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Foreword

The County Durham Plan will set out how much development is required in the county, including housing, jobs and shopping and then look to place it where people want to live and where businesses want to invest.

This document identifies the issues and options relevant to the future planning of County Durham which will develop what will become the preferred option for moving the county forward. Understanding the issues and clarifying which option delivers the best outcomes is the starting point of any plan process.

Whilst the economy is seen as a high strategic priority of the council and its partners it also needs to be balanced with ensuring that social and environmental issues are fully considered and prioritised equally. This is a Plan for the whole county so it is important that it works for each and every settlement in ensuring that they remain sustainable in the long term.

The way the county's towns and villages are spread out is a legacy of the rise and fall of the mining, steel and other heavy industries and has left us with a built environment which reflects this industrial past. The decline of these industries meant a significant weakening of the economy and high levels of unemployment. The response to this decline was the use of significant amounts of public funding to support regeneration. This has met with some localised success however, whilst environmental improvements and decontamination of sites has occurred, structural issues within the economy remain. As a result and despite the growth experienced during the 2000s, our economy continues to lack the diversity and scale required to be robust and thriving. Furthermore large scale reductions in public expenditure have acted to remove significant resource from the local economy.

County Durham falls below the North East's economic performance which in turn is one of the poorest regions in the UK, just above Wales. Similarly our employment rate, at 66.8% is significantly below the national average of 73.4%. County Durham's existing proportion of jobs in the private sector is also significantly lower than the national average, 63.8% compared to 72.6%, and this imbalance is growing. The county's

industrial past has also had an impact on its housing mix with the proportion of terraced housing as part of the housing stock at 38.4%, much higher than the figure for the North East and England, both of which are 30.4%.

The under-performance of the county's economy and the reduction in public funding has required the council and its partners to seek alternatives to tackling these challenges. In doing so it is important to recognise the opportunities that exist including:

- Significant private investment including Hitachi in Newton Aycliffe; Atom Bank, Freeman's Reach, Milburngate House and The Gates in Durham City; DurhamGate in Spennymoor; Integra61 at Bowburn; Auckland Castle and Eleven Arches in Bishop Auckland;
- The opportunity to lever in further private sector investment at North Road in Durham City, Forrest Park, Newton Aycliffe and Hawthorn, Murton amongst others;
- The expansion of NETPark, a regionally significant centre for research and development (R&D);
- Durham University as a major academic and cultural asset to the county;
- An improving qualification and skills base including the growth of high tech engineering supported by the opening of the first University Technical College this coming September;
- The continued development of the visitor economy with significant opportunities arising as a result of investment in Bishop Auckland and Beamish;
- Improving delivery of new housing to meet the needs of different groups including affordable housing and an opportunity for executive housing at Lambton Park Estate;

- Excellent communications including the East Coast Mainline, the A1(M) and the A19; and
- An exceptional natural and built environment which makes County Durham an attractive place to work, invest, visit and live.

Comments will then be considered and made available on the website together with the council's response.

In 2014 the council submitted a plan to Government for consideration which identified an approach to give us the best chance of harnessing these opportunities and addressing the challenges we face. It focused development on our main towns, including Durham City, while also recognising the important contribution other areas of the county can make.

Following the Examination in Public of the County Durham Plan, the independent inspector's interim report suggested that the economic growth set out by the council and its partners in the plan was over-ambitious. As a result the council felt it had no alternative but to challenge the report by way of a Judicial Review.

With the consent of the Government, this resulted in the interim report being quashed by the High Court and an agreement which saw the council withdraw the plan. This resolution meant that the council could prepare a local plan without the inspector's interim report having any bearing on the way forward.

Following legal advice and discussions with Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the planning inspectorate, it was agreed that a new plan, which builds on the changes that have taken place over the last two years in respect of progress, evidence and opportunity, would be the most robust position. This provides a strong foundation for preparing a local plan for County Durham.

We therefore encourage as many people as possible to get involved and help us prepare a robust local plan that will help build a sustainable future for our existing and future residents. We do understand that many people may have made comments to the previous plan, however as they relate to the withdrawn plan you will need to make representations as the new Plan takes shape. Each of the consultation stages will provide an opportunity for you to make comments.

1 Introduction

1.1 A local plan seeks to guide the future development of a place to improve the lives of its existing and future residents. We therefore need a local plan that meets the differing needs of our communities. The county has seen some successful regeneration in the past but our overall economy is the weakest in the north-east, itself the poorest performing economy in England. We therefore need a local plan that promotes quality of life, provides jobs for a flexible and skilled workforce, protects and enhances our special environment and supports our towns and villages.

1.2 Without a local plan, development including housing, will still happen given the context of a growing population and a national housing shortage. The County Durham Plan will therefore give us the ability to guide and direct where it goes and what it looks like.

1.3 This is the first stage of consultation on the Plan which will provide the policy framework for the county up to 2033 to support the development of a thriving economy so that our residents can experience the benefits that ensue as a result. It is important that local communities, interested people and groups get involved and have their say to help shape the future of County Durham. This document sets out the planning issues that the county will face and options for how they could be addressed. These include how many new homes and jobs we need to plan for and where they could go, what infrastructure we need and how we can protect our important landscapes and habitats.

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all councils to produce a local plan and keep it up to date. Since Local Government Review in 2009 we have been using saved policies from the existing local plans produced by the previous local authorities. Without an up-to-date local plan, the Council have much less influence over the location of new development and the provision of infrastructure. As a result sites are being promoted for development in locations that the council and its communities want to protect. Not having an up to date local plan therefore creates uncertainty and makes it harder to resist inappropriate development and secure new infrastructure such as schools and health facilities.

1.5 The Government continues to stress the need for economic and housing growth in all areas and has stated that if councils do not deliver this by way of a local plan then the Government could potentially intervene in that area. The new local plan is the opportunity for local communities and stakeholders to plan for how County Durham should grow and improve.

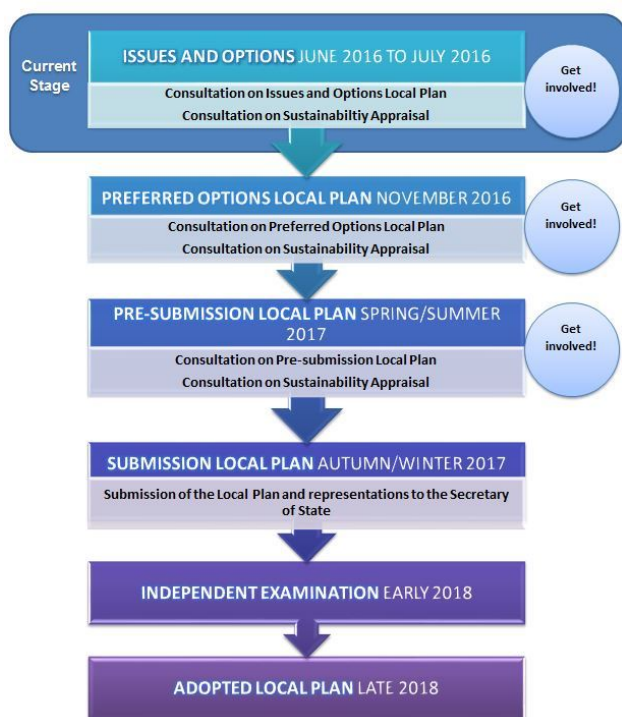
1.6 In a local context the Plan should have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which is the overarching strategy for County Durham and is published by the County Durham Partnership. It sets out our shared long-term vision for the county, our ambitions for the area and the priorities that partners and communities believe are important. It provides the blueprint to deliver long lasting improvements and sets the scene for the Plan. Similarly regard will be had to the County Durham Regeneration Statement which supports the SCS and seeks to create places that are attractive, well-designed, and well-managed, with good amenities and transport connections, providing a focal point for business and social interactions.

1.7 The main focus of the Plan will be to reflect the local policy context by exploring the strategic issues including how much development we need and where it should be located. The detail of the actual development sites and the planning policies needed to determine planning applications will all evolve as the consultation stages on the new local plan progress.

1.8 In addition to the Plan there will be one other future document. The Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document will be prepared to complement the minerals and waste policies of the Plan. It will contain detailed development management policies and any non-strategic minerals and waste allocations which are considered necessary to meet the future needs of County Durham and make an appropriate contribution, if necessary, to wider regional and national needs for mineral supply. Once adopted the policies and provisions of the Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document will replace the remaining saved policies of the County Durham Minerals Local Plan 2000 and the saved policies of the County Durham Waste Local Plan 2005.

Stages of Local Plan Preparation and Next Steps

1.9 The timetable for preparing the Plan with details on key stages of public consultation is summarised below. The detailed timetable is set out within our Local Development Scheme which is available to view online at: www.durham.gov.uk/cdp. Following this Issues and Options stage further evidence will be prepared and any comments received will be considered to help us determine our 'preferred option' for each issue. This is known as the Preferred Options stage and will also include a range of policies and sites for further consultation. Following consideration of comments received at this stage the Plan will be refined and published for further consultation. The comments received at this stage will then be forwarded on to an appointed Planning Inspector following formal Submission of the Plan for an Examination in Public.



How do I get involved?

For more information on the County Durham Plan, and the Issues and Options consultation in particular, please visit our website at: www.durham.gov.uk/cdp.

You can send responses in a number of ways, but we would like to encourage you to submit your views online, via our interactive website, at: ⁽ⁱ⁾

<http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

This method should save you time and it will allow us to process and consider your comments more quickly. We hope that you will find the website quick and easy to use. Once your comments have been submitted they will be processed and added to the interactive website where you will also be able to see what comments have been made by others. Names will be made available, unless we are notified otherwise. In order to protect your privacy all other information you provide when registering will not be open to public view. All of your comments will however be publicly available so please ensure that you do not include any personal details, such as your address within your comments. Responses can also be sent by email to: cdpconsultation@durham.gov.uk.

A response form is also available for download from the website. If you do not have access to the Internet, please respond in writing to: **FREEPOST SPATIAL POLICY**. No further information is required on the address.

You can also call the **Spatial Policy Team** with any questions, to request hard copies of the documentation or to request further information on: **0300 026 0000**.

All comments should be submitted by **6pm, 5th August 2016**.

On the following pages you'll find the questions we are asking everyone about the issues and Options for the Plan.

You can answer as many or as few as you like or that you feel are relevant to you.

To try and help you to find the questions that may be most relevant to you, we have categorised them into three types:

BLUE questions are those we think everyone will want to answer.

ⁱ <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

PINK questions are those we think are of a more technical nature, such as windfall allowances, waste or minerals and may be particularly relevant to people involved in the planning process or specialists in those areas.

YELLOW questions are those where we are asking everyone if they would like to suggest any sites which could be considered for allocation for different uses such as housing, employment, or retail.

The colour of the question is however only a guide and you can answer any you would like to.

Neighbourhood Plans

1.10 Town and Parish Councils, or constituted community organisations (Neighbourhood Forums) have the ability to prepare further plans and orders that complement the Plan. These powers were introduced to enable communities to get more involved in planning for their areas and consist of the following:

- Neighbourhood Plan – provides local policies for development and use of land in a neighbourhood;
- Neighbourhood Development Order – enables Town and Parish Councils to grant planning permission for certain types of development without the need for people to apply to the County Council; and
- Community Right to Build Order – enables small scale development in communities such as housing or community facilities.

1.11 These tools are designed to be used positively to support planned growth in a local area and build on, and conform with, the strategic needs set out in a local plan. They must also conform with national policy and guidance. We

will work together with communities who are developing their community-led plans alongside the Plan, to make sure they complement each other. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been finalised and following an examination by an appointed examiner, a referendum is held in the neighbourhood area it covers. If it is approved by the community, it will be made as part of the development plan by the council. They will therefore be a key material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Assessing Impacts

Sustainability Appraisal

1.12 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a statutory process integrated into the preparation of all aspects of a local plan. The process assesses the potential impacts of policies and allocations against a range of economic, social and environmental considerations and includes the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment legislation. The SA advises on ways in which any adverse effects can be avoided, reduced or mitigated or how any positive effects could be maximised. This helps to shape the Plan and ensure that it is promoting sustainable development. You can give us your views on the Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal using the methods set out in the 'How do I get involved?' section.

Habitat Regulation Assessment

1.13 Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is integral to the development of land use plans such as the County Durham Plan as it provides a statutory process⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ to assess the potential impact on Natura 2000 sites. Natura 2000 sites are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within Europe. These include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU 'Wild Birds' Directive, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the EU 'Habitats Directive', and European Marine Sites (EMS). As the Habitats Directive applies the precautionary principle, plans can only be adopted if no adverse impact on the integrity of site(s) in question is proven. To ascertain this a Screening

ii In accordance with Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>), which transposes the EU Habitats Directive, (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm).

Assessment, followed by an Appropriate Assessment, where necessary, must be undertaken. You can give us your views on the Issues and Options HRA Screening Assessment using the methods set out in 'How do I get involved?' section.

Equality Impact Assessment

1.14 Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) allows us to assess any risk of discrimination before introducing new policies. Sometimes certain groups, such as Gypsies and Travellers or older people, will be treated differently to ensure that they are not unfairly impacted or that their needs such as in respect of housing can be met. An EQIA has been undertaken for this Issues and Options stage and will be built into the development of the policies and proposals as the Plan evolves. A further EQIA update will be carried out after the consultation, to ensure that groups have been reached and their views listened to.

Health Impact Assessment

1.15 The Plan plays a key role in shaping the physical environment which can have a significant impact on health and well-being by making it possible for people to make healthier lifestyle choices. Therefore to embed health considerations in the Plan a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be undertaken to inform the Preferred Options stage.

Duty to Cooperate: Cross-Boundary Issues

1.16 One of the changes brought about by the Localism Act is the introduction of the Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders when preparing plans. County Durham borders a number of county, district and unitary councils and a National Park Authority. Regular liaison meetings will continue to be held with neighbouring councils to inform plan preparation and to ensure that issues of common

concern are taken into account and hopefully resolved as the local plan evolves. Notably, the council has developed working groups with the Tyne and Wear authorities and those in Tees Valley, where we have our closest interaction. We also have formal arrangements with authorities in North Yorkshire and Cumbria where specific issues such as minerals are discussed. Other meetings with statutory consultees such as Historic England and Natural England will also continue throughout the process.

1.17 As an outcome of this co-operation we will seek to recognise the economic, social and environmental linkages with neighbouring areas and ensure particular issues are understood and resolved wherever possible. Similarly this process will allow County Durham to influence the local plans of our neighbours.

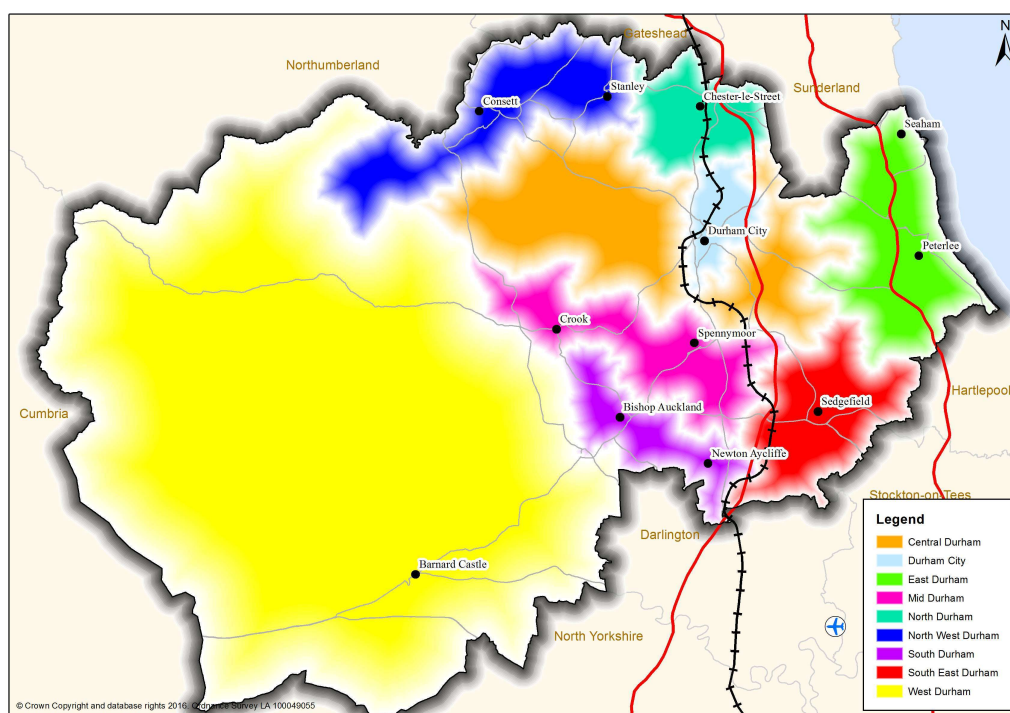
Monitoring

1.18 Monitoring the success of the Plan will be important to ensure it is being delivered and remains effective. It also indicates when policies may need to be reviewed in response to changing circumstances. An Annual Monitoring Report will therefore be produced to measure the effectiveness of our policies.

Monitoring Areas

1.19 In order to aid monitoring and discuss issues across an area the size of County Durham, with its many different communities, it is useful to break the county down into geographical areas which have similar characteristics in terms of their housing, economy and history. We have therefore identified nine monitoring areas which will assist in measuring the success of the Plan's policies. In reality, the boundaries between these areas are not distinct and in some cases issues overlap as they are not physically discrete. The general extent of the monitoring areas is shown below.

County Durham Plan Monitoring Areas



2 Vision and Objectives

2.1 The key community priorities set out in the County Durham Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) draw upon the needs, expectations and aspirations of local communities, groups and partner organisations across the county. Looking to the end of the plan period of 2033, we think the SCS Vision to create an 'Altogether Better Durham' is the starting point to inform the vision for the Plan. Regard will also be had to the County Durham Regeneration Statement which supports the SCS. The spatial vision for the Plan needs to reflect the key challenges and issues facing the county.

Spatial Vision for County Durham

By 2033 County Durham will have a thriving economy and will be bridging the gap between its economic performance and that of other parts of the North East and the rest of England. It will be a top location for business and tourism, capitalising on its strategic location on the A1(M), A19, East Coast Mainline and close proximity to Durham Tees Valley and Newcastle Airports.

The county will comprise sustainable and regenerated communities, with key development being located where sustainable patterns of development can occur and support the vitality and vibrancy of existing centres. All communities and businesses will benefit from an accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system, resulting in increased public transport use and well used and attractive cycling and walking routes.

