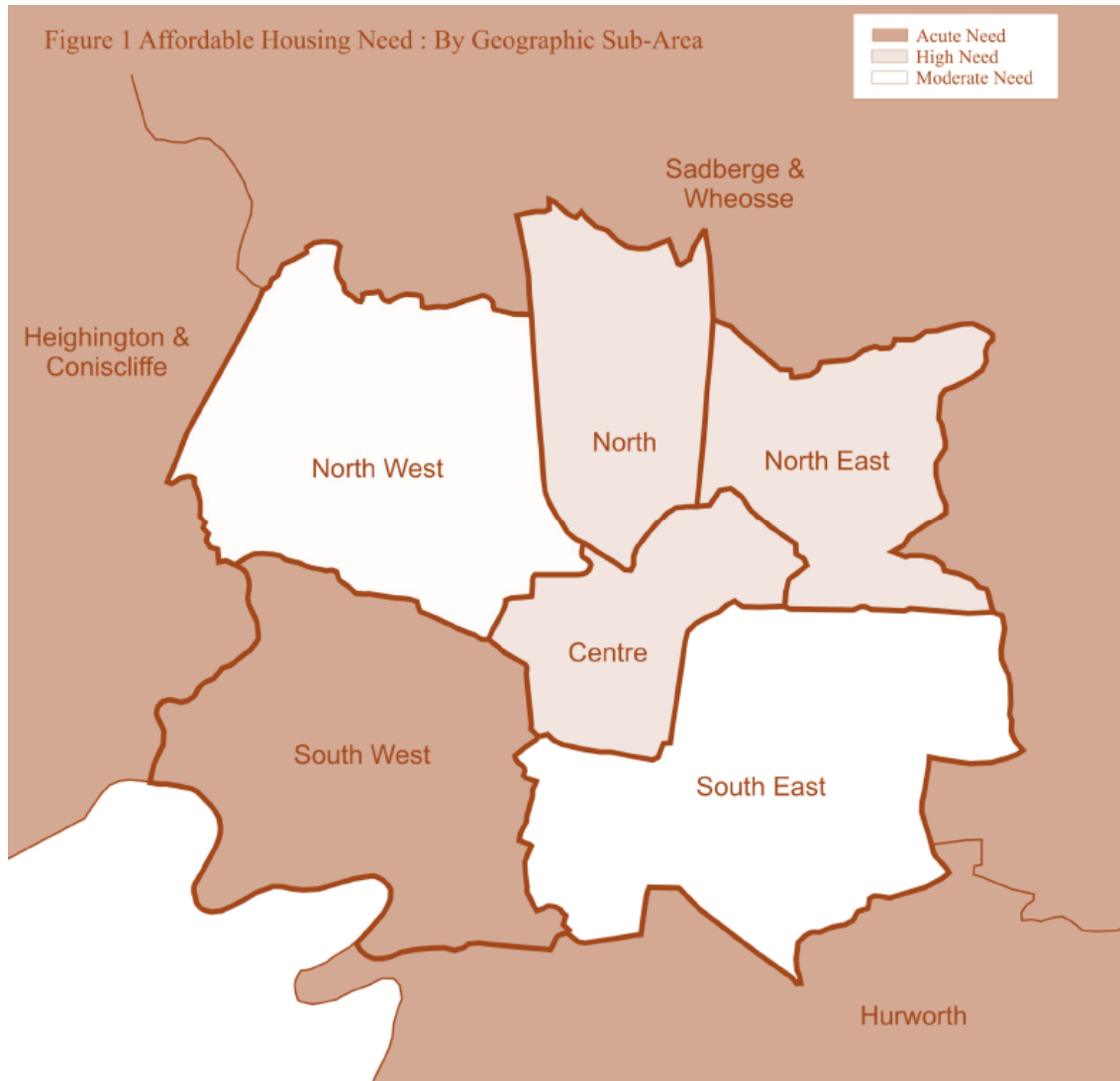
- 14.1 The Council's Annual Monitoring Report will assess the infrastructure evidence base and unfunded projects can be reviewed annually. Where infrastructure delivery, particularly for the strategic locations is not being delivered, the Council will:
- review whether there are any additional sources of funding that could be accessed to help provide the infrastructure;
 - consider allowing those strategic locations where development is phased for later segments of the plan period to be brought forward earlier, and consider whether the plan needs to be revised to include any of the other potential strategic locations for housing considered as options but not taken forward in the plan.