The county will have an accessible, well designed range and choice of housing, services and community facilities, complementing the area's thriving economy and meeting the needs of all residents. At the heart of communities will be accessible green infrastructure, not only improving the quality of place but people's quality of life and reducing health inequalities. The county's rural areas will be continuing to play a vital role in the county's economy, employment and tourism, including through

diversification and embracing the opportunities provided by improved broadband connectivity.

The county will continue to be renowned for its wealth of environmental assets. The natural and historic environment will be enhanced, recognising the significant contribution to the county's economy, sense of place and cultural identity. Our environment, communities and businesses will be capable of adaptation to and be resilient in the face of climate extremes supporting opportunities to establish a low carbon economy.

County Durham will continue to play its role and remain an important source of minerals. Its quarries will continue to produce the steady and adequate supply of minerals, as required. New or extended mineral workings will be guided to environmentally acceptable locations and carried out to the highest high environmental standards. County Durham's waste will be viewed as a valuable resource and waste recycling will be an integrated part of daily lives.

The strategic objectives are derived from the Vision and focus on the key issues which the Plan needs to address. The objectives provide the broad direction of the spatial strategy and the detailed policies of the Plan.

Objective 1: Economic Ambition - Improve the economic performance of County Durham by creating more and better jobs, increasing the employment rate of the working age population to 73% and maintaining it, thereby increasing GVA (a measure of economic performance), household income and demand for local goods and services.

Objective 2: Sustainable Communities - Locate new development in areas which offer the best opportunity for sustainable development patterns thus ensuring that new homes and jobs are supported by a high quality environment, services and

infrastructure and in turn new development supports the vitality, viability and economic performance of our towns and villages.

Objective 3: Housing Need - Deliver new, high quality housing that is accessible to, and meets the needs and aspirations of, County Durham's residents (including affordable, families with children, older persons, specialist housing and those people wishing to build their own home).

Objective 4: Infrastructure - Enable the delivery of the infrastructure that is required to support the economic, social and environmental ambitions of the county.

Objective 5: Rural Economy - Support and improve the rural economy by encouraging diversification, retaining key facilities, infrastructure and services whilst promoting appropriate new development in rural settlements.

Objective 6: Green Belt - Support the aims and purposes of Green Belt and seek to positively enhance its beneficial use.

Objective 7: Natural Environment - Protect, enhance and manage the county's locally, nationally and internationally important natural environment.

Objective 8: Built and Historic Environment - Protect and enhance County Durham's locally, nationally and internationally important built and historic environment, including its wide range of buildings, sites, archaeology, parks and gardens and other heritage assets.

Objective 9: High Quality Design - Ensure that all new development incorporates the highest quality of design and innovation, reflects local distinctiveness, promotes sustainability and achieves secure communities.

Objective 10: Raising Aspirations - Encourage greater prosperity by supporting education, training and research establishments that help to raise the aspirations, participation and attainment of

young people, re-engage adults with work and lifelong learning and develop workforce skills.

Objective 11: Tackling Deprivation and Inequalities - Ensure that the regeneration needs of County Durham's communities are met in order to reduce deprivation and social, economic and environmental inequalities.

Objective 12: Quality of Life - Safeguard, enhance and provide a wide range of educational, social, sporting, health, recreational and cultural facilities including Green Infrastructure to contribute to the quality of life, satisfaction and health and well being of people who live, work within and visit County Durham.

Objective 13: Visitor Economy - Strengthen County Durham's role as a visitor/tourist destination through supporting and enhancing existing attractions, townscapes, landscapes and the historic and natural environment.

Objective 14: Adaptation to Climate Change - Adapt to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather conditions by promoting sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) in new developments, promoting sustainable land management and conservation including for protecting habitats such as woodland and peatland, ensuring that new development is located away from areas of flood risk, and encouraging appropriate building design.

Objective 15: Low Carbon - Reduce the causes of climate change and support the transition to a low carbon economy by encouraging and enabling the use of low and zero carbon technologies and sustainable and active transport.

Objective 16: Natural Resources - Encourage the efficient, effective and environmentally sensitive use of the county's natural resources, particularly energy, water, soils, minerals and waste.

Objective 17: Minerals - Ensure a steady and adequate supply of energy and non energy minerals, in the most appropriate and sensitive way, whilst conserving existing facilities from incompatible development.

Objective 18: Waste Management - Support the development of a modern network of sustainable waste management facilities and protect existing facilities from incompatible development.

Question 1

Is this an appropriate Spatial Vision for County Durham, or is there something missing or a more suitable alternative? Please give reasons for your response.

Question 2

Do you agree with the objectives? Can you suggest any alternatives and are there any missing?

3 How Much Development and Where

Quantity of Development (How Much)

3.1 Through the Plan, we will seek to ensure that the supply of housing meets the needs of the current and future population of County Durham. The council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) June 2016 ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ has determined that County Durham can be described as a self-contained housing market area in that the majority of households seeking to move house, look for another house within the county. We should therefore be able to plan for the needs of our existing communities without needing to look at other areas outside of the county. Discussions with our neighbouring authorities indicate there is no current requirement to take account of their housing needs.

Question 3

Do you agree that County Durham is a single Housing Market Area for developing housing needs? Please give reasons for your response.

Determining Housing Need (Objectively Assessed Need)

3.2 In order to understand our housing needs up to 2033 we commissioned Edge Analytics to provide us with a number of future demographic scenarios. These have been undertaken as part of an assessment of our Objectively Assessed Need for housing (OAN). The 'County Durham Demographic Analysis & Forecasts' ^(iv) report provides the background to this section and work on developing and identifying OAN will evolve through the plan making stages and through updates to the Demographic Analysis & Forecasts evidence base and the SHMA.

3.3 Against a position of seeking to 'boost significantly' ^(v) the supply of housing, Government guidance requires that the household projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) should provide the 'starting point' estimate of overall housing need ^(vi). The 'starting point' projections predict that in order to accommodate for projected growth 1,329 additional dwellings per year (based on a population increase of 34,615 people) would be required (25,251 dwellings over the Plan period) whilst a scenario of natural change (zero migration in or out of the county) would require 844 dwellings per year (16,036 dwellings over the Plan period). The guidance also states that it is necessary to consider 'alternative assumptions in relation to the underlying demographic projections and household formation rates' of the local area. On this basis it is appropriate to look at long term trends which include both recession and booms in the economy which will then reflect migration trends at different stages of the economic cycle. The following population growth scenarios have therefore been developed as a basis for identifying our OAN:

- A scenario which makes use of short term international and short term national migration trends. This is the **Population Growth Short Term** scenario and it derives its internal migration rates and international migration flow assumptions from the historical period 2008/09 to 2013/14 (i.e. 6 years, similar to the ONS SNPP approach). This scenario results in **1,533 additional dwellings per annum** (29,127 over the period 2014 - 2033).
- A scenario which combines short term international migration trends and long term national migration trends. This is the **Population Growth Combination** scenario applies internal migration

iii <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

iv <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

v National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 47

vi Planning Practice Guidance (ref ID: 2a-016-20150227) notes that 'The 2012-2037 Household Projections were published on 27 February 2015, and are the most up-to-date estimate of future household growth'. To note, on the 25th of May 2016, the Office for National Statistics published 2014 based Subnational Population Projections (SNPP). This data will be considered as part of the Preferred Options stage County Durham Plan.

assumptions based on the 2001–2014 history ^(vii) but which incorporates immigration and emigration assumptions directly from the 2012-based SNPP. This scenario results in **1,629 additional dwellings per year** (30,951 over the period 2014 - 2033).

- A scenario which makes use of long term international and long term national migration trends. This is the **Population Growth Long Term** scenario and it derives its internal migration rates and international migration flow assumptions from a longer 13-year period, 2001/02 to 2013/14. This makes use of the full 2001–2014 historical time series ^(viii) for County Durham. This scenario results in **1,717 additional dwellings per year** (32,623 over the period 2014 - 2033).

3.4 As context, over the past 17 years (1999/2000 - 2015/16 and the same length as the Plan period) there have been, on average, 1,371 new dwellings built per year. This demonstrates that each of the scenarios significantly boosts the supply of housing as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is still realistic and likely to be deliverable.

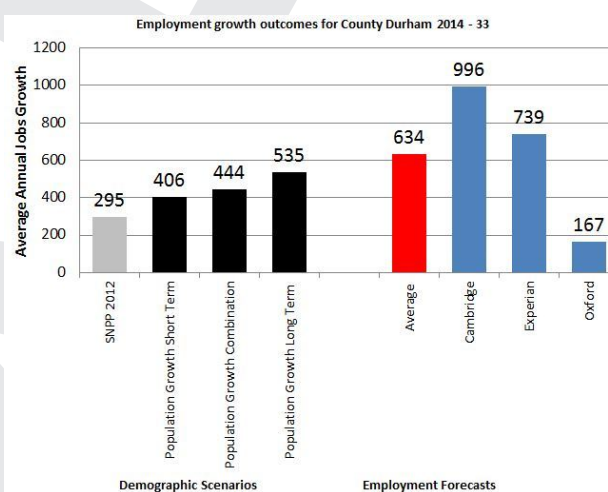
Question 4

Which population growth scenario do you prefer? Please give reasons for your response.

- 1,533 houses per year;
- 1,629 houses per year;
- 1,717 houses per year; or
- None of the above, please suggest an alternative option.

Jobs Growth

3.5 Once the population growth scenarios, as set out above, have been established it is possible to identify the level of job growth that is expected from each of the three scenarios. This is then compared against available forecasts of job growth to see whether or not sufficient jobs will be created. There are three main job forecasts which can be used by Experian, Oxford and Cambridge. It is notable that the jobs resulting from the three population growth scenarios are lower than the jobs expected by two of the forecasts and the average of the three. This comparison is shown in the figure below.

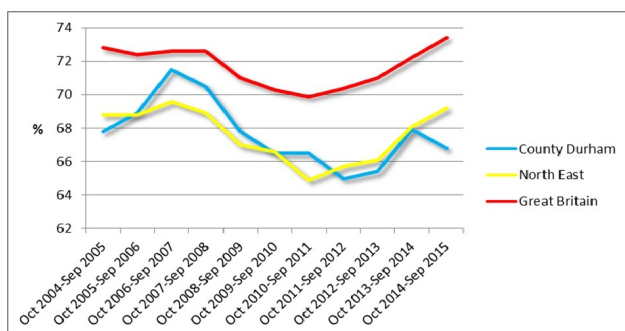


Employment Rate

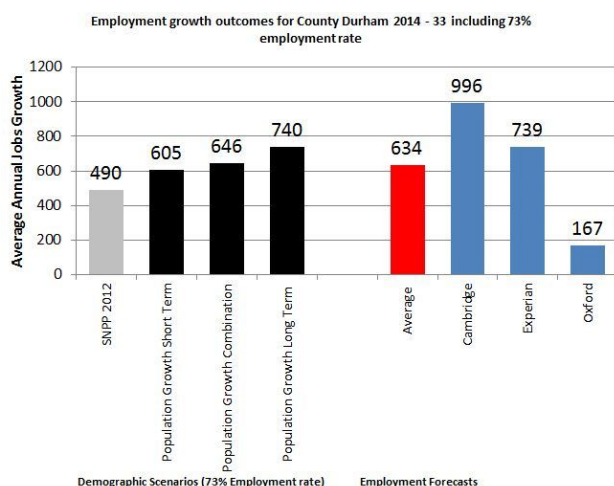
3.6 As the figure below shows, in 2007 County Durham's employment rate (the proportion of people of working age in employment) had steadily risen and achieved a level that was close to the national average. Since the 2008 recession however, the county's employment rate has fallen. A key objective of the County Durham Partnership is therefore to support efforts to achieve and maintain an employment rate of 73% (from the current 67%). To reach this target it is essential that a planning framework is in place that can deliver economic improvements and bring about investment that can deliver jobs.

vii 2001-14 incorporates a longer term internal migration trend across a full economic cycle using the 2001 Census as a starting point for this cycle.

viii 2001-14 incorporates a longer term internal and international migration trend across a full economic cycle using the 2001 Census as a starting point for this cycle.



3.7 Once the 73% employment rate is applied to the three population growth scenarios the resulting jobs growth increases and in two of the scenarios is higher than the average of the forecasts, as shown in the figure below.



Question 5

Is the ambition to increase the employment rate to 73% as part of creating more and better jobs within County Durham realistic? Please give reasons for your response.

Market Signals

3.8 In order to have a robust assessment of housing need it is necessary to ensure that we have an understanding of how the housing market is performing. The SHMA considers market signals for the County Durham housing market including house prices, rents, affordability and overcrowding. These indicators are considered over a historical time frame and against comparator authorities. In considering market

signals, the SHMA concludes that currently there are no market signals that require an adjustment to our housing need.

Determining the Amount of New Housing Required

3.9 Once we have established our housing need we then have to determine how we will meet it. In doing this we need to consider a number of sources of housing supply that can contribute to meeting need. Such sources include the number of houses which have been completed since the start of the plan period, the number of houses with planning permission and deliverable within the plan period, windfalls, empty homes which are brought back into use and allowances for demolitions. Once these have been applied to the need figure (the Objectively Assessed Need) what is left is the number of houses we need to allocate to fill any gap that might remain.

Windfalls

3.10 Government guidance states that local plans may include allowances for windfall sites (non-allocated sites) which may come forward at some time in the future if there is evidence to justify that allowance. As small sites under 0.4 hectares (12 houses) have historically made a contribution to past housing delivery (11% of housing completions since 2011) we believe it would be appropriate to include an allowance for these.

Question 6

Do you agree that it is appropriate to include a windfall allowance for small sites less than 0.4 hectares (12 houses)? Please give reasons for your response.

3.11 We believe it is inappropriate to include an allowance for large windfall sites as this could undermine the purpose of the local plan in providing certainty on where new housing should go. This is not to say that there will not be any large windfalls receiving planning permission during the Plan period just that these should not be relied on to meet our housing requirement.

Question 7

Do you agree that there should be no windfall allowance for large sites over 0.4 hectares (more than 12 houses)? Please give reasons for your response.

Question 9

Is it appropriate to include an allowance of 50 per year for demolitions in the housing supply? Please give reasons for your response.

Empty Homes

3.12 Bringing empty homes back in to use is a key priority for the council and is pursued through a number of different approaches. Past performance shows that on average, around 100 houses per year have been brought back into use. This figure is offset to some degree by those that have become long term vacant during the same period. Although there is no evidence on the number of properties that have become long term vacant, it seems reasonable to assume a figure of about 50 per year.

Question 8

Is it appropriate to include an allowance of 50 units per year for bringing back empty properties into use in the housing supply? Please give reasons for your response.

Demolitions

3.13 Sometimes where there is little or no demand for houses or they are in such poor condition that they are uninhabitable it is necessary to demolish them. If they are not council owned then they may have to be purchased before they can be demolished. Although funding for future demolitions is uncertain it is likely that there will be further demolitions across the Plan period, particularly in areas of low demand. Although on average, there have been around 75 demolitions a year in the past this is not necessarily a guide to the number of future demolitions given the changing funding climate. We think it is therefore reasonable to assume a lower figure of around 50 per year.

Employment Land

3.14 Government guidance recognises that analysing the demand and supply of employment land allows plan-makers to identify whether there is a mismatch between the quantitative and qualitative demand for employment land and the existing supply. Understanding the levels of employment land required for the county will be evidenced through the Issues and Option Stage Employment Land Review June 2016 (ELR)^(ix). The ELR will be updated at Preferred Options stage.

Quantitative Demand

3.15 Government guidance requires us to develop the total future needs for employment land based on a range of data which is current and robust. Three methods are suggested and the ELR has considered these approaches to understand the total amount of employment land that is needed in County Durham up to 2033. This figure would include existing employment land not currently in use. It could also include new employment land where this was justified These are set out below:

- **Labour Demand** – This approach uses employment forecasts of growth in different employment sectors from companies such as Experian and reflects recent trends and economic growth projections at the national and regional level. They also take into account how specific employment sectors in County Durham have performed relative to regional growth rates in the past. This results in a figure of **132 hectares**;
- **Labour Supply** – This approach is based on the estimated growth in jobs and a calculation of land needed to support these jobs. The jobs figures used are outputs from

ix <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

the calculation of housing need set out in the three scenarios in paragraph 3.3 above. This results in a figure of **130 hectares**; and

- **Past Take-up** of employment land and property – The amount of employment land which has been developed for different employment uses across the county since 2001. This results in a figure of **270 hectares**.

3.16 The main difference between the forecasting techniques is conflicting views regarding the future requirements of manufacturing. The baseline labour demand and labour supply scenarios indicate that future manufacturing demand will be in the order of 20 hectares. In contrast, the past take up scenario indicates that future manufacturing demand will be closer to 110 hectares.

Qualitative Demand

3.17 All of the above forecasting techniques have their strengths and limitations and consideration needs to be given as to how appropriate each scenario is to the circumstances of County Durham, taking into account current market conditions. Therefore before determining a final figure for the levels of employment land required, it will be important to take into account relevant qualitative factors. Such factors will include the views of businesses, agents and developers. This will allow us to obtain a detailed understanding of the commercial market context for the county, emerging sectors and market signals. It will also be key to factor in current business trends and monitor relevant business, economic and employment statistics. Ultimately the completed ELR will allow us to build up the qualitative and quantitative picture necessary to provide a full understanding of demand for employment land.

Supply

3.18 The ELR will also consider the current land supply of employment land. We estimate the county has around 755 hectares of allocated employment land. The reason this figure is so high relates to the local plans of the former local authorities which each allocated their own sites. Therefore the supply of employment land will be

much higher than whatever final figure for employment land is determined by the ELR. This does not however reflect qualitative issues or the potential to take advantage of specific opportunities relating to location. Therefore although it is likely that significant amounts of existing employment land will need to be de-allocated there may also be new sites allocated.

3.19 This approach would align with Government advice which recommends the de-allocation of employment land that has not come forward for development over many years as this could be a constraint on the development of our towns and villages by reducing the amount of land that may be available for housing. Similarly the long term protection of sites where there is no reasonable prospect of the site coming forward may also make it difficult to resist non-employment uses, such as housing, being developed on our more valuable employment allocations.

Spatial Distribution of Development (Where)

3.20 A local plan should not only identify the amount of new development needed but also a spatial strategy for where it should be located. Any options for locating new development must be realistic and deliverable, support the achievement of sustainable development and reflect an understanding of our neighbouring authorities' strategies.

Sustainability

3.21 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes it clear that the purpose of the planning system is the achievement of sustainable development in terms of its economic, social and environmental impacts. Patterns of growth should therefore recognise the role and function of settlements and focus significant development in locations which have access to services, facilities and employment opportunities allowing the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.

3.22 The County Durham Settlement Study 2012^(x) helps us understand these roles and the access to services and facilities of each of the county's over 250 settlements. The Study also assists in understanding the relationship between settlements and how they meet social and community needs, where people shop and go to school, work and leisure. The Settlement Study will be updated for the next stage of plan preparation and the proposed methodology is available for comment in the Call for Sites document accompanying the Issues and Options.

3.23 New development should also respond to an area's natural, built and historic environment and avoid unacceptable impacts on local, national and international designations. These principles should be incorporated into any option for the spatial strategy.

Impact on Economic Growth

3.24 The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. NPPF also states that plan-making should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should therefore be made to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Therefore any option for the spatial strategy should be considered in terms of its ability to support economic growth and the regeneration requirements of County Durham.

Viability and Delivery

3.25 Evidence within the Issues and Options - Viability Assessments in County Durham, June 2016^(xi), shows that viability and market attractiveness varies significantly across the county with values fluctuating significantly across short distances. Durham City achieves the highest house prices across the county. There are also high prices in Chester-le-Street owing to its proximity to Newcastle / Gateshead and Newton Aycliffe compared to its surrounding towns and villages. The delivery of development, taking into account the reduced availability of public funding

and market signals such as land prices and housing affordability, is therefore critical in the consideration of options for the spatial strategy. Housing sites, employment land and sites for retail development must therefore be located in places where people want to live, businesses want to invest and retailers want to operate.

Efficient Use of Land

3.26 The availability of suitable land will influence the spatial options for the distribution of development. Environmental designations and physical constraints such as flood risk and topography will therefore limit the areas of land that will be assessed as we seek to identify allocations in future iterations of the Plan.

3.27 NPPF also encourages the effective use of land, including reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is viable and not of high environmental value. County Durham has an excellent record of maximising brownfield land with much of the development that has taken place over the last 20 years bringing such land back into use. The council is also committed to the reuse of brownfield land and to this end has joined the Government's Brownfield Register pilot programme. As part of this project we are helping to develop the methodology that will be used for all local authorities to develop brownfield registers which will make it easier for these sites to obtain planning permission. The first draft of the Brownfield Register for County Durham has been made available as part of the evidence base supporting this Issues and Options document. Therefore the an important consideration for all options for the spatial strategy is to maximise the use of viable brownfield land wherever possible.

Question 10

Do you agree that these factors are the most important when considering the options for the Plan's spatial strategy or are there others? Please give reasons for your response.

x <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>
xi <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

Distribution of Employment

3.28 It is important to ensure that there is a portfolio of available sites across the county which are attractive to new employers, allow the expansion of existing businesses and respond to the changing needs of businesses. It is essential that these are located in areas of the county that offer good opportunities to attract investment. The Employment Land Review 2016 (ELR)^(xii) identifies a number of economic market areas across County Durham which reflect different commercial markets and recognise cross boundary relationships. These market areas are:

- Durham City (International Market Area);
- A1 Corridor (International Market Area);
- A19 Corridor (Regional Market Area);
- Consett and Surrounds (Local Market Area);
- Bishop Auckland and surrounds (Local Market Area); and
- The Rest of County Durham including rural areas.

3.29 The ELR will be further developed to inform the Preferred Options and will assess land across these market areas and identify surpluses and shortages against the levels of demand for employment land. The Preferred Options will then allocate land in accordance with the economic market areas above, focusing on the most attractive international and regional market areas, whilst also ensuring that we meet the needs of other areas.

Question 11

Do you agree that it is appropriate to focus on the most attractive economic market areas? Are there any alternative approaches that could be used? Please give reasons for your response.

3.30 A call for sites for land suitable for employment use was issued in October 2015. The proposed methodology for how these sites will be assessed for possible inclusion within the Preferred Options is included within the 'Call for Sites' document, available for consultation alongside the Issues and Options. Please note this does not preclude additional sites being put forward for consideration at this stage.

Distribution of Retail

3.31 The retail centres of the county face different challenges over the Plan period in order for them to remain competitive and vibrant and function as part of the county's retail hierarchy. Many retail centres are under pressure and are evolving. It is important, particularly in rural areas, that existing services are maintained, providing sustainable options for residents and retaining expenditure locally. Many of these issues arise from the size of the catchment areas of the towns and villages so the development and improvement of homes maybe crucial for retaining and attracting new residents.

3.32 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to identify where new retail facilities will be focused and where there is a specific requirement for new floorspace. To understand where retail need exists we must use a robust and credible evidence base. The existing County Durham Retail and Town Centre Study (2009) and its updates in 2013^(xiii) identifies where there is a qualitative or quantitative need to plan for new convenience (food), comparison (clothing, small household goods etc.), bulky goods (furniture, DIY goods etc.), or leisure services. The evidence indicates that there is no need to identify sites for comparison shopping, other than a possible emerging need in Durham City. As there were outstanding permissions for food stores in locations such as Bowburn, Stanley and Peterlee, the Study only identified an unmet need for convenience shopping in the following locations:

- Durham City; and
- Crook.

xii <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>
 xiii <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

3.33 As this is a new Plan we will be preparing a new Retail and Town Centre Study which will use more up to date data. This may change the locations where allocations are needed. We are therefore asking for sites to be suggested for retail development in Durham City and Crook and also across the county to reflect the current status of the evidence. It should be noted that the NPPF requires town centre development outside of town centres to be subject to sequential assessments and impact tests.

Question 12

Call for Sites

Should evidence show they are required, are you aware of any site that should be considered for allocation for food and non-food retail? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

Distribution of Housing

3.34 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016 (SHMA)^(xiv) has identified County Durham as a self-contained housing market area, albeit with interactions with neighbouring areas, particularly north Durham with Tyne and Wear and south Durham with Tees Valley. Through the Duty to Co-operate we are working with neighbouring local authorities to ensure that throughout the preparation of the Plan that cross-boundary housing delivery issues are addressed.

3.35 In the following sections we identify four alternative options for the spatial strategy and specifically the distribution of housing. In addition to the four options, the Sustainability Appraisal process has also considered an option of a new settlement. At this stage, we are not aware of any location suitable to accommodate this as an option however question 13 allows an opportunity for alternative options, which could include an option for a new settlement, to be proposed for further consideration. The maps with each option give an idea of how each option would distribute

the houses (including existing commitments) across the county. The percentages relate to all settlements within an area and are intended as a visual aid and should not be seen as definitive, or as relating to specific numbers or sites. Each option will seek to allow all communities to become more sustainable and resilient and encourage social cohesion and economic vitality.

3.36 The indicative percentages relate to the total amount of housing discussed in Section 3.1 i.e 29,127 to 32,623 new houses, although it should be noted that these figures do include a significant proportion of houses that are already committed either on sites under construction or those with planning permission (14,466 houses as of 31st March 2016). As shown in the table below these commitments are not evenly distributed, for example in Durham City there are 862 commitments (6% of the total) while in east Durham there are 2,380 (16% of the total).

Table 1 Distribution of Existing Commitments

| Monitoring Area ^(a) | Total Commitments ^(b) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Central Durham | 2,169 |
| Durham City | 862 |
| Mid Durham | 2,830 |
| North Durham | 889 |
| North West Durham | 2,258 |
| South Durham | 2,049 |
| South East Durham | 71 |
| East Durham | 2,380 |
| West Durham | 958 |
| Total | 14,466 |

a. (see Map on page 9 for areas)

b. (including sites under construction and those with an outstanding planning permission)

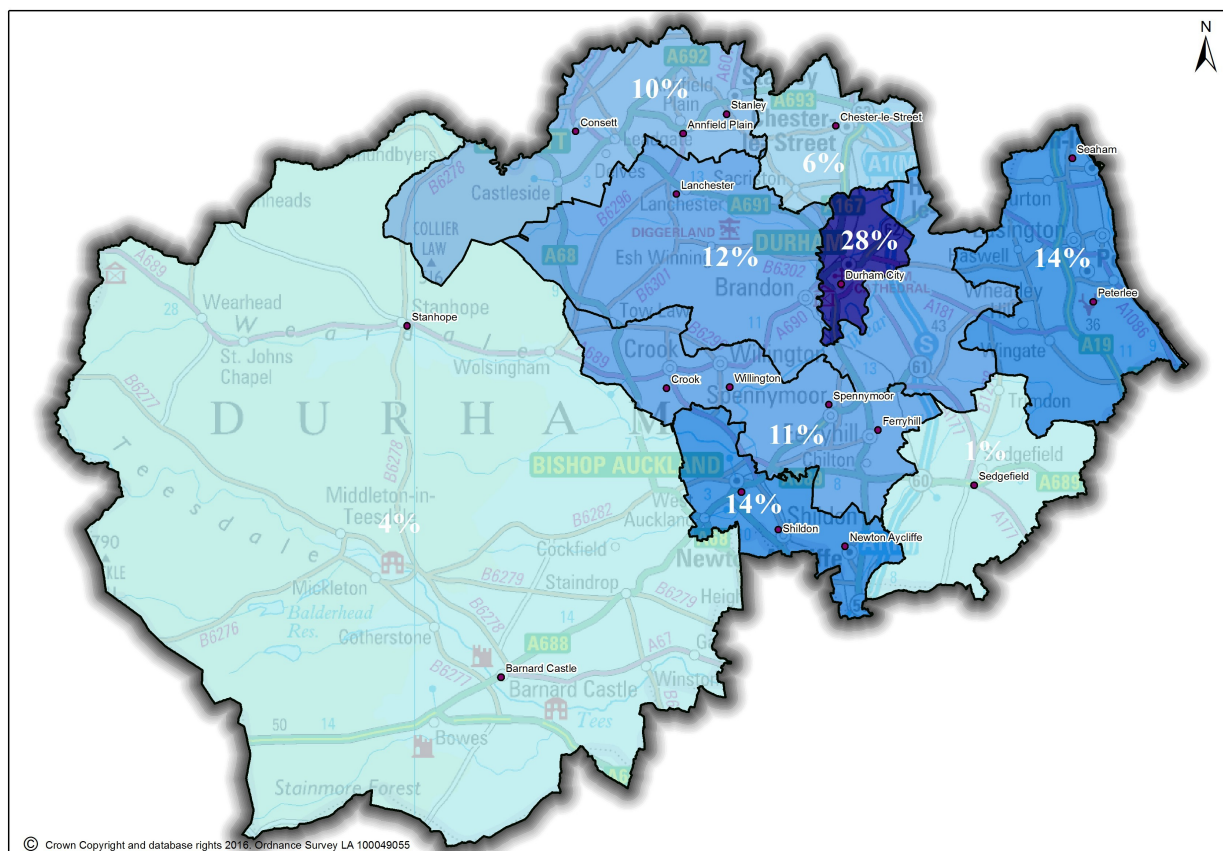
xiv <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

3.37 The potential implications of each option are also included and, at the end of the section, we will be asking you which (if any) is your preferred option. The four options are:

- Main Town Focus;
- Sustainable Communities;
- Sustainable Communities with Central Durham Villages; and
- Wider Dispersal.

3.38 Determining the final option for housing distribution will involve the consideration of a series of factors including matters of sustainability, economic growth, viability and delivery and the efficient use of land. All four options need to be cross-referenced with other relevant sections of this document including Protecting Green Belt Land and Promoting Sustainable Transport.

Option - Main Town Focus



3.39 The Main Town focus would direct housing to the principal towns in the county, with a large proportion of new development directed to our largest and most sustainable town, Durham City (28%). South Durham is shown with 14% of the total predominantly focused around the towns of Bishop Auckland of Newton Aycliffe reflecting their current scale and economic opportunities. Mid Durham is shown with 11% which includes the large number of commitments within Spennymoor. The 14% in East Durham again includes a number of commitments principally in and around Peterlee and Seaham. The 10% in North Durham again relates primarily to the towns of Consett and Stanley. Towns and villages within the other areas receive an amount of housing to meet their social and economic needs also reflecting the level of existing commitments in each. As with all of the options there would be an amount of housing allocated in the county's smaller towns and villages where housing would make them more sustainable.

3.40 This option focuses predominately on the places likely to be most attractive to the market particularly Durham City which has the highest land values and house prices in the county. This gives more certainty that when housing, including affordable housing, is delivered it should be able to pay for the infrastructure that is required to support the new development. In particular this option would require a solution to the congestion on the A167 either through Western Relief Road or other significant highway improvement. In areas where viability is more of a challenge, such as East Durham, there are still opportunities for delivery particularly where land is owned by the council which will assist in the regeneration.

3.41 This option seeks to minimise the need to travel by putting houses close to jobs, shopping, schools, health facilities and other services. It would therefore give the best opportunity of all options for promoting public transport and the ability to walk and cycle given, in particular, the close proximity of new housing to the major employment locations in Durham City. With much

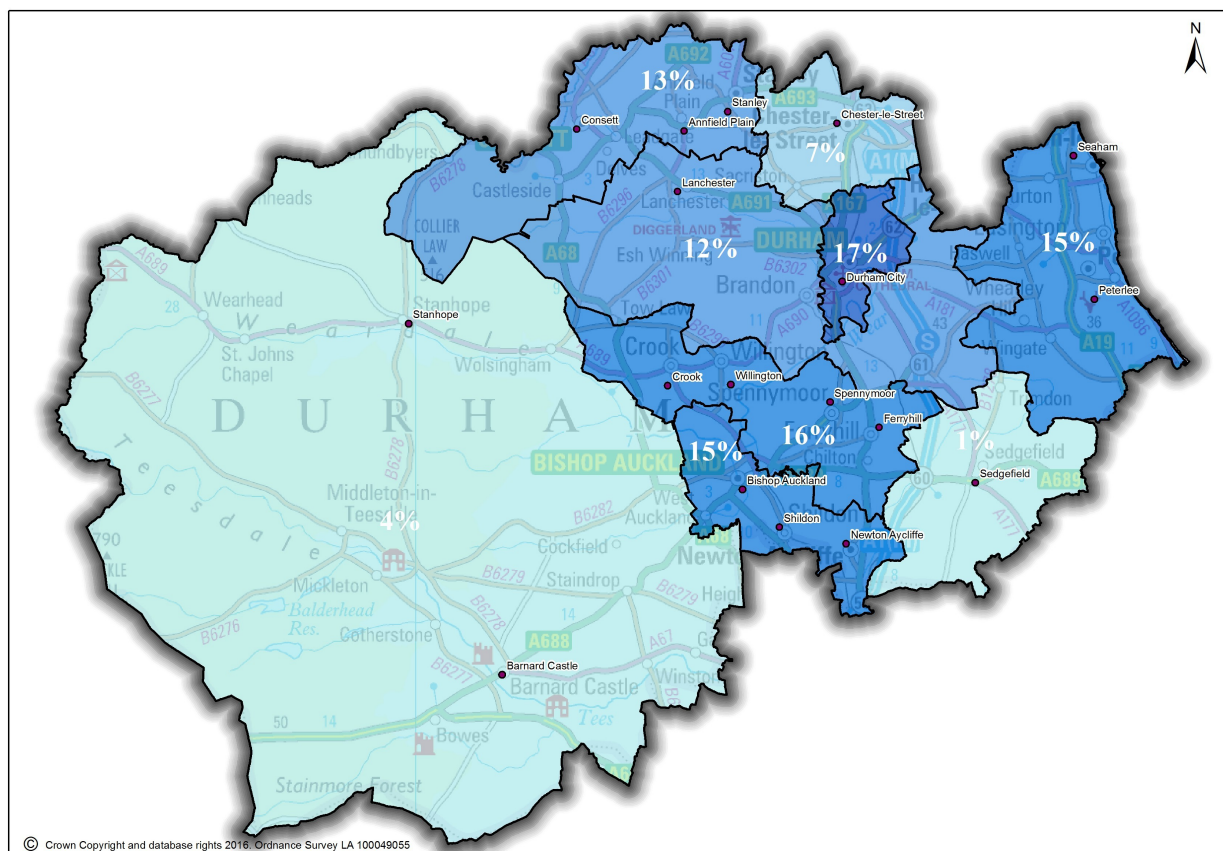
of the new housing located in the county's towns the new population would also help support our town centres. In Durham City in particular it would help businesses in the city centre outside of term time when students are not present in the city.

3.42 There are however a number of challenges in delivering this option which would require further understanding and evidence. In particular, the impacts on the setting of the historic core of the city and on the Green Belt. Given that the Green Belt boundary is drawn tightly around the city and the proportion of housing proposed in this option, it would require the deletion of more Green Belt land than any of the other three options. Therefore further assessment would be required to understand the effect of any deletions on the Green Belt and ensure that the Green Belt still performs the function as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.43 NPPF makes it clear that the alteration of Green Belt boundaries should only be made in exceptional circumstances. In this case these would consist of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, locating new housing near the significant number of jobs and other services and facilities in Durham City. This would help to improve the economic performance of the county by fulfilling the potential of Durham City as an employment location of regional and national importance.

3.44 Evidence would be required to ensure that market saturation would not occur and that the scale of housing in the Plan period could be delivered. In addition the necessary infrastructure such as education, health and transport will need to be provided.

Option - Sustainable Communities



3.45 The emphasis of the Sustainable Communities option is on ensuring we have a balance of housing across the county. It takes into account the most sustainable locations, market attractiveness, reflecting where people want to live, and the reality of land values, house prices and the need for and prospects of regeneration. The assessment looks at the county as a whole, seeking to ensure that the right level of housing is identified for each settlement to ensure its economic performance and vibrancy is secured in the future.

3.46 Our existing key employment locations are Durham City, Newton Aycliffe, Bishop Auckland, Peterlee, Consett and Chester-le-Street which account for over half of all jobs in the county between them. To continue to develop the economy of these areas sustainably it is important that the supply of housing is provided in the right locations. Durham City and Chester-le-Street in particular, have the highest level of demand for new housing. The resulting high land values provide us with a good opportunity to secure

affordable housing and necessary infrastructure. This option seeks to minimise the need to travel by putting most of our new homes close to existing jobs, shopping, schools, health facilities and other services. The availability of public transport and the ability to walk and cycle are important considerations. This option would also help to support our town centres by attracting and retaining retailers through increased population.