APPENDIX 1 DARLINGTON CYCLE MAP

APPENDIX 2 DARLINGTON LOCALITY MAP



APPENDIX 3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED



APPENDIX 4 STATION TRAVEL PLAN

| Measures to be delivered in the short term | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Description | Owner | Funding Source | Likely Cost | Timescale |
| Improve direction signing within, to and from Station and at car parks | TOC | TOC (train operating company) | TBA | 12/09 |
| Improve subway to/from Victoria Road | TOC | TOC | TBA | 12/09 |
| Install dedicated car sharing parking spaces | TOC | TOC | £1000 | 12/09 |
| Install new cycle parking at main entrances | TOC | TOC/LTP/ERDF/CDT | £20-30,000 | 12/09 |
| Measures to be delivered in the Medium-Long Term | | | | |
| Extend integrated ticketing options | TOC/Bus Operator | TOC/Bus operator | TBA | 12/11 |
| Investigate improved bus connectivity between town centre and the Station | TOC/Bus Operator | N/A | TBA | 4/11 |
| Operation of cycle hire scheme at the station linked to other sites in the urban area | TOC/DBC | TOC/ERDF/CDT | £5,000 start up | 4/11 |
| Provision of smart card operated cycle parking | TOC/DBC | ERDF/CDT | £10,000 | 12/11 |
| Investigate options for improving ambience of footways on Parkgate | DBC/NR | LTP/NR | Dependent on options identified | 12/11 |
| Improvements to Pensbury Street back lane by Station entrance | DBC | LTP/ERDF/Other | £20,000 | 2010/2011 |
| Parkgate ramp improvements to footway | TOC/NR | TOC/NR/LTP | TBA | 2011 |
| Neasham Road/Garbutt Square refurbish footbridge | DBC | TOC/NR | TBA | 2012 |
| Longer Term – funding to be identified | | | | |
| Improved access to Garbutt Square car park via new footbridge | LA/TOC/NR | TBA | £2M | |
| Direct access to Central Park via pedestrian/cycle bridge across Parkgate | LA/TOC/NR | Central Park/other | £2-3m | |
| Major improvements to Victoria Road and entrance including bus interchange and bus loop | DBC | TBA | £1-2M | |
| Shuttle bus-Parkgate entrance to/from Town Centre | DBC/Bus Operator | TBA | Revenue cost to be identified | |

DBC: Council, TOC: Train Operating Company, ERDF: European Regional Development Fund, CDT: Cycling Demonstration Town, NR: Network Rail

APPENDIX 5 INDICATIVE PRIMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROJECTS

| SCHOOL | PROJECT | TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING | PCP CONTRIBUTION | DFC CONTRIBUTION |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Heathfield Primary | Significant reorganisation to address suitability issues, creating opportunities to enhance extended schools activities and increase capacity from 60-75, increasing overall capacity by 105 | 1,500,000 | 1,363,230 | 136,770 |
| Dodmire Infants and Junior | Major remodelling and refurbishment of the school linked to possible amalgamation of the two schools | 1,500,000 | 1,296,768 | 203,232 |
| Corporation Road | Major remodelling of kitchen and dining areas and addressing condition issues | 1,500,000 | 1,388,178 | 111,822 |
| Hurworth Primary | Significant reorganisation to consolidate the school within the existing infant building and demolish current junior school building | 1,500,000 | 1,405,188 | 94,812 |
| Reid Street Primary | Major remodelling to address significant areas of concern within the school including entrance, foundation stage, externals and provision of new classroom | 1,500,000 | 1,362,852 | 137,148 |
| Whinfield Primary | Significant remodelling to address suitability, condition work to kitchen and two classroom extension to replace temporary classrooms | 900,000 | 736,203 | 163,797 |
| Harrowgate Hill | Add three additional classrooms to address basic needs, increasing intake from 75 to 90, increasing overall capacity by 105 | 900,000 | 833,210 | 66,790 |
| Gurney Pease Primary | Addressing major condition issues through replacing the roof, windows and heating | 600,000 | 521,778 | 78,223 |
| Alderman Leach | Four extra classrooms to meet basic need in the area, intake increased from 45 to 60 adding 105 places | 700,000 | 651,755 | 48,245 |
| Mount Pleasant Primary | Internal remodelling to address the capacity of the hall, create small group teaching areas and remove temporary accommodation | 600,000 | 512,093 | 87,908 |
| Red Hall Primary | Addressing major condition issues through reroofing and replacement heating system | 450,000 | 387,108 | 62,892 |
| Heighington Primary | New classroom to increase intake to 40, extend existing classroom and additional remodelling | 350,000 | 280,492 | 69,508 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|---|------------|------------|-----------|
| Abbey Infant and School | Junior | New classroom to free up additional community facilities, create safer parking and play area at juniors | 150,000 | 65,536 | 84,464 |
| St John's Primary | | Hygiene facility and flexible small group space for intervention work | 150,000 | 135,000 | 15,000 |
| High Coniscliffe Primary | | Create turning circle within school grounds to address Health and Safety issue, improve externals and hardstanding play area | 150,000 | 99,770 | 50,230 |
| St Bede's RC Primary | | Replacement of steps at all fire doors, between playgrounds and general access improvement work | 50,000 | 45,000 | 5,000 |
| Holy Family RC Primary | | Internal remodelling to create access to existing community space to enhance small group work and community engagement (possible future development of nursery) | 44,000 | 39,600 | 4,400 |
| TOTAL | | | 12,544,000 | 11,123,760 | 1,420,240 |

CONTACT US

If you would like any more information about the Local Infrastructure Plan or would like copies of the document or response form please contact

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