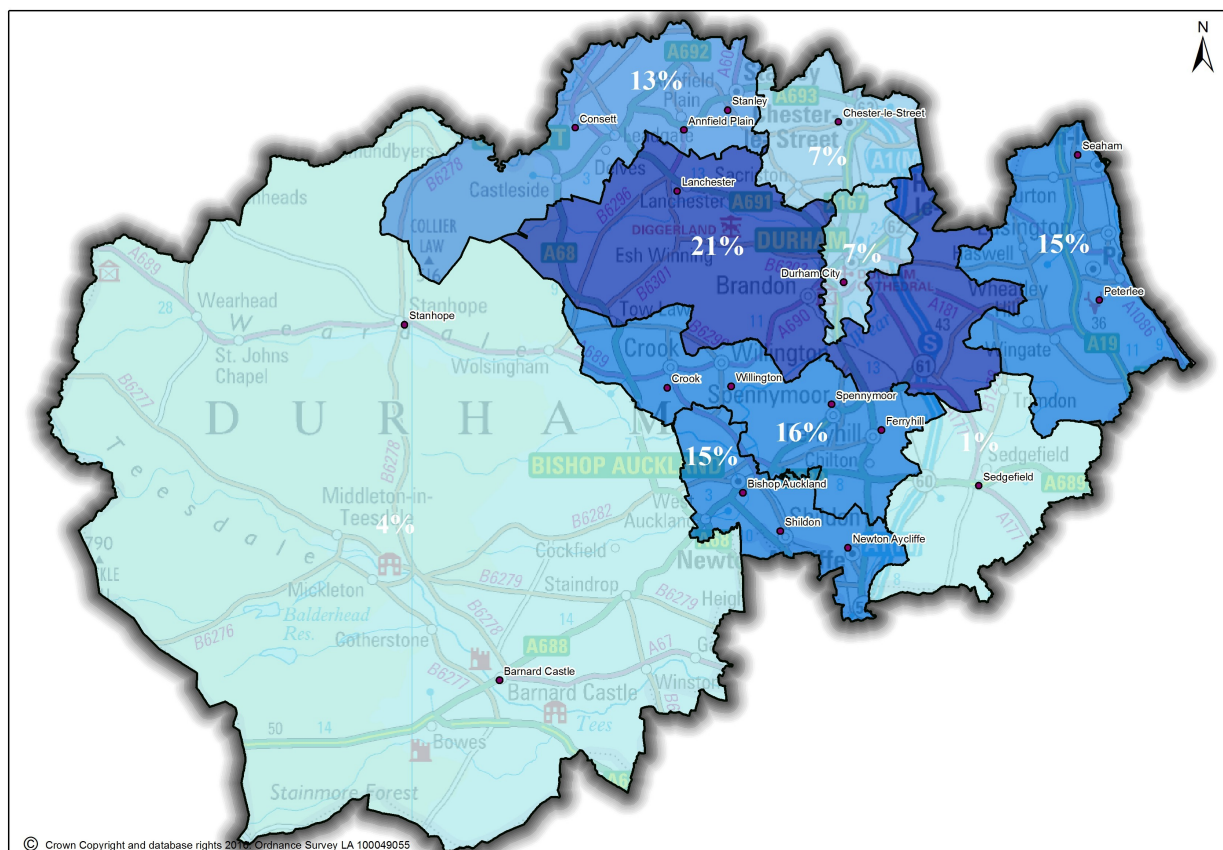
3.47 This option would require a solution to the congestion on the A167 either through Western Relief Road or other significant highway improvement.

3.48 This option acknowledges that other settlements across the county have a significant role to play in meeting our housing need, enhancing our economy, including the rural economy, and supporting regeneration. They therefore require housing commensurate with their size, function and accessibility to services and facilities and reflecting existing housing

commitments. This option therefore identifies 17% of housing in Durham City, seeking to ensure that the opportunities are maximised county wide.

3.49 Given the proportion of housing proposed in Durham City this option would require some land to be deleted from the Green Belt but less than in the Main Town Focus option. As with that option an assessment would be required to understand the impacts on the setting of the historic core of the city and a Green Belt assessment would be required to ensure that the Green Belt still performs the function as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The exceptional circumstances would be the same as set out in the Main Town Focus option.

Option - Sustainable Communities with Central Durham Villages



3.50 This option redistributes a significant proportion of the housing (as set out in the Sustainable Communities option) from Durham City to the rest of the Central Durham villages including Brandon/Langley Moor Meadowfield, Coxhoe, Langley Park, Sherburn, Ushaw Moor, Lanchester and Esh Winning. The figure for Durham City is now 7% compared to 17% in the Sustainable Communities option and that for Central Durham is 21% compared to 12%.

3.51 The additional housing in the villages in Central Durham would still be in relative proximity to the employment available in Durham City. This would however result in more journeys in comparison with the Main Town Focus and the Sustainable Communities options as there are fewer facilities within the villages, for example employment and secondary schools and people would still need to travel into Durham City. The opportunity for walking and cycling would be significantly reduced due to the relative distances, topography and increased traffic. The increase

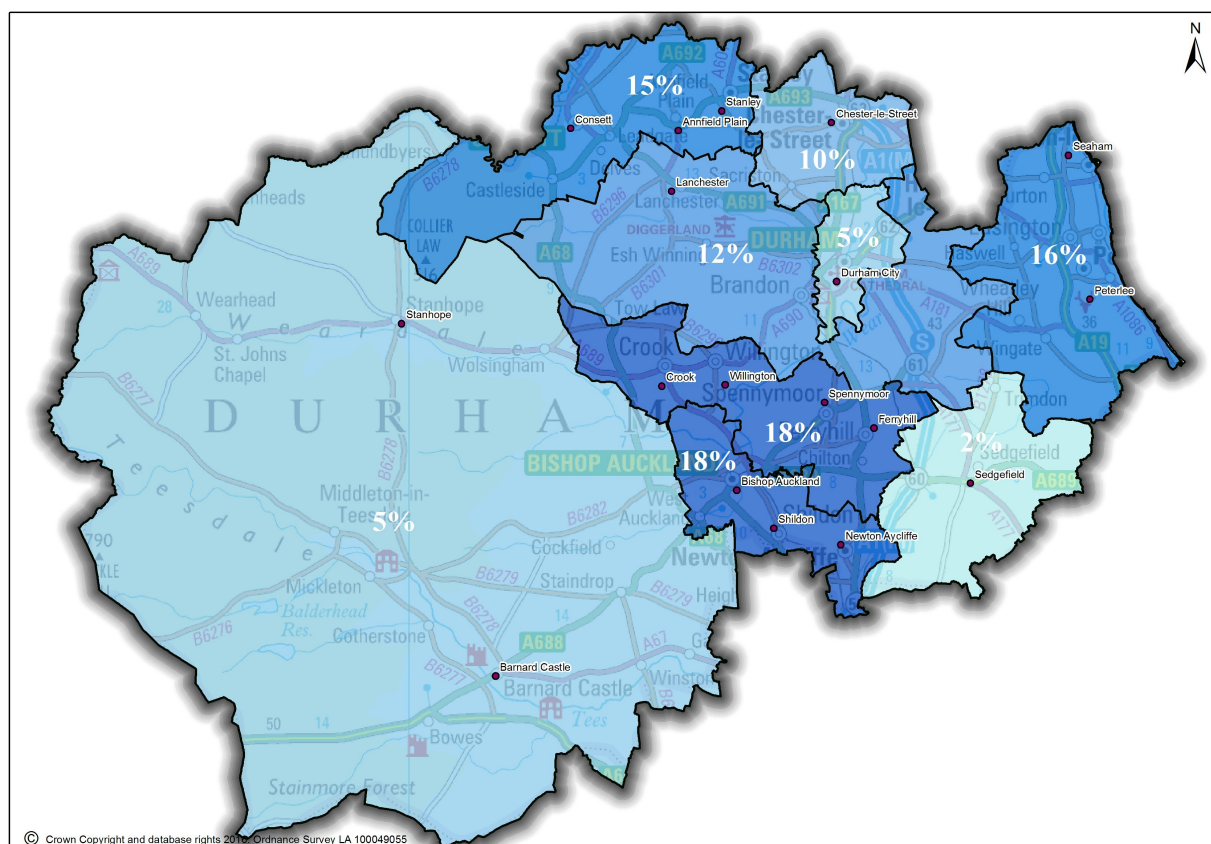
in congestion would therefore result in the need for necessary infrastructure including a Western Relief Road or a significant highway improvement to the A167. Delivery of the infrastructure would likely be more difficult due to low land values in these areas.

3.52 Significant housing-based regeneration has been undertaken in these areas over the last 20 years, much of which required public subsidy. The more difficult viability and reduced market attractiveness of some of the villages may impact on housing delivery rates and the ability of developers to fund necessary infrastructure.

3.53 Whilst this option focuses on the villages in Central Durham it would also require the deletion of some Green Belt land around Durham City, but less than in the Sustainable Communities option. As with that option, assessment would be required to understand the impacts on the setting of the historic core of the city and a Green Belt assessment would be required to ensure that the

Green Belt still performs the function as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The exceptional circumstances would be similar to those set out in the Sustainable Communities option but would also include the regeneration benefits that can be achieved from the delivery of new housing in certain areas.

Option - Wider Dispersal



3.54 This option redistributes the majority of the additional housing from Durham City (Main Town Focus, Sustainable Focus options) or the villages of Central Durham (Central Durham Regeneration Focus option) to the rest of the county. This results in 15% of housing in North Durham principally around Consett and Stanley, 10% in Chester-le-Street and the surrounding villages, 18% in Mid Durham around Crook, Willington, Spennymoor and Ferryhill, 18% in South Durham principally in Newton Aycliffe, Bishop Auckland and Shildon, a doubling of the figure for South East Durham, principally in Sedgefield, to 2%, an increase in 5% in West Durham principally around Barnard Castle and an increase to 16% in East Durham. The figures reflect existing housing commitments.

3.55 This option has limited acknowledgement of differing land values and relative market attractiveness which could reduce delivery rates. The lack of housing around Durham City would increase travelling to our largest employment centre. Whilst it may direct more new housing to parts of the county which may experience some

regeneration benefits from the provision of that new housing it will also put further pressure on some of our more prosperous areas such as Chester-le-Street, Lanchester and Sedgefield, where housing has traditionally been difficult to deliver due to a range of concerns. In terms of regeneration, in particular in the east, an increase of housing over and above that identified in the Sustainable Communities option may lead to concern over suitable land availability, viability and therefore delivery.

3.56 This option does not require the deletion of any land from the Green Belt but will result in an increased need to travel. Furthermore as a result of increased new housing in the north and south of the county, this option would likely result in more trips out of County Durham to the major employment centres in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley putting extra pressure on the infrastructure of those areas.

Question 13

Considering the implications of each option, please specify which you prefer and please give reasons:

- a. Main Town Focus;
- b. Sustainable Communities;
- c. Sustainable Communities with Central Durham Villages;
- d. Wider Dispersal; or
- e. None of the the above. Please suggest an entire alternative option, for example a new settlement, or a variation of one of the existing options.

Question 14

If you have chosen one of the first three options listed above, what are the exceptional circumstances to justify any Green Belt deletions? Please give reasons for your response.

Question 15**Call for Sites**

Are you aware of any sites that should be considered for allocation for housing? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

3.57 As well as testing each option through consultation and Sustainability Appraisal, it is necessary to have regard to the county's supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The SHLAA does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development; rather it provides information on the range of sites available to meet need. It is for the Plan process to determine which of these sites are the most suitable to meet the chosen spatial strategy and which should therefore be allocated. For this reason and to prepare a 2016 update of the SHLAA and begin the process of allocating housing sites in the Preferred Options, we are issuing a call for sites.

4 Core Principles

4.1 The council deals with approximately 4,500 planning applications per year and these can be wide ranging from works to trees and single storey extensions through to major applications for housing sites and business premises. Planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore across the county this means the 'saved' policies of the adopted Development Plans provide the framework for determining planning applications together with the NPPF and other material considerations. The weight attributed to each policy is dependent on its consistency with the NPPF.

4.2 The Plan is the opportunity to provide a consistent planning policy framework across the county. This will provide certainty to communities, businesses and developers to ensure that planning applications can be processed and decisions made in a timely, consistent and appropriate manner. The following sections, in conjunction with the Vision and Objectives, set out the issues and options on a thematic basis which will inform how we shape the policies which will then be included in the Preferred Options.

Building a strong competitive economy

4.3 A key priority of the council and its partners is to improve the economic performance of County Durham to ensure that its residents have access to job opportunities. Over the last 30 years the county has gone through significant structural economic change with the decline of its traditional industries and the pressure of globalisation.

4.4 Over this period Government initiatives and public sector investment enabled the development of regeneration programmes and settlement renewal. However, despite the receipt of significant resources and sustained efforts to attract inward investment to support the creation of new jobs and businesses, economic performance has been mixed and areas of deprivation within the county continue to exist. The fundamental challenge therefore is to improve the economic performance of the county.

4.5 We also need to be aware of the regional context and major proposals in our neighbouring authorities. In particular, we will need to monitor the progress of the proposed International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), a 100 hectare site to the west of the A19 near Sunderland. The park would provide modern business premises close to existing employers and would build on the region's advanced manufacturing heritage, creating up to 5,200 new jobs. Given the proximity to County Durham it is likely that there will be some impacts on the county which will need to be assessed as more detail becomes available.

4.6 As well as ensuring that the county has the right levels of employment land in the right locations, we believe that the Plan should also identify locations where new and emerging sectors may seek to locate into County Durham. This approach is advocated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the recent investment of Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe is an example of where this may create the potential for further new investment. The allocation of additional employment land within such locations would allow us to exploit these opportunities.

4.7 Another factor which would impact on the future economy of the county is its changing age structure. Unprecedented demographic change due to the population ageing and the reduction of the number of people that are economically active, makes it challenging to maintain an adequately sized labour force and to maintain and increase the overall rate of employment. This is particularly the case in County Durham where the average age of the population is projected to increase considerably over the next 25 years, with a larger proportion of the population in the older age-groups.

Durham University

4.8 Durham University makes a strong, positive contribution to the local, regional and UK economy, for example through direct investment, as a large employer, an extensive supply chain and staff and student spending. It produces high calibre graduates who in turn generate wealth. The University also participates in the Knowledge Transfer Partnership – a UK wide initiative designed to enable businesses to access the knowledge and expertise available within UK Universities and is a centre for research in its own right. To ensure that it remains as a competitive global leader, the University is currently in the process of developing a new Academic Strategy which in turn will be supported by a Masterplan and a revised Estates Strategy.

4.9 Although Durham University is one of the country's leading universities and attracts the highest quality of students, the retention of students within the county is currently low. Working with the University provides a major opportunity and is a priority for improving the county's economy by providing adequate and appropriate space to facilitate investment related to the work and research of the University and the conditions in which graduates want and have the opportunity to stay within the County. Given the University's location within Durham City there may be particular opportunities related to the development of the Aykley Heads site as well as their continued contribution at NetPark in Sedgefield.

Specific Use Employment Sites

4.10 The June 2016 Employment Land Review (ELR)^(xv) recommends that a number of sites should be allocated for a specific type of employment use and not be considered as part of the general portfolio of employment land. This is on the basis that they serve, or offer the potential to serve, a unique function within the county's economy and, as such, should not be used for general employment purposes that could be accommodated elsewhere. These sites offer the potential to attract sectors or end users that have distinctive requirements with respect to the scale, location or particular attributes of a site, as for example, at NETPark at Sedgefield which is a regionally significant centre for research and development (R&D).

Question 16

Is it appropriate to identify some employment sites that are only suitable for a particular type of employment use, for example research and development, and are therefore not available for general employment use? Please give reasons for your response.

Key Economic Opportunities

Forrest Park

4.11 Forrest Park is located adjacent to junction 59 of the A1(M) bounding the A167 and Shildon Branch line. The site offers the opportunity to deliver a prestige employment development with the potential to include a major freight interchange, providing rail linked distribution and warehousing. The site also has the potential to provide accommodation for businesses attracted to Newton Aycliffe following the recent investment of Hitachi in the town. Given this investment it is important that sufficient land is provided through the Plan to build on these opportunities.

NetPark

4.12 NETPark is an internationally recognised location for science and technology companies in the UK and plays a vital role in unlocking the

research potential of North East universities and colleges. The site is located in an attractive setting north of Sedgefield village with good access to the A1(M) and A19 and provides an environment for innovative companies to grow their businesses. It is important that further land is provided for its continued growth and to allow it to continue its success in attracting businesses and investment.

Hawthorn

4.13 The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has recently unveiled 10 sites across the region that will be given new enterprise zone (EZ) status. Hawthorn Business Park, located south of Murton in East Durham, is one of these locations. The site has road connections to the attractive A19 corridor and will complement the existing business parks and industrial estates within this area of the county. The focus of the site will be on growing businesses, particularly working in the LEP's four smart specialisation areas of: health and life sciences; creative and digital; sub-sea and low carbon industries.

Integra 61

4.14 Planning permission has recently been granted for a large mixed use development on an 83 hectare site adjacent to junction 61 of the A1(M), south of Bowburn. As part of this mixed use development, the site will provide 171,000sqm of industrial and distribution space. The site has the potential to provide significant employment growth, estimated at over 4,000 direct full-time jobs. The proposal also includes housing, retail, restaurants, a hotel and other community facilities including a children's nursery and new GP surgery.

Aykley Heads

4.15 The Census 2011 reinforces that Durham City is the most important employment centre in the county and the only key employment location within the county which can be described as having a county-wide employment draw.

4.16 Whilst Durham City performs well relative to other areas of the county, it currently relies upon significant levels of public sector jobs including Durham Passport Service, National

xv <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

Savings and Investment, Durham Constabulary, University Hospital and the county council. Despite a world leading university, good infrastructure and an excellent environment and quality of life on offer, historically it has struggled to attract significant private sector investment. This is principally because the city lacks a modern business quarter.

4.17 Recent investment in the city at the Gates, Freeman's Reach and Milburngate House and by Atom Bank (a new and exclusively online bank), at Aykley Heads, is evidence that the city, and Aykley Heads in particular, has the potential to attract significant private sector investment.

4.18 A council's Cabinet resolution is in place that agrees the principle of the relocation of the council's Headquarters to a Durham City centric site subject to an outline business case process and procurement exercise. It also approved in principle the release of the site as a major regeneration opportunity. In doing this it will free up a considerable area at the entrance of the site for private sector investment.

4.19 The Aykley Heads area is dominated by a variety of landscape environments and is partly designated as Green Belt. The settings include dense woodland, open grassland, streams and ponds. These are key assets of the site and will ensure that buildings are set in an attractive landscape. As an integral part of the redevelopment of the site, these areas will be retained and there is also an opportunity to significantly improve the area by providing a high quality parkland which preserves and enhances existing habitats and creates new ones. The public access into and around Aykley Heads should be retained and improved, creating more attractive gateways into the site particularly from the railway station and Wharton Park.

4.20 For the potential of Aykley Heads to be fully realised, it is necessary to understand the environmental constraints of the site and in particular the current Green Belt designation. The current Green Belt boundaries have been drawn tightly around the existing buildings at Aykley Heads, to the extent that the Green Belt currently incorporates the hard surfaced car parking area at County Hall. The existing Green Belt boundaries could therefore limit opportunities to expand the site. Any deletion would be of the least

sensitive parts of the Green Belt to ensure it remains 'open' and would still fulfil its purposes. The exceptional circumstances which could justify any deletion would be the unique economic opportunities a strategic employment site in this location could bring in terms of more and better jobs for the county.

Question 17

What should be the extent of the proposed Aykley Heads Strategic Employment Site?

- Only reusing existing land currently used for employment, excluding any Green Belt land;
- As above but also including land at County Hall car park currently in the Green Belt;
- As above but also including former police leisure centre and playing fields currently in the Green Belt; or
- As above but only use Green Belt land when other areas have been redeveloped.

Where relevant please set out the exceptional circumstances that exist to justify the removal of some Green Belt land? Please give reasons for your response.

Visitor Economy

4.21 The visitor economy is an important and resilient part of the county's economy. However there still remains a great deal of untapped potential. All areas of the county have the potential to develop their visitor offer to attract more short-stay and long-stay visitors from within the region as well as national and international locations. Boosting visitor numbers and the amount of money and time they spend in the county will lead to a range of business opportunities as well as supporting investment in the county's natural and historic tourism assets and town centres.

4.22 Planning for tourism, ensuring we have the right facilities and infrastructure, should ensure that in maximising the county's assets we do not harm the very character, quality and beauty that makes them attractive to residents and visitors.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

4.23 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) maintains the 'town centres first' approach to the location of main town centre uses, requiring planning policies to be drawn up to positively promote competitive town centres and manage their growth.

4.24 Nationally, town centres face increasing economic challenges including a change in consumer behaviour and the rise in e-commerce, mobile technology and Internet shopping. The significant growth in this sector has inevitably impacted on the number and range of shops, with many national retailers withdrawing from town centres including those in County Durham. We have seen similar changes in respect of food retail with the development of large format stores now either shelved or closing. We have however at the same time seen growth of smaller and more local convenience and discount stores coming forward as a direct response to the economic climate that currently exists. The ease of travel and the increasing attraction out of town shopping across the region has further impacted on how our town centres are used.

4.25 Although town centres are now not always the main focus for people's shopping, they are still key drivers to the economy. Therefore it is important that we ensure our centres remain viable going forward by understanding national trends and ensuring that they reflect the needs and opportunities of the communities that they serve. It is essential that we set out this strategy in the context of national policy.

4.26 Our existing evidence is in the 2013 Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment^(xvi) will be renewed for the next stage of plan preparation.

Defining a Retail Hierarchy

4.27 Durham City is the principal centre in the county and performs a wider sub-regional role; this is reflected in terms of the numbers of outlets, the representation of prominent national retailers and the levels of floorspace within the city centre. The NPPF identifies a need to define a hierarchy of centres and, given the role Durham City has, it is considered that this should be placed at the

top of the retail hierarchy. It does however have an increasing number of cafes and restaurants which has decreased the overall retail offer that exists in the city.

4.28 Elsewhere the other large towns (Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Consett, Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee, Seaham, Spennymoor, Stanley) within the county serve a more local catchment. In addition there are also a number of defined smaller centres including local neighbourhood centres, each with distinct individual roles serving their local communities.

Town Centre Boundaries

4.29 In recent years a number of national high street retailers have closed down which has left empty units within our town centres across the county. In addition to this other retailers have drastically reduced the number of stores that they operate, again reflected in coverage across the county. The council monitors vacancy levels across the major centres within the county and, whilst some have retained modest levels of empty units, others have seen vacancy rates increase to levels above the national average. The NPPF identifies that, where town centres are in decline, there is a need to plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity which may include alternative uses.

4.30 National policy requires the Plan to define the boundaries of town centres and primary shopping areas and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations. The changing circumstances of our town centres and recent retail developments may require a review of our existing defined centre boundaries across the county. Reducing or redefining the extent of town centres may allow a more focused, concentrated offer.

Out of Centre Retailing

4.31 The growth in new retail parks located away from town centres has inevitably impacted on town centres diverting retail expenditure away from town centres. Recent development pressure has come in such locations, most recently at Bishop Auckland. In addition, at retail parks in Durham City there has been increasing trend of

xvi <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

seeking to remove bulky goods ^(xvii)restrictions on operating units. It is important to consider the impacts such developments bring in terms of investment and regeneration against the potential negative impacts on existing centres. NPPF advocates sequential and impact tests for dealing with proposals for town centre uses that are proposed in locations outside an existing centres. Sequentially, applicants are requested to look first at in centre and edge of centre sites and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. In addition an impact assessment is also required for retail proposals outside of a defined centres over a proportionate locally set threshold. If there is no threshold in place the default threshold is 2,500sqm. There is currently no adopted threshold and we will give consideration as to whether one is required or whether the default national threshold is sufficient.

Question 18

Should we have a higher or lower threshold for impact assessment than the default threshold of 2,500sqm in Government guidance? Please give reasons for your response.

xvii Goods of a large physical nature (for example DIY, furniture, carpets) that sometimes require large areas for storage or display.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

4.32 The county varies in character from remote and sparsely populated rural areas in the Pennine Dales, to the larger villages located within the former coalfield communities in the centre and east. Ninety per cent of the county's population lives east of the A68 road in forty percent of the county area yet rural communities do not only exist within the west of the county. All of these communities require similar support and an understanding of the issues that they face.

4.33 It is important that rural villages are not unduly constrained and remain sustainable. Our rural communities require proportional growth that respects the character of the countryside to ensure they remain demographically balanced and are able to thrive and grow. Rural communities across the county are quality environments to live in and visit but also have an important role to play in the rural economy as workplace locations. Therefore the council supports development that meets the needs of the local community such as affordable housing and economic diversification, provided the countryside is protected from wider development pressures and widespread new building.

4.34 Rural areas can also experience a far greater reliance on the car than urban areas which can cause problems in accessing work. Similarly young people need the means to be able to access the further education system including maintaining public transport links. We also need to provide graduates with a reason to stay or return.

4.35 One of the key issues that has constrained the economy of rural areas is the lack of a reliable broadband connection. As this is improving with the roll out of superfast broadband, we need to be in a position to capitalise on this opportunity but in a way which preserves the quality and character of what makes these areas special. This will stimulate a prosperous rural economy by opening up new economic sectors as well as improving the traditional sectors such as tourism, agriculture and forestry. It should also improve the quality of lives of residents by providing greater access to key services. We need to ensure that the Plan supports and enables rural

growth in order to provide sustainable jobs and be proactive and flexible in attracting investment to the area.

Exception Sites

4.36 Rural exception sites are specifically for affordable housing in rural locations where market housing would not normally be an acceptable form of development subject. Exception sites meet an identified local housing need, reflect demand for house sizes and types and should be affordable in perpetuity. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) suggests that local authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would help facilitate the delivery of affordable housing where the scheme may not otherwise be viable.

Question 19

In order to ensure the delivery of affordable housing where there are issues of viability, is it appropriate to allow some market housing on exception sites? Please give reasons for your response.

4.37 There may also be an opportunity to use an exception site approach to attract industry and jobs to rural areas providing it would not impact on the character or amenity of a place or the amenity of neighbouring residents and where there are no other suitable sites. In particular, it could benefit businesses which are reliant upon technology and do not require traditional work space.

Rural Tourism

4.38 In terms of tourism there is a lack of bed spaces for rent in rural areas. Normally policies on providing tourist accommodation and attractions apply the principles of sustainability and access to services equally across the county. If a change to this approach was to be considered in rural areas it would still require any scheme not to be detrimental to the character or amenity of the area.

Question 20

Should the Plan apply more flexibility to the consideration of tourism accommodation and attractions in rural areas where it would benefit the visitor economy? Please give reasons for your response.

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Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

4.39 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local plans to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and thriving local places we need. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing needs of an area. Identifying and meeting objectively assessed need (OAN) is set out in the Quantity of Development section on page 13. This section will cover the other aspects of housing such as providing housing that is affordable and meets the needs of all sections of society.

Affordable Housing

4.40 The NPPF states that a local plan should meet the full need for affordable housing in the housing market area as far as is consistent with other policies in the NPPF. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)^(xviii) sets out that there is a net shortfall of 378 affordable homes per year. This is the extent to which the need for affordable homes is greater than the supply.

4.41 The NPPF also recognises that careful attention must be paid to viability. The council will therefore undertake a detailed assessment of viability through a whole plan viability study. This work will enable us to set realistic targets for the delivery of affordable housing which do not threaten viability and the delivery of housing, and will include an assessment of the impacts of other policy requirements included within the Plan. On sites where site specific circumstances indicate that viability is an issue, negotiations on the proportion of affordable housing required will continue to take place. The target levels for the delivery of affordable housing will also reflect past delivery in acknowledgement that market values change over time and in recognition of what we have been able to achieve in past negotiations. The affordable housing targets will be included in the Preferred Options document for consultation.

4.42 The recent Housing and Planning Act will have significant implications for the delivery of affordable housing and will need to be reflected in the policies of the Plan at the Preferred Options stage.

4.43 The provision of affordable housing on-site as part of a wider housing development supports the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. There may however, be some circumstances in which it may be appropriate to provide affordable housing off-site examples might include: where there were such a small number that it would be difficult for a Registered Provider to manage them or where off site contributions would serve to deliver more affordable housing than if delivered on site.

Question 21

Are there circumstances where it would be appropriate to accept a financial contribution to be used to provide affordable housing elsewhere rather than have the affordable housing provided on-site? Please give reasons for your response.

Older Persons' Housing

4.44 Like the rest of the country, the population of the county is ageing. Indeed, the majority of County Durham's household growth to 2033 will be in households aged over 65^(xix). This is a demographic shift which gives rise to a range of housing issues affecting both older people and the housing market as a whole.

4.45 For many years housebuilders have almost exclusively built family housing, with very little aimed at older people. There are a range of housing options which older people may consider including bungalows, larger multi-generational housing or specialist housing like sheltered accommodation and extra care which has 24 hour care available.

4.46 Providing housing to meet the needs of older people has a number of benefits including freeing up larger family homes, making limited

xviii <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

xix ONS household projections for 2012 estimate that growth in County Durham to 2033 will be 26,813 households.

mortgage lending go further, potentially freeing up hospital beds if older patients have suitable housing to return to and addressing fuel poverty.

Affordable Housing for Older People and Extra Care

4.47 The council secures a proportion of social retirement housing through agreements related to planning permissions for private housing development. Other affordable retirement housing is built by Registered Providers as part of their own schemes. Extra Care Schemes offering round the clock care in the North East have usually been developed by Registered Providers, but they can have high associated service costs and Registered Providers can perceive these schemes as high risk. We will therefore seek to support and facilitate such schemes where they enhance wellbeing, can be delivered and meet social care needs in a cost efficient way.

Private and Intermediate Housing for Older People, and Sheltered Housing

4.48 Developers in the county have built very little private housing aimed at older people, other than a small amount of private sheltered housing built by specialist providers. There have also been very few homes built to the 'Lifetime Homes' standards. This historic voluntary standard was aimed at incorporating design features in new homes to meet people's needs as they age, such as wider halls which can accommodate stair lifts. The 'Lifetime Homes' standard has recently been replaced with a similar optional building regulation standard aimed at achieving 'accessible and adaptable homes'^(xx) which can only be imposed through a local plan and must be justified by evidence.

4.49 Developers may sometimes be reluctant to innovate new house types because of the potential financial risks. Therefore any potential planning approaches to increasing the housing choices of older people need to be tested in relation to viability, profitability and deliverability. This makes it difficult to allocate specific sites for older persons' housing which developers may not be willing to build voluntarily.

Question 22

In order to meet the housing needs of older people should we:

- a. Allow developers to make their own decisions on house types and building standards;
- b. Require developers to build a proportion of houses within housing schemes to the new optional building regulations standard aimed at making homes more accessible and adaptable. If so, what proportion would be appropriate; or
- c. Require developers to build bungalows, level access flats, multi-generational housing, sheltered housing or extra care as a proportion of all new housing developments. If so, what proportion would be appropriate?

Please give reasons for your response.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites

4.50 Government policy requires local plans to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Sufficient sites must be available for ten years, and where possible for fifteen years. The county has around 520 Gypsy and Traveller households, mostly living in housing. It also has six council run sites and is a major provider of pitches for Gypsy and Travellers. Indeed, Government statistics show that the county has the second highest number of social pitches of any authority in England, with these sites having the highest caravan capacity.

4.51 A comprehensive site renewal programme has recently been completed on all six of the council's Gypsy and Traveller sites, the most comprehensive programme of its type in the country. Alongside the physical improvements, new management systems have also been introduced. The refurbishment process has inevitably given rise to significant disruption

xx Optional building regulation standard M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings

across sites, with residents from sites variously relocated on commercial caravan sites, other council sites, in housing or outside the county. The pitches did not become fully available for letting until February last year, after the last site to be re-furnished became available.

4.52 As a result of the refurbishment programme, trend figures are not yet available for either a full year's lettings or a full year's terminations. There has also been a period of 'bedding in' as residents have relocated onto the sites and vacant pitches have been let. Volatility is to be expected for some time in the context of the type of comprehensive rebuilding programme that has taken place. This is reflected in the fact that there has been an exceptionally fast rate of letting over a six month period following refurbishment, with many being taken up by Gypsies and Travellers from outside the county.

4.53 These circumstances make it very difficult to carry out a robust assessment of pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers for the full Plan period. At this stage therefore it seems sensible to assess and plan for Gypsies and Travellers pitch needs for the shorter period of ten years permissible under government policy, rather than the full Plan period. A re-assessment will then be undertaken in five years when more robust trend information will be available. There is unlikely to be a need for an allocation over this ten year period however this work will be finalised before the publication of the Preferred Options. Meanwhile a 'Call for Sites' will be carried out and an assessment undertaken, in the event that further Gypsy and Traveller sites will be needed over the chosen period.

Question 23

Call for Sites

Should evidence show they are required, are there any sites that should be considered for Gypsy and Traveller pitches? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

4.54 There are also three small sites for Travelling Showpeople in the county at Coxhoe, Tudhoe and Thornley. Travelling Showpeople

have specific site requirements which include the need for good access to the road network to travel to fairs and shows, along with space within sites to store and maintain equipment. An assessment of the need for new plots and sites for Travelling Showpeople will be carried out for the whole of the Plan period in discussion with families on existing sites.

Purpose Built Student Accommodation

4.55 The Plan, whilst recognising the importance of Durham University to the county as a world class university, needs to ensure that the scale of the student numbers in the city from the University and other higher education establishments does not significantly impact on the city and its residents. The recent growth in the demand for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) also has implications for Durham city centre as, whilst students can provide life and vitality to an area, the use of buildings for PBSA will decrease the opportunities for retail space and other town centre uses. However national policy recognises that residential development, including for students, can play an important role in maintaining the health of a centre and there are instances where such development can revive under-performing areas and other uses such as shops, cinemas and restaurants.

4.56 We are aware that the University will shortly be publishing a new strategy for its future growth. In partnership with the University we will seek to incorporate appropriate policies and, if necessary, sites in future iterations of the Plan. To obtain an early indication of what sites may be available for Purpose Built Student Accommodation at this stage we are issuing a 'call for sites'.

Question 24

Call for Sites

Should evidence show they are required, are there any sites that may be suitable for student accommodation? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

4.57 In order to respond to residents' concerns in respect of studentification of certain areas, in July 2015 the council's Cabinet approved an interim policy on student accommodation and an Article 4 Direction for Durham City. The Article 4 Direction requires applicants who wish to change a dwelling house (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4), to apply for planning permission. The interim policy includes criteria to be considered when assessing proposals to change a dwelling house into an HMO, including parking, design and importantly the number of existing HMOs already in the area. It also includes criteria to be considered when assessing proposals for purpose built student accommodation including the need for the proposal, car parking, design and the impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

4.58 Following consultation the interim policy, incorporating many of the suggested changes, was agreed in April 2016. The Article 4 Direction was also agreed and will come into force in September 2016. It is also suggested that the Article 4 should be extended to cover the Framwellgate Moor, Newton Hall and Pity Me areas. This Article 4 Direction was subject to public consultation between May and June 2016.

4.59 Given the extensive public consultation and responses received, we propose to incorporate the interim policy on student accommodation into the Plan. It will therefore be included in the Preferred Options document later in the year.

Question 25

Do you support our intention to include the student accommodation Interim Policy in the County Durham Plan? Please give reasons for your response.

Type and Mix

4.60 Data from the 2011 census suggests that in terms of house type (flats, terraced, semi-detached, detached) we have a higher

proportion of terraced and semi-detached housing compared with the national average. We therefore need to ensure an appropriate choice and mix to meet the requirements of a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.

4.61 The SHMA provides information on the current dwelling stock profile and household preferences. This data can then be used to suggest what would be an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes on all new housing developments. Wherever possible, new development should seek to address these preferences. However it is likely that flexibility on the housing composition of schemes will be required in some circumstances, for example on some smaller sites where it may be impractical, or where there are specific physical site constraints that may limit the range of housing that is possible or where there may be market demand or viability issues. On that basis we do not believe that it would be appropriate to set county wide targets for the type and mix of housing, but to assess it on a site by site basis.

Question 26

Do you agree that we should assess the type and mix of housing on a site-by-site basis? Please give reasons for your response.

Self-Build

4.62 The Self-Build Portal^(xxi) defines self-build as projects where someone directly organises the design and construction of their new home. The UK has a much lower rate of self-building than other European countries. The sector currently accounts for between 7-10% of completions while in countries such as Austria it accounts for around 80%.

4.63 The Government has introduced a number of measures to support the self-build sector and remove the barriers which prevent people from building or commissioning their own home, including the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. We encourage the development of self-build within the county and have recently launched a local register of people

xxi <http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk/>

who want to build their own homes in order to help measure demand for self-build. We will have regard to the register when carrying out our functions in relation to housing, planning, land disposal and regeneration and encourage self-build in suitable locations. The number of mortgages available for self build properties is set to increase substantially and self-build developments are exempt from Community Infrastructure Levy and section 106 contributions for the provision of affordable housing.

4.64 The provisions of the recent Housing and Planning Act and the proposed amendments to the NPPF include provisions relating to self-build and these will also need to be incorporated into any future policies.

Protecting Green Belt land

4.65 We attach great importance to our Green Belt which covers a total land area of 8,703 hectares and recognise that the Green Belt's essential characteristic is its openness and permanence. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the five purposes of a Green Belt as: checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another; assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and assisting in urban regeneration.

4.66 Unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated, there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The NPPF sets out a number of exceptions: buildings for agriculture and forestry; appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries; proportionate extensions or alterations of a building; replacement buildings which are not materially larger; limited infilling and limited affordable housing for community needs and partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land which do not have a greater impact on openness. The NPPF also sets out other forms of development which may be appropriate in the Green Belt including: mineral extraction; engineering operations and transport infrastructure.

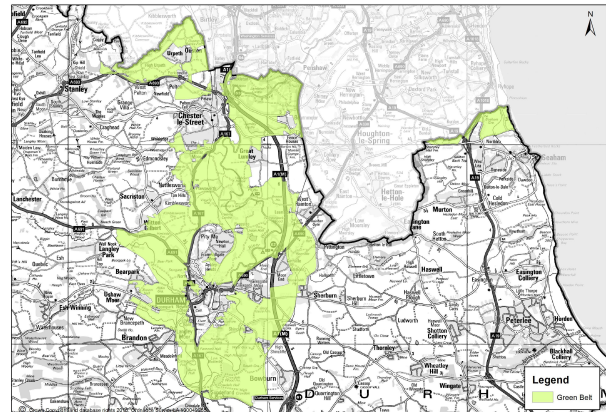
4.67 The NPPF also states that 'once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the local plan'. It is therefore appropriate that, through the preparation of this Plan, we consider the existing Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long-term.

The Existing County Durham Green Belt

4.68 As shown on the map the county's Green Belt currently reaches to the north and west of Chester-le-Street along the north of the A693, encircles Urpeth and Ouston and then eastwards towards the Tyne and Wear City Region. It then extends southwards from Chester-le-Street, east of Kimblesworth, south of Witton Gilbert, east of

Bearpark, and southwards to Croxdale and then north-eastwards to Sherburn and West Rainton to encircle Durham City.

The County Durham Green Belt



4.69 In the east and north of the County, the Green Belt complements that of Tyne and Wear by checking the unrestricted sprawl of the Tyne and Wear conurbation particularly around Chester-le-Street and Seaham. The Green Belt surrounding Durham City was primarily designated to preserve the special character and setting of the City and was largely based on the existing Area of High Landscape Value. However it was also drawn tightly around the City in order to restrict new development and assist in the success of urban regeneration efforts taking place in the surrounding villages. This was the strategy of the City of Durham Local Plan and reflected its priorities at that time.

4.70 Three of the four options for the distribution of development set out in Section 3 require Green Belt deletions. As we progress the Plan we will therefore undertake an assessment of the existing Green Belt to ensure the boundaries are still appropriate, continue to fulfil the purposes for which they were designated and to consider the impact of the spatial options.

Question 27

Do the existing Green Belt boundaries serve the five Green Belt purposes of: checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another; assisting in safeguarding the countryside from

encroachment; preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and assisting in urban regeneration? Please give reasons for your response.

4.71 NPPF expects local planning authorities to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access, outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes and to improve damaged and derelict land. We will therefore include an appropriate policy in the Preferred Options.

New Areas of Green Belt

4.72 The NPPF is clear that the general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established, and any new Green Belts should only be identified in exceptional circumstances. If new Green Belt is proposed then it needs to be demonstrated: why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate; what major changes in circumstances have occurred; what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development; the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with local plans for adjoining areas and show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the NPPF.

4.73 Previous discussions with neighbouring authorities have suggested there might be exceptional circumstances to justify an additional area of Green Belt to the north of Consett and Stanley. This will be assessed together with any other proposals put forward to inform the Preferred Options.

Question 28

Are there any areas of the county where there are sufficient exceptional circumstances which would justify new Green Belt? Please give reasons for your response.

Non-Strategic Green Belt Alterations

4.74 In order to address any errors, illogical boundaries or change in circumstances that could justify a minor change to the Green Belt

boundaries we are issuing a 'call for sites'. This is an opportunity to suggest sites where there is a justification for an amendment to the existing Green Belt boundary. These sites will then be considered against the five Green Belt purposes.

Question 29

Are there any non-strategic sites within the existing Green Belt where a change to the Green Belt boundary would be justified? If so, for what type of development and what are the exceptional circumstances for that change?

Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

4.75 There are a number of longstanding uses which already exist within the Green Belt including Finchale Training College, East Durham and Houghall Community College, Lanchester Road Hospital, Sherburn Hospital, the former Stonebridge Dairy, Frankland Prison and Remand Centre, Durham High School, Ustinov College and a number of sewage treatment works. These are currently identified as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt. National policy no longer refers specifically to Major Developed Sites however NPPF specially mentions limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, providing that it does not have a greater impact on openness or the Green Belt purposes. We believe there is no need to retain this specific designation.

Question 30

Do you agree that there is no longer a need to identify sites as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt? Please give reasons for your response.

Promoting sustainable transport

4.76 County Durham's dispersed settlement pattern creates specific transport issues. The majority of residents do not live, work, shop or spend recreational time all in one place. There are also parts of the county where there is little or no alternative to using the private car or access to work and facilities is difficult.

4.77 Whilst the planning system cannot directly change people's travel behaviour, it can influence the delivery of more sustainable transport choices by seeking to put new development in locations which minimise the distance and time of journeys, making the best use of existing public transport hubs and the highways network, while delivering new sustainable transport choices.

4.78 It is important that we maximise opportunities to access sustainable forms of transport for residents of both existing and new developments. Therefore, the design of new development should proactively seek to provide opportunities for the integration of walking, cycling and public transport as well as encouraging car sharing and electric vehicles. It should also encourage efficient and sustainable growth of freight and minimise the number of road journeys created by business and industry.

Walking

4.79 To promote walking it is necessary to ensure that the environment and setting of the routes are as safe and pleasant as possible. In respect of the county's tourism, long distance routes such as the nationally protected Pennine Way, the regionally significant Teesdale Way, Weardale Way, Heritage Coastal path and numerous local routes, which encourage and enable walking for recreation and travel, need to be enhanced and promoted.

Cycling

4.80 The council has set out its ambitions for cycling in the County Durham Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2015^(xxii). This seeks to establish a network of key routes connecting all of our main centres which are both well designed and safe, encouraging more people to cycle as opposed to using their cars.

Bus Services

4.81 Buses provide the only form of public transport in most parts of the county with 24 million passenger journeys started at bus stops in the county in 2014/15. There is an extensive network of services with most settlements having at least two buses per hour during Monday to Saturday daytimes, with much higher frequencies in the larger towns and along many of the main bus corridors. In more rural areas services may run every hour or less often in all but the smallest settlements.

4.82 The provision of public transport in the county is reliant on subsidies, meaning that some parts of the County have no bus services and others are vulnerable to reductions in future subsidy levels and therefore have a greater reliance on the private car.

4.83 One way to improve the transport infrastructure within Durham City is by re-locating the existing bus station. The scheme would create a retail opportunity on the existing bus station site and remove the existing A690 roundabout and replace it with a signalised junction. These modifications could create a modern, more pleasant environment and improve pedestrian links between the shops and the bus and rail station reducing the severance effects currently experienced by pedestrians.

Rail

4.84 The railway network connects a small number of settlements in the county with major centres in the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley conurbations but, overall rail accounts for only 6% of the total public transport journeys in the county. The East Coast Mainline (ECML) links Edinburgh and London and is major asset to County Durham.

4.85 There are a number of opportunities for improving the rail network in the county including the reinstatement of the Leamside line. This is a major opportunity to improve rail services and cross boundary links into the major conurbations north and south of the county. It runs for 34km from Tursdale Junction near Ferryhill to Pelaw in Gateshead via the east side of Durham City and

xxii <http://www.durham.gov.uk/media/3881/County-Durham-Cycling-Strategy-and-Action-Plan-2012-15/pdf/CountyDurhamCyclingStrategy2012-2015.pdf>

to the east of Washington. The line was 'mothballed' in 1992. However, since that time, rail patronage has accelerated beyond forecasts and there is now growing momentum from businesses, key government transport agencies, politicians and local authorities to re-open the Leamside Line.

4.86 There is evidence that both the ECML^(xxiii) and parts of the A1(M), particularly the Gateshead Western Bypass, are running at or above capacity. The reinstatement of the Leamside Line would provide additional capacity and relieve the existing two track railway between Darlington and Newcastle. A re-opened Leamside Line would help deliver a more regular service from Chester-le-Street and Durham City to York and Newcastle on the ECML as well as making it HS2 ready. On a newly created Leamside Line, new services and stations could be provided for passengers and additional capacity would be created for more freight to be transported in and out of the county without delaying trains on the ECML.

4.87 A new station at Horden (Peterlee) will improve access for passengers on the Durham Coast Line. It will connect areas of high population with areas of employment (such as the Tees Valley and Tyne and Wear conurbations) as well as making East Durham more attractive for inward investment. A funding package for the new station is now being established and detailed site studies and assessments are now being undertaken as part of delivering the proposed station.

Parking and Accessibility Guidelines

4.88 The council's Parking and Accessibility Guidelines have been updated to reflect alterations to national guidance and do not seek to minimise parking at origin but rather focus on limiting parking supply at destination. Therefore these guidelines provide minimum parking standards when building new housing and maximum parking standards at destination locations such as employment locations.

4.89 In the county, it is very important that we plan to enable the adoption of alternative fuel vehicles and also actively discourage the number and frequency of single occupancy car journeys

through the provision of car sharing bays. This is because passenger cars are often the only practical choice for residents living in some parts of the county, particularly rural areas. The Parking and Accessibility Guidelines therefore require the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and car sharing bays where 100 parking spaces or more are being provided.

Freight

4.90 The ability of business to transport goods and raw materials is essential to the efficient functioning of the economy. The council will support the efficient growth of road freight by allocating manufacturing, storage and retail premises in the right locations and via its role on the North East Freight Partnership.

4.91 There are currently no inter-modal freight terminals or major rail freight generators in the county. The North East is the only region in the UK that is a net exporter of manufacturing goods while ports such as Teesport and Port of Tyne have grown significantly. It is important that the county capitalises on this growth in freight and the opportunity that it presents to improve the distribution network. There may be opportunities at Newton Aycliffe (Forrest Park) and Tursdale/Bowburn (adjacent to Integra 61) to provide sites for inland rail freight interchanges that would potentially serve the wider North East.

Highways

4.92 County Durham experiences congestion and delay in a number of locations across the highway network relating to various factors such as capacity restrictions at peak demand, accidents and incidents, road works or peaks in traffic. Unsurprisingly the majority of pinch points are in and around Durham City where demand is at its highest. A particular example is the A167 traversing north south through the centre of the county where it crosses other principal east west routes such as the A693, A691, A690 and the A689. Many of these pinch points also impact on public transport and commercial traffic with an associated impact on the economy.

xxiii ECML 2016 Capacity Review - December 2010 -

<http://www.ecml.co.uk/2016/01/2016-capacity-review/>

4.93 In some instances the most appropriate solution to these highways issues is new roads. Some of these have been proposed in previous plans such as the Northern and Western Relief Roads, Bowburn Relief Road, the East Durham Link Road around Murton or suggested through consultation such as the Barnard Castle Relief Road. To be included in the Plan these proposals must be supported by clear evidence that the issues are of such significance that an infrastructure solution is required and that the proposed road is the most appropriate and effective solution.

Question 31

Are there any significant congestion hotspots in the county that could require building a new road? Please give reasons for your response.

Durham City

4.94 Rather than build a ring road in the 1960's, Durham City's solution to traffic growth was to create a 'through road' on a disused railway line through the city centre. This link crosses the River Wear at Milburngate Bridge, which now accommodates over 47,000 vehicles per day during the working week^(xxiv) and approximately 14 million in total for a year. Furthermore 35-40% of these trips are by vehicles that have no origin or destination in the city and this through traffic uses up limited highway space in the city and is a major factor in peak hour congestion.

4.95 The large volumes of slow moving and standing traffic makes the city less attractive to visit and has an adverse impact on the environment of the city centre and the setting of the World Heritage Site. The amount of traffic also acts as a barrier to walking and cycling routes, discouraging sustainable travel. It also impacts on the health of local people, with heavy traffic creating local air quality and road safety issues. In particular Nitrogen Dioxide levels in the city centre have now exceed statutory limits and as a result an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been designated.

Question 32

Does existing and future predicted traffic in Durham City have an unacceptable impact on the city? Please give reasons for your response.

Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy 2016-33

4.96 The Draft Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy 2016-33 (STSDC)^(xxv) sets out an ambitious and positive vision and strategy for the entire transport network across the City and has been developed in partnership with the city's key stakeholders after a series of targeted events and consultations.

4.97 Demand management is key as it can be delivered more quickly than infrastructure improvements that require greater levels of design, consultation and funding. The STSDC identifies four core activities that help to reduce demand: employer travel planning; school travel planning; residential travel planning and marketing and promotion programmes.

4.98 Durham is a relatively small, compact city which lends itself to the promotion of sustainable modes of travel, including active modes, such as walking and cycling. Census data from 2011 identifies that 36% of people living and working in Durham City walk to and from work. The city is also a public transport hub for the County so there are also more alternatives to using the private car in Durham City. Census data also shows that 58.4% of individuals living in Durham City drive a car or van to work while 73.4% of those individuals living in the villages outside the city drive a car or a van. However, more can be done to improve sustainable travel in Durham City and ease congestion in the city.

4.99 To 'lock in' the benefits of demand management measures, sustained programmes of investment in infrastructure are also needed. The STSDC finds that because of the shortage of highway space across the city, most transport improvements relate to the re-allocation of the

xxiv This figure was calculated from taking average daily flows on the Bridge in 2015.
xxv <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

existing highway space or improving transport infrastructure. This includes a focus on slowing traffic in certain areas and providing a step change in the quality of bus interchange in the city centre.

4.100 The STSDC is clear that the long term strategy for the city centre is dependent on the ability to provide more space for people travelling on foot, by bike and by bus and where there are barriers to direct continuous routes, those barriers need to be removed. This is impossible to achieve without a new crossing of the River Wear (a Northern Relief Road) which provides an alternative to Milburngate Bridge. A new crossing provides the opportunity to re-prioritise space on Milburngate Bridge bringing significant transport and environmental benefits to the city centre. Specifically, the STSDC recommends reducing the number of car lanes on the bridge from four to two, making this route less attractive for through trips and making it more attractive for pedestrians, cyclists, bus users and visitors. It will also create significant air quality benefits by removing unnecessary slow moving and standing traffic including heavy goods vehicles, from the city, addressing the principle cause of the increased Nitrogen Dioxide levels that resulted in the designation of the Air Quality Management Area. A new crossing forming part of a Northern Relief Road has long been identified by the council (and its predecessor authorities) as a strategic priority.

- d. Improving missing links for sustainable transport modes in and across main roads and junctions at Aykley Heads, Sniperley, Framwellgate Moor and Newton Hall;
- e. Reducing congestion by making appropriate improvements for all transport modes in Gilesgate, Dragonville, Carrville and Belmont; or
- f. Any other suggestions.

A167 Congestion

4.101 The A167 is currently the most congested part of the transport network in both the AM and PM peaks. The traffic on the A167 creates a barrier for traffic when entering or leaving the city at peak times with significant bottlenecks especially where the A690 and A691 join the A167 in the west of the city at the Nevilles Cross Junction and Sniperley Roundabout. Congestion in this area will increase as a result of predicted national increases in traffic. In addition any further traffic generated from new development onto this part of the network, would exacerbate this congestion requiring a transport solution. As the Main Town Focus, Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Communities with Durham Villages options for the distribution of housing would all likely include development in proximity to the A167, these three options will therefore require either a Western Relief Road or other significant highway improvement to the A167. Addressing the congestion on the A167 also removes a potential barrier to the creation of further jobs in and around Durham City and would have environmental benefits on the route of the A167 itself.

Question 33

The Draft Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy identifies the following infrastructure measures which would create a more sustainable transport network in the city. Which measure or measures do you believe are important and why?

- a. A new crossing of the River Wear through the provision of a Northern Relief Road;
- b. Improvements to the existing city centre transport infrastructure such as to the bus station and stops;
- c. Pedestrian improvements linking the University to the city centre;

Question 34

Are measures required to address the congestion on the A167 from Nevilles Cross to Sniperley Roundabout? Please give reasons for your response.

- a. There are no measures required;
- b. Yes. A Western Relief Road; or

- c. Yes. An alternative proposal (please specify).

Sherburn Retail Link Road

4.102 Sherburn Retail Link Road will provide a link road from Sherburn Road Retail Park through Dragonville Industrial estate to the north of Damson Lane. It will help the regeneration of the Sherburn Road/Dragonville area of Durham City and help relieve congestion on the east side of Durham City. Much of the funding for the Link Road is now in place and it will likely progress in the near future.

Supporting high quality infrastructure

4.103 Infrastructure can take many forms:

- Physical, such as roads, utilities and energy supply networks;
- Social, such as community buildings, education, health facilities, sport and recreation and employment or training opportunities; and
- Environmental, such as heritage assets, areas for wildlife and green infrastructure.

4.104 We have worked with statutory undertakers, utility companies and other agencies to identify the need for new infrastructure. If additional infrastructure is not delivered alongside new development, it can put pressure on existing facilities that may not have the ability or capacity to cope with the additional demand. This may have a detrimental impact on the existing population.

4.105 The provision of infrastructure is managed by a wide range of organisations, not just the council. The Plan, together with an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, will play a key role in securing private sector involvement in infrastructure delivery, and in aligning the programmes of the various providers.

Why Should Development Contribute to Infrastructure?

4.106 It is important that development contributes to improvements in infrastructure capacity to cater for the additional needs it generates. By paying a contribution, developers help fund the infrastructure that is needed to make development acceptable. Required infrastructure or community benefits, provided on-site and off-site, must make development sites acceptable and mitigate the impact of the additional demand caused by one or more new development sites.

4.107 Where there are site specific infrastructure requirements without which a development should not be granted planning permission, Section 106 obligations are sought. These obligations are a means of securing

financial contributions from developers for the provision of affordable housing, infrastructure and other policy requirements. These contributions are negotiated on a site by site basis and subject to the viability of the scheme.

Viability and Plan Making

4.108 Sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision taking. To ensure a viable and deliverable Plan, the costs of policy requirements to be applied to development, including affordable housing, sustainable drainage, sustainable design, open space and other infrastructure requirements such as education will need to be taken into account to ensure that development is deliverable. In terms of viability, the County is granular in its nature with high valued areas alongside low values areas. In accordance with government guidance, these need to be tested through a viability assessment which seeks to balance development costs to ensure the delivery of development is not threatened.

4.109 The Plan is accompanied by a consultation paper 'Issues and Options - Viability Assessments in County Durham'^(xxvi) which is consulting on a number of assumptions which could be used for assessing whether the plan is deliverable. These assumptions relate to new development and include: build cost; sales prices; profit; abnormal costs and land values. Viability appraisals for planning applications will continue to be dealt with on a site by site basis.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

4.110 To ensure that infrastructure supporting a number of development sites is not just paid for by an individual developer but rather shared proportionately by several, the Government has introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This applies equally to all development over 100 sq.m from individual houses to large supermarkets and, unlike Section 106 contributions, is not subject to negotiation, other than in the most exceptional circumstances. In setting CIL, we will need to take a cautious approach and only set charges at a level which is within the comfortable margins of viability.

xxvi <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

4.111 As part of the CIL Regulations, a proportion of CIL monies will go directly to the local community to spend in their area. Parish Councils will receive 15% of CIL monies collected within their area to spend on improvements and local infrastructure projects. Where an adopted Neighbourhood Plan is in place this will increase to 25%^(xxvii). Monies for non-parished areas will be retained by the Council but spent in accordance with the wishes of the community.

4.112 A preliminary charging schedule setting out the level of CIL to be applied to different types of development will be published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Plan later in the year.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure

4.113 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning to support the transition to a low carbon future including the use and development of renewable energy. We are also required by Government to have a positive strategy for renewable and low carbon energy and the delivery of the required infrastructure. We must do this whilst ensuring any effects, such as the impact on the landscape, are addressed adequately to protect County Durham's uniqueness. We intend to develop an overarching criteria-based low carbon and renewable energy policy which will cover renewable energy schemes which do not involve wind turbines, such as solar farms or geo-thermal schemes.

Wind Turbine Development

4.114 Wind energy makes up the majority of operating renewable energy generating capacity within the county (around 49% of operational and approved capacity^(xxviii)). Recent changes in government policy and support mechanisms for wind development have led to a reduction in the number of new proposals for larger scale schemes coming forward but there continues to be some interest from this sector, and particularly for single turbines, including from the farming community.

4.115 Government policy^(xxix) now states that local authorities should only grant planning permission for wind energy development involving one or more turbines if the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local or neighbourhood plan. This applies to developments of any scale requiring planning consent. If any further development of wind energy is to be accommodated in the County it would be necessary for the Plan to identify suitable areas.

Question 35

Should the Plan identify areas suitable for wind turbine development? If so, should the extent of areas be different for different sizes of turbine? Please give reasons for your response.

xxvii This is subject to a cap of £100 per household in the Parish Council area per year where no neighbourhood plan is in place.

xxviii Durham County Council's own estimates.

xxix <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/June%202015/18%20June/1-DCLG-Planning.pdf>

Requiring good design

4.116 The design quality of new development in the county has varied significantly. We are committed to ensuring that in future it will be of the highest standards in terms of architecture, urban design, sustainability and innovation. This ensures that new development enhances and complements existing high quality areas and raises the design standards and quality of areas in need of regeneration. New development should provide local people with civic pride, make them feel safe and secure and help improve the overall image of the county and reflect local distinctiveness.

4.117 Development needs to be carefully planned to ensure important features and characteristics are protected and enhanced. The layout and design of new developments must be based on a thorough understanding of a site and its wider context. This requires careful consideration of site layout, including how the development integrates into its setting in terms of: building layouts; built form; height; mass; scale; building line; plot size; elevational treatment; materials; streetscape and rooflines. The layout, form and mix of development should also support walking, cycling and public transport provision.

4.118 There are many occasions when alterations and extensions are proposed to buildings, both domestic and business premises. Such extensions and/or alterations should be sympathetically designed, not detract from the character of an area and have no unacceptable adverse effect on neighbours.

4.119 Development of all sizes, ranging from small scale domestic extensions to major development proposals can have an impact upon amenity. If not carefully designed it can have a negative impact by way of overlooking, loss of light, loss of privacy and in some cases through odour, light or noise pollution.

Building for Life 12

4.120 Building for Life 12 (BfL) is a government endorsed industry standard for well designed homes and neighbourhoods. It is an independent initiative, originally developed by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

(CABE), with partners the Home Builders Federation, the Civic Trust and Design for Homes. BfL seeks to address the concerns of local communities by setting standards which developers have to meet in order to achieve planning approval. As such it has been adopted by many local authorities for planning approval. The BfL standard also reflects the Government's commitment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to build more and better homes. If we are to use the BfL standard we will need to include any additional costs it requires in our viability testing.

Question 36

Should we require new housing developments to meet the Building for Life 12 standard? Please give reasons for your response.

Density

4.121 Density is linked with design and it is essential that imaginative design solutions are encouraged to achieve appropriate density levels. Developments should make efficient use of land and resources by achieving higher densities in locations with good access to public transport and facilities. Lower densities are more likely to be appropriate for smaller settlements and to provide a range and choice of housing. The density of development should be a product of a robust site assessment which responds positively to County Durham's exceptional environment quality.

Energy Efficiency

4.122 The built environment accounts for over half of the UK's CO₂ emissions, through both construction and use. It is essential to meet both national and local targets so that new development does not overly increase this burden. Ideally development should achieve zero carbon through energy efficiency and the use of renewable and low carbon energy technologies to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions. The location of new development should also maximise access to services and employment. It is also important to plan buildings and communities that are resilient to potential climate change impacts.

Development should be designed to withstand future weather trends as flooding events and heat waves become more regular.

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Promoting healthy communities

4.123 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Local plans should therefore embed health and wellbeing considerations and aim to achieve places with safe and accessible environments for people to come together. They should also seek to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that communities need.

4.124 Encouraging sustainable travel patterns through the location of new development can promote healthy lifestyles by allowing people to reach employment and other services by walking or cycling. The location of housing, employment, education, health, retail and leisure facilities can have an impact on accessibility, particularly for those without a car. Transport is therefore key to facilitating growth and good quality transport infrastructure can improve access to health and other services.

4.125 Positive health impacts can result from increased employment. They can also arise by ensuring housing is designed with access to green space, public transport and traffic management in mind (e.g. car free zones, self-enforcing speed limits, walking/cycling links between residential and business areas). Buildings that are well insulated also have benefits for health as well as reducing costs and contributing to addressing climate change.

4.126 Growth in County Durham may increase demand for certain types of health, leisure and social care services such as elderly accommodation and may change the demand for primary and community care, both mental and physical. Discussions on forward planning and future service provision with healthcare providers is taking place on a continuous basis to ensure the impact of new development will be mitigated.

Air Quality

4.127 The council recognises the impact on health of air pollution, particularly from vehicular traffic. The National Air Quality Strategy introduced a system of local air quality management requiring local authorities to undertake periodic reviews of air quality. As a

result we have identified that air quality standards for Nitrogen Dioxide have been exceeded close to busy roads and junctions within and around Durham City centre and in an area near Chester-le-Street town centre. We have therefore designated two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). An Action Plan is being produced for the Durham City AQMA which will seek to reduce pollution levels and improve the standard of air quality through a variety of means. Development within the AQMAs and adjoining areas should minimise the impact on air quality and include design measures that mitigate the effects of the existing air quality issues.

Hot Food Take-aways

4.128 The fast food sector has remained resilient in recent years with continued developer interest from national operators within the county. However the rise in the number of smaller independent hot food take-aways has reached such levels within some centres that this it is causing concern. The over-concentration of such uses has impacts on the vitality and viability of our centres in terms of noise, disturbance, odours and litter. In addition evidence has shown that there is a correlation between a high concentration of hot food take-aways and childhood obesity levels. As the promotion of healthy eating amongst young people is a key national and local priority it may be reasonable to limit the number of hot food take-aways in some locations for example close to schools and colleges. This could be one way the planning system can influence the environment to support individual behaviour change.

Question 37

Should we seek to limit the number of hot food take-aways in some locations, for example in our town and local centres (where there is an over-concentration) and/or close to schools and colleges or does this unfairly prejudice commercial interests? Please give reasons for your response.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

4.129 One of the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is to mitigate the impact of, and adapt to Climate Change. Addressing climate change is a principal concern for sustainable development and a key priority of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We therefore need to encourage the prudent use of non-renewable resources, contribute to reducing emissions and stabilising climate change (mitigation) and take into account the unavoidable consequences (adaptation). However, addressing climate change is multi-faceted and cannot be addressed through a single policy or plan. Reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change therefore underpins every aspect of planning and helps support regeneration and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in County Durham. Climate change mitigation and adaptation must therefore be integrated throughout the Plan.

4.130 The NPPF sets out a positive approach in order to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It is made clear that decisions should be taken in line with the 2008 Climate Change Act, which has the provision to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050 and by 34% by 2020. We have gone further and want to reduce emissions by 40% by 2020 and by 55% by 2030.^(xxx) The NPPF also states that development should avoid increasing vulnerability to a range of impacts arising from climate change including flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape.

4.131 The Plan can make a major contribution to mitigating and adapting to climate change by shaping new and existing developments in ways that reduce carbon emissions and positively build community resilience to problems such as extreme heat or flood risk. It can do this by ensuring that new development is located to reduce the need to travel and support the fullest possible use of sustainable transport. It should be designed in a way that limits carbon dioxide

emissions, uses decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy and minimises vulnerability to future climate impacts.

Flooding

4.132 The water environment is vital to the well being of the county. As the Lead Local Flood Authority we work with a number of partners, including the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water, to ensure development is within environmental limits^(xxxi) and considers the effect on flood risk both on and off-site. The NPPF and other Government guidance also sets strict tests to protect people and property from flooding, providing guidance on how to assess, avoid, manage and mitigate flood risk.

4.133 Across the county, flood risk is mainly fluvial (from rivers and watercourses) although there are increasing events owing to surface water flooding. The Plan can contribute to reducing flood risk by avoiding areas at greater risk of flooding and requiring Sustainable Drainage Systems, where appropriate, when planning for new development. This is particularly important due to the predicted increase in flooding due to climate change. The Plan can also set out a robust policy approach to address all areas of water management to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to impacts arising from climate change.

The Durham Coast

4.134 The Durham coastline is a unique asset which comprises distinctive bays and headlands carved from magnesian limestone and overlying clays unique to this area. It is defined as a Heritage Coast and is internationally important for nesting and migratory birds and rare limestone grasslands and almost its entire length is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation or other environmental designations.

4.135 Coastal management and planning is a strategic issue which requires an integrated approach. National policy is clear that the planning system should reduce risk from coastal

xxx Set out in An Energy Management Plan for County Durham. This document can be downloaded here:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/media/4563/CDP-Towards-a-Strategy-for-Low-Carbon-Energy-in-County-Durham-May-2011.pdf>

xxxi Environmental limits includes issues such as the availability of water to meet demand from housing and industry, the treatment of waste water to acceptable standards, water quality within our watercourses and the capacity of our watercourses to cope with increased volumes of treated waste water, rainfall and/or flood waters.

change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or by adding to the impacts of physical changes to the coast. The NPPF and the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) also requires local authorities to maintain, enhance and protect the character of the undeveloped coast, especially where it is defined as Heritage Coast.

Question 38

Do you agree that we need to address all areas of water management including flood risk? Please give reasons for your response.

Conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment

4.136 County Durham's environment and well being are fundamental to the quality of life of the people who live and work in the county and to the success of its economy. Environmental considerations are therefore fundamental to all policy areas addressed in the Plan. The quality and diversity of the built and natural environment is amongst the county's major assets.

4.137 The natural environment of County Durham is one of great contrast and diversity. From the North Pennines in the west to the Durham Coast in the east it contains landscapes, habitats and features of local, national and international importance. Over 30% of the county's area is covered by some form of statutory designation, compared to the national average of 8%. This high quality natural environment delivers a wide range of ecosystem services (i.e. the benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as food, water, flood and disease control and recreation) and is critical to both the quality of life and the economic prosperity of our residents as well as its attractiveness to visitors. There are some areas where the natural environment has been degraded in some degree by forces such as past industrialisation or agricultural intensification. There are also some areas, such as the countryside around towns, where the environment does not always best serve the needs and aspirations of local communities.

4.138 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies conserving and enhancing the natural environment as a core land-use principle and looks to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, protect and enhance valued landscapes, halt the overall decline in biodiversity and reduce the risks of pollution, land instability and contamination. It identifies the need for a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment. We also recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

4.139 County Durham has a wide variety of heritage assets that evidence and reflect human interaction with the landscape from pre-historic times to the present. These are manifested in landscapes, towns and villages, individual buildings and features, ancient monuments, open spaces, historic public realm and archaeological sites, with many phases overlaid upon one another. The county's designated heritage assets include:

- 1 World Heritage Site;
- 3036 Listed Buildings (101 Grade I; 157 Grade II*; and 2778 Grade II);
- 93 Conservation Areas;
- 226 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs);
- 17 Registered Parks and Gardens;
- 1 Historic Battlefield; and
- Numerous Archaeological Remains.

4.140 All of these assets are recorded on the County's Historic Environment Record (HER)^(xxxii), a publicly accessible computerised inventory of our historic environment including known heritage assets, sites without statutory protection, and the find-spots of archaeological objects. As part of the planning process we can identify additional non-designated heritage assets that are not currently statutorily protected. Impact on a non-designated heritage asset is in itself a material consideration for planning decisions.

4.141 County Durham has a wealth of attractive natural and historic assets which present unique opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors. The Plan must therefore successfully balance the protection and enhancement of these assets with the requirement for new development to meet our need for new homes and jobs. New development in and around our historic towns and villages must complement their built heritage and natural landscapes. Across the county development pressures must not compromise the natural and historic assets that make them attractive and valuable.

xxxii <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2012/Historic-Environment-Record>

A Positive Strategy for the Historic Environment

4.142 The NPPF requires the council to have a positive strategy for the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment. This strategy will need to be reflected throughout the Plan and also relates to the actions that the council has committed to undertaking including: the adoption of conservation area character appraisals and management proposals for all of the county's 93 conservation areas; supporting the improved condition of Heritage at Risk; taking action to protect designated heritage assets; contributing to the revised World Heritage Site Management Plan; and improved HER curation and accessibility.

Question 39

Do you agree with our proposed strategy to conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment? Can you suggest any alternatives? Please give reasons for your response.

Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

4.143 Minerals are a fundamental natural resource. They are of vital importance to modern economies and are essential to sustainable economic growth and quality of life. County Durham is a geologically rich county and possesses a wide range of mineral resources of local and national importance including aggregates such as magnesian limestone, carboniferous limestone, dolerite and sand and gravel and non aggregate minerals such as brick making raw materials and natural building and roofing stone. Historically, the county has also been a major producer of coal. Although all deep coal mines have now been closed, continued interest remains in the extraction of coal by surface mined methods. Our evidence relating to minerals can be found in the Minerals and Waste Technical Paper 2016 and the Joint Local Aggregate Assessment for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear 2016 (LAA)^(xxxiii).

4.144 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires us to facilitate the sustainable use and the steady and adequate supply of minerals. The Plan will therefore seek to meet future demand for aggregate and non-aggregate minerals. In considering potential options for minerals, a fundamental starting point is that minerals can only be worked (i.e. extracted) where they naturally occur. Consideration needs to be had to the acceptability of working within different areas of the county many of which are near to settlements or are overlain by important environmental designations.

4.145 For minerals such as aggregates the key considerations are the size, adequacy and composition of the respective crushed rock and sand and gravel landbanks and future demand forecasts. In particular, a steady and adequate supply should be maintained and an over-supply of sites should be avoided. Similar considerations apply to other mineral commodity types such as brick clay; whereas in contrast significant uncertainty currently applies to many energy mineral types such as surface mined coal and oil and gas where the magnitude and possible location of areas for future working is uncertain.

4.146 Please note that we intend to prepare a separate Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document which will complement the strategic minerals and waste policies of the Plan and will contain detailed development management policies for minerals and waste and in addition, if necessary will allocate non-strategic minerals and waste sites.

Magnesian Limestone

4.147 Magnesian limestone underlies most of east Durham and has traditionally been divided into the lower, middle and upper magnesian limestone. The most commercially important part is the lower magnesian limestone series between Pitlington and Shildon. In quantitative terms, the majority of the crushed rock landbank, approximately 112 million tonnes out of a total landbank of 138 million tonnes (on the 31st December 2014), comprises magnesian limestone. In addition we estimate that additionally at least 4 million tonnes of magnesian limestone is available for agricultural lime production and at least 11 million tonnes is available for high grade purposes.

Question 40

Given the extent of permitted reserves of magnesian limestone, do you agree that no further sites for new working are required? Please give reasons for your response.

Carboniferous Limestone

4.148 Carboniferous Limestone naturally occurs in west Durham. Although similar in some respects to magnesian limestone, carboniferous limestone often differs in that it tends to be harder and more durable and therefore suited to more heavy duty uses, for example in road building. Prior to the current economic downturn, approximately 900,000 tonnes was extracted from the county's four active quarries every year. In quantitative terms, existing permitted reserves of this mineral are approximately 8.7 million tonnes and are declining and will not be sufficient to maintain current levels of sales beyond the

xxxiii <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/issuesandoptions>

short-term without the grant of additional permissions. There are considered to be two alternatives for the location of new workings.

Question 41

Which option do you prefer for the location of new Carboniferous Limestone workings?

- Only outside of the North Pennines AONB and in areas not subject to international or national biodiversity designations;
- As (a) but in addition proposals for extensions to existing quarries and the reworking of former carboniferous limestone quarries within the AONB which have not been restored properly (provided they also create or safeguard employment, do not have an adverse impact on European sites and provide substantive landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity benefits) should also considered; or
- Other, please specify.

Please give reasons for your response.

Dolerite

4.149 Given the extent of permitted reserves, approximately 18 million tonnes, the location of the mineral resource within and adjacent to European sites we do not consider that any further working is justified for aggregate or non-aggregate working over the Plan period.

Question 42

Given the extent of permitted reserves of dolerite do you agree that no further working is justified? Please give reasons for your response.

Sand and Gravel

4.150 The significant permitted reserves of sand and gravel, approximately 8.6 million tonnes (on 31st December 2014), would indicate that further working would not be required during the Plan period. However, due to issues over the likely delivery of some sites we consider that we may need to allocate some sites for longer-term working in order to provide long term certainty.

Question 43

If the Plan allocated sites for longer term working should we consider:

- Proposals to deepen existing magnesian limestone sites where basal permian sand lies beneath the existing quarry void at accessible depths;
- Proposals to laterally extend existing magnesian limestone sites where basal permian sand lies at accessible depths;
- New sand and gravel sites, working fluvial or glacial sand and gravels wherever the resource occurs;
- New sand and gravel working fluvial or glacial sand and gravels in locations outside of environmentally important areas and in locations in close proximity to markets e.g. Central Durham and the Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley conurbations; or
- Disagree, there is no need to allocate new sites.

Please give reasons for your response.

Brickmaking Raw Materials

4.151 Until Eldon Brickworks closed the county had two brickworks^(xxxiv) and also met the needs of a third, the Union Brickworks at Birtley in Gateshead. Our longstanding approach has been to meet the long term supply requirements of the county's Brickworks and work with Gateshead

xxxiv Eldon Brickworks closed in 2012. Todhills Brickworks remains operational.

Council to meet the supply requirements of the Union Brickworks for glacial clay, whenever possible from dedicated on site pits adjacent to the brickworks. We consider that this approach is the right approach in order to provide security of supply for the area's brickworks and help minimise environmental impacts.

Natural Building and Roofing Stone

4.152 There are seven natural building and roofing stone quarries currently operating in the county, three of which are anticipated to expire during the plan period. With the exception of two sites all are relatively small scale with the overall scale of production being between 500 and 2,500 tonnes per year. In total the overall scale of production in recent years has been between 20-30,000 tonnes per year. The majority of existing natural building and roofing stone quarries are outside of the North Pennines in an area centred around Barnard Castle. In order to maintain a steady and adequate supply of natural building and roofing stone we believe that further sites may be required.

Question 44

Which option do you prefer for the location of new natural building and roofing stone workings?

- a. Only outside of the North Pennines AONB and in areas not subject to international or national biodiversity designations;
- b. Locate the majority of new working to areas outside the North Pennines AONB and international or national biodiversity designations but allow some small scale working in certain circumstances within the AONB; or
- c. Do not provide any locational guidance.

Please give reasons for your response.

Energy Minerals including Surface Mined Coal, Fireclay and Conventional Oil and Gas

4.153 We do not consider that there are currently any spatial options for any of these mineral types. In locational terms, for surface mined coal our intention is to consider potential sites for new working put forward by coal operators as potential allocations through our work to prepare the Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document. In addition for surface mined coal and all energy minerals, the Proposals Map which accompanies the Plan, will identify the extent of any onshore oil and gas licences (this includes Fracking) and the key environmental designations across the County which will need to be addressed by any future planning applications.

Question 45

Do you agree with the approach to Energy Minerals including Surface Mined Coal, Fireclay and Conventional Oil and Gas? Please give reasons for your response.

Call for Sites

4.154 In order to identify strategic and non-strategic minerals sites we are issuing a 'call for sites', alongside this issues and options consultation.

Question 46

Call for Sites

Are there any sites that should be considered for allocation for mineral extraction (relating to the need outlined above)? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

Waste resource management

4.155 Waste is a natural by-product of all social and economic activity. Over recent years international and national concern for the impact of the disposal of waste has led to a fundamental change in how waste is viewed. Waste management now seeks to tackle the growth in waste by using the waste hierarchy which prioritises the prevention of waste at source, maximises the recovery of value through waste management which focuses upon increased recycling, composting and energy recovery, with the disposal of waste as a last resort.

4.156 Waste management is increasingly seen as part of the wider efforts to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change and the Government's Waste Review^(xxxv) has pointed to the 'zero waste' economy as a clear goal. National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) stresses positive planning and the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the waste hierarchy. Currently over 1.6 million tonnes of waste requires management in the county every year. This is a wide range of waste streams such as municipal, commercial, industrial and inert waste. In addition to these streams, a range of other waste streams need to be managed including hazardous waste, agricultural waste, sewage and water treatment sludge and low level radioactive waste.

4.157 The evidence base for waste is currently contained within a variety of documents including the Minerals and Waste Technical Paper 2016; Model of Waste Arisings and Waste Management Capacity for the North East of England Waste Planning Authorities 2012; and Production and Disposal of Low Level Radioactive Waste in the North East of England 2013. These will be updated where necessary.

4.158 In line with Government guidance the Plan will, where necessary, make provision for the sustainable management of: non-hazardous waste; which consists of Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) and Commercial and Industrial Waste; construction, demolition and excavation waste (CDEW); hazardous waste such as

asbestos or batteries; low level radioactive waste; agricultural waste and waste water produced from water treatment.

4.159 County Durham plays an important part in the management of waste from other areas. This is likely to continue as waste development is driven by the market. Whilst the principles of proximity and self-sufficiency are clear aims of the Waste Framework Directive and Government Guidance, it is apparent that there are wastes (such as those produced in very small quantities) where it is more economic to use other facilities elsewhere. It is also clear that there is no expectation to provide unnecessarily for our own waste if there is capacity available elsewhere.

Question 47

In making provision for waste we produce should we:

- Make provision for all of County Durham's waste (net self sufficiency);
- Make provision for all County Durham's waste and as much as possible from elsewhere, in order to maximise economic and employment opportunities in waste management; or
- Make provision for less waste than arises in County Durham, on the basis that a significant proportion will be managed outside the County.

Please give reasons for your response.

The Location of New Waste Facilities

4.160 The county's distinctive settlement pattern presents a challenge to delivering waste facilities. Paragraph 4 of the NPPW lists locations which should be considered for waste management facilities. Appendix B of NPPW also sets out criteria for the assessment of sites for inclusion in local plans. Through the Plan we will build on this approach and also consider our local context.

xxxv Government Review of Waste Policy in England (DEFRA, 2011).

4.161 The spatial strategy for waste needs to reflect the spatial strategy of the whole Plan so that facilities can be located close to potential sources of waste. Evidence from the Employment Land Review will also help assess which employment sites have the potential to accommodate new waste development. In order to ensure that facilities that require a rural location can be accommodated, support will also be given to a connected network of facilities in rural areas.

Non-Hazardous Waste: Local Authority Collected Waste and Commercial and Industrial Waste

4.162 Total non-hazardous waste arisings were 653,000 tonnes in 2011/12 and are projected to be 638,000 tonnes in 2020/21 and 637,000 tonnes in 2029/30^(xxxvi). The County's contracts for the management of Local Authority Collected Waste are in place until 2025 and involve the use of the SITA Energy from Waste plant in the Tees Valley. These contracts may be extended but until that procurement decision has been made we will need to be flexible in case further provision will need to be made towards the latter half of the Plan period.

Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste (Inert Waste)

4.163 The availability of reliable data on inert waste continues to be an issue in planning for future capacity. Significant volumes are managed on site at the point of arising, or on sites which are exempt from waste or environmental permitting by the Environment Agency and are therefore unrecorded^(xxxvii). Government guidance has now acknowledged this and suggests that we plan on the basis of a limited evidence base. On this basis we have assumed a 'worst case' scenario in that the figure of 1,066,097 tonnes in 2008^(xxxviii) will remain the same for the entire Plan period to 2033. We consider that there is therefore no need to provide further capacity for arisings of inert waste as it is estimated that we have more capacity than this figure and there is

also a drive to recycle 70% by weight of construction and demolition waste by 2020 (excluding hazardous waste and naturally occurring material).

Question 48

Do you agree that arisings of inert waste are likely to remain at 2008 levels (1,066,097 tonnes) for the entire Plan period? Please give reasons for your response.

Hazardous Waste

4.164 County Durham remains a relatively small producer of hazardous waste in regional terms and we consider that no additional capacity for hazardous waste is required in the County. Arisings are projected to decline from 16,000 tonnes in 2011/12 to 13,000 tonnes in 2029/30 compared to a current capacity of over 45,000 tonnes^(xxxix).

Low Level Radioactive Waste

4.165 Limited information is available both locally and nationally for this waste stream. However a study was undertaken in the North East in 2013 which found that there is sufficient commercial capacity in other local authority areas to manage low level radioactive waste generated in County Durham to at least 2029^(xl).

Question 49

Given the capacity elsewhere, do you agree that there is no need to identify any allocations for hazardous or low level radioactive waste capacity? Please give reasons for your response.

Agricultural Waste

xxxvi Urban Mines (Model of Waste Arisings and Waste Management Capacity for the North East of England Waste Planning Authorities, Urban Mines, 2012).

xxxvii As the Environment Agency can only give permits to carry out waste or environmental processes to sites which require them and only monitors those which have or have had active permits.

xxxviii EA Waste Interrogator 2008, inert waste received used as a proxy for arisings.

xxxix Urban Mines (Model of Waste Arisings and Waste Management Capacity for the North East of England Waste Planning Authorities, Urban Mines, 2012).

xl Production and Disposal of Low Level Radioactive Waste in the North East of England, Urban Mines, 2013.

4.166 As the majority of agricultural waste is managed on the farms where it occurs there is no need to provide for it through the Plan. Any larger facilities that may come forward will be determined using appropriate development management policies.

Call for Sites

4.167 In order to identify suitable waste management sites we are issuing a 'call for sites', alongside this issues and options consultation. Therefore if you are aware of a site that you believe to be suitable, we would encourage you to send us details including a site plan, size of site, site capacity, processes proposed, and the type of waste that would be managed. We would encourage you to give us as much detail as possible as this will allow us to assess the potential of the site.

Question 50

Call for Sites

Should evidence show they are required, are there any sites that should be considered for allocation for waste management (related to the need outlined above)? Please refer to the Call for Sites document for detail on what information is required.

Residual Waste (Landfill)

4.168 Whilst striving to drive waste management up the waste hierarchy, we are also required to make adequate provision for the disposal of the residual waste that cannot be recycled, reused or more sustainably managed. We will therefore set out an appropriate approach at the next stage of plan preparation.

5 Glossary of Terms

This glossary of terms defines terms used in this report:

Affordable Housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

- Social Rented Housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- Affordable Rented Housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- Intermediate Housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Amenity: A broad concept that refers to the pleasant or satisfactory aspects of a place which add positively to its overall character and to the enjoyment of residents or visitors. For example,

it encompasses human health, quality design, provision and protection of local services, local economy and the protection of the countryside, historic environment and environmental character. Amenity also encompasses leisure and sporting areas, such as playing fields and other open spaces used for sport.

Archaeological Interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, they represent the finest landscapes.

Article 4 Direction: A Direction made under the Town and Country Planning Act to remove some or all permitted development rights in an area or on a site.

Basal Permian Sand: This is a bedrock deposit of sand which is found along the base of the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment and dips to the east beneath the limestone. The resource can be used as a building and asphaltting sand or combined with limestone fines to make a product suitable for concreting purposes.

Brownfield Land and Sites: See ‘Previously-Developed Land’.

Capacity (in waste context): The ability of existing facilities to deal with all the waste which occurs.

Climate Change Adaptation: Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunity

Climate Change Mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Community Infrastructure Levy: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area in order to fund necessary improvements to services; systems; or facilities (e.g. Roads; rail; etc) needed by the development.

Comparison Shopping: The provision of retail items not obtained on a frequent basis, i.e. not classified as convenience shopping (see definition below), which the purchaser will compare on the basis of price and quality before a purchase is made, e.g. clothes, fashion, gift merchandise, electrical goods (white and brown), gas cookers and furniture.

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Conservation Area: Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Convenience Shopping: Broadly defined as food shopping, drinks, tobacco, newspapers, magazines and confectionery, purchased regularly for relatively immediate consumption.

Crushed Rock: Hard types of rock, which have been quarried, fragmented and graded for use as aggregate.

Demographic Projections: Demographic projections provide an indication of the future size and age structure of the population based on mid-year population estimates and a set of assumptions on future births, deaths and migration. ONS (Office for National Statistics) projections are widely used for resource allocation and planning.

Density: In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.

Designated Heritage Asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development: Development means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.

Development Management: The process whereby a local planning authority manages, shapes, and considers the merits of a planning application and whether it should be given permission with regard to the development plan.

Development Plan: In County Durham this currently includes saved policies in adopted Local Plans and will include this Local Plan and Adopted Neighbourhood Plans, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Edge of Centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Employment Land Review (ELR): The study will review current employment land supply and look to identify the appropriate type, quantity and location of employment land which will be capable of accommodating the economic growth trajectories up to 2033.

Employment Rate: The percentage of the labour force that is employed.

Environment Agency: Government body with responsibility for issues relating to flood risk; pollution and contamination; and waste licensing.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): Seeks to ensure that plans will promote equality and assess any risk of discrimination before policies are introduced or changed. The process checks that reasonable steps are being taken to tackle disadvantage and meet the diverse needs for all communities.

European Site: This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and

Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Evidence Base: The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the “soundness” of the policy approach set out in Local Plans, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

Examination in Public: The process by which an Independent Planning Inspector publicly examines a submitted development plan, together with any public representations, before issuing a report.

Fluvial or Glacial Sand: These are superficial deposits of sand laid down in the last two million years. Once extracted the resource is often suitable for concreting sand.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green Belt (not to be confused with the term ‘greenfield’): Areas of land where there is a strong presumption against development except that which falls into certain limited categories. The purposes of Green Belts are to check the unrestricted sprawl of urban areas, stop the joining of neighbouring towns, safeguard the surrounding countryside, preserve the special character of the area, assist in urban regeneration and to serve as a recreational resource.

Greenfield Land or Site: Land (or a defined site) which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

Green Infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Gross Value Added (GVA): is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Gypsies and Travellers: Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel

temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

Habitats Regulation Assessment: An assessment of the Plan’s likely impact on wildlife habitats of European importance. Also known as an ‘Appropriate Assessment’.

Hazardous Waste: Material or substances potentially harmful to health or the environment, including oils and asbestos, batteries, and fluorescent lighting.

Hectare: A metric unit to measure land. One hectare equals 2.47 acres or 10,000 square metres. One hectare of land can often accommodate 30 houses.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage Coast: An area identified to focus attention on managing the best stretches of undeveloped coast, where the needs of conservation, pressures of recreation and problems of pollution need to be considered in a co-ordinated way.

Historic England: Government body with responsibility for all aspects of protecting and promoting the historic environment.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD): A ward level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services). IMD can help to identify areas for regeneration.

Inert waste: Waste that does not cause contamination or danger to human health by decomposing or react physically, chemically or biologically (e.g. Rubble, glass, concrete).

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): Identify what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed, such as new roads, schools and open spaces, who will deliver this and when.

Interchange: To transfer between different transport modes to complete a single journey. Transport Interchanges are places where the change between modes of travel is easy, for example a Bus/Rail station or an airport with rail access.

Listed Building: A building of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II.

Local Aggregate Assessment: An annual assessment of the demand for and supply of aggregates in a mineral planning authority's area. A mineral planning authority must either prepare a Local Aggregate Assessment on its own or jointly with one or more other minerals planning authority if it wishes.

Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW): All waste collected by the local authority. This includes both non-municipal waste fractions (such as construction and demolition waste if collected by the Local Authority) and waste which is 'similar in nature and composition' (such as business waste) as required by the Landfill Directive (LACW is the definition that will be used in Government statistical publications, which previously referred to municipal waste).

Localism Act: Provides new planning tools to help empower communities to shape and manage development in their local area.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP): An overall partnership of public, private, community and voluntary organisations within a local authority area, with the objective of improving people's quality of life. The County Durham Partnership is the LSP for County Durham and it is responsible for the production of the Sustainable Community Strategy (as referred to below).

Main Town Centre Uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Material Consideration: A material consideration is a process in planning law in which the decision maker (usually Durham County Council) must take into account when assessing a planning application.

Migration: In the demographic scenarios, this means people moving in and out of the County. This can be national migration from within the UK or international migration from abroad.

Mineral Resource: A potential mineral deposit where the quality and quantity of material present has not been tested.

Municipal Waste: Waste from households as well as other waste which, because of its nature or composition, is similar to waste from households. This includes a significant amount of waste that is generated by businesses and not handled by local authorities.

Natural England: Government advisors on nature conservation, biodiversity and landscape in England.

Neighbourhood Plans: A plan prepared by a Parish or Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area.

Non-Hazardous Waste: Consists of Municipal Waste (formerly MSW) and Commercial and Industrial (C&I) waste. 'Municipal waste' traditionally meant waste managed by a local authority. The Landfill Directive defines municipal waste as waste from households as well as other waste which, because of its nature or composition, is similar to waste from households. This includes a significant amount of waste that is generated by businesses and not handled by local authorities.

Objectively Assessed Need: An assessment of the future amount of housing needed.

Older people: People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open Space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Permitted Reserves: Mineral deposits with the benefit of planning permission for extraction.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG): The Government's guidance on planning issues.

Pollution: Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

Previously Developed Land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Recovery: Value can be recovered from waste by recovering materials through recycling, composting or recovery of energy.

Registered Providers: Social rented housing is owned by registered providers.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep

geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Residual Waste: Waste remaining after materials for re-use, recycling and composting have been removed.

Rural Exception Sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

SHLAA: The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment's (SHLAA) primary role is to identify sites with potential for housing, identify any issues affecting the development of sites such as access problems and estimate when they are likely to come forward which may be affected by issues such as policy constraints or site conditions. The SHLAA is therefore of considerable value in being able to demonstrate that sufficient developable sites are available to deliver the Local Plan.

SHMA: Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) are key to informing an area's level of future housing provision and establishing the mix of housing required.

Spatial Vision: A brief description of how the County will have changed at the end of the plan period (2033).

Statutory Undertakers / Statutory Utilities: Providers of essential services such as gas, electricity, water or telecommunications.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment including those in the field of planning and land use, which complies with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC.

Sustainable Community Strategy: The purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is to set out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area in a way that contributes to sustainable development. The SCS is produced by the Local Strategic Partnership, a partnership of public, private, community and voluntary organisations.

Sustainable Development: There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Sustainable Travel / Sustainable Transport: Often meaning walking, cycling and public transport (and in some circumstances “car sharing”), which is considered to be less damaging to the environment and which contributes less to traffic congestion than one-person car journeys.

Sustainability Appraisal (including Environmental Appraisal): The process of weighing and assessing all the policies in a development plan document for its global, national and local implications. (See also Strategic Environmental Assessment).

Transport Assessment: A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Travel Plan: A travel plan aims to promote sustainable travel choices (for example cycling) as an alternative to single occupancy car journeys that may impact negatively on the environment, congestion and road safety. Travel Plans can be required when granting planning permission for new developments.

Waste Hierarchy: A framework for securing a sustainable approach to waste management. Wherever possible, waste should be minimised. If waste cannot be avoided, then it should be: re-used; recycled or composting; or converted to energy; and finally landfill disposal.

Windfall Sites: Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

World Heritage Site: A cultural or natural site of outstanding universal value designated by the “International Council on Monuments and Sites” (ICOMOS).