

## Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum

### PBSA Sites Proposed to the Forum by Durham University

#### Note of meeting with Durham County Council, 2 July 2018

***Present:***

Carole Dillon, DCC

Sue Childs and John Ashby, Neighbourhood Forum

1. The meeting was arranged to compare the seven PBSA sites submitted by Durham University to the Forum with the boundaries in Preferred Option.
2. We used the latest boundaries shown on the revised maps provided by Durham University for the site visits on 27 June and compared these with detailed maps of the Preferred Option boundaries. Carole will provide copies of these detailed maps.
3. The Evidence Base for Preferred Option includes the County Council's Assessment of Purpose Built Student Accommodation sites put forward by Durham University as part of the SHLAA 2018 trawl for sites. There were eleven sites put forward and assessed; some of the site assessments call for reduced boundaries but there are no maps in the document. Clarification was needed as to whether the boundaries shown on Preferred Option Proposals Map are exactly the same as the latest boundaries provided by the University to the Forum on 27 June. This is to check whether the County Council's assessments are applicable. If in some case they are not then AECOM might need to carry out an assessment of them.
4. **Leazes Road:** this has six plots but it is not clear which numbered assessment applies to which plot. Taking them as deduced in the site visits:  
Site 1: the 2.3 hectare plot: unresolved as to whether Preferred Option has left part of this site in the Green Belt and why a V-shape area has been removed from the site; **Carole** will check.  
Site 2: the 0.2 hectare plot: Preferred Option has taken a slight nibble.  
Site 3: the 0.9 (not 9.0) hectare plot: Preferred Option appears to have halved this plot.  
Site 4: the 0.1 hectare plot: Preferred Option has taken a slight nibble.  
Site 5: the 0.3 hectare plot: boundary unchanged.  
Site 6: the 4.2 hectare plot: clear that Preferred Option has pulled the boundary back from the river and has left the V-shaped gap with Site 1: **John A** will check with Matthew Wright whether this and all the other changes matter to the University.
5. **St Mary's College:** just a slight difference to check with the University.

6. **James Barber House:** Preferred Option has halved this site and straightened the curved boundary; to be checked with the University. Note that the Forum may prefer this site to be for older people and will explain why in a representation on Preferred Option.
7. **Howlands:** redevelopment of an existing development in the Green Belt, so not submitted to the Forum.
8. **Mill Hill Lane:** the University's boundary for the Mill Hill Lane site immediately adjoins their boundary for the St Aidan's site, whereas Preferred Option leaves a significant space between them. The Forum may wish to make representations on Preferred Option that the trees and green area between this site and the St Aidan's site should be retained.
9. **St Aidan's:** as above.
10. **Elvet Hill car park:** Preferred Option boundary definitely identical to the University's boundary provided to the Forum. The issue of the loss of car parking capacity will need to be addressed between the University and the County Council; the Forum may wish to make representations.
11. **Green Lane:** not allocated in Preferred Option but no mention of Green Belt in the County Council's assessment. **Carole** will investigate (a) what boundary did the University submit to the County Council, and (b) what is the flood risk boundary.
12. Subject to the clarifications set out above, the Forum will be recommended to express support in principle in the Neighbourhood Plan for the six PBSA sites proposed in Preferred Option (with whatever fine-scale protections etc the Forum wishes to include in the Neighbourhood Plan), with the proviso that if for any reason the County Local Plan experiences significant delays then the Parish Council should amend the Neighbourhood Plan to make these sites formal allocations.  
*Note: the Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum at its meeting on 3rd July considered this note and decided that the PBSA sites should be allocated in a formal policy in the draft Neighbourhood Plan with an explanation in the accompanying text that once the County Durham Local Plan is adopted its provisions for PBSA in Our Neighbour will supersede and replace the corresponding allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan.*
13. For the Green Lane site, AECOM will carry out a full assessment so that the Forum can consider whether to allocate it in the Neighbourhood Plan. If any of the differences on other sites noted above are considered to undermine reliance on the County Council's assessments then AECOM will need to assess these too.

14. Carole confirmed that Durham County Council will provide very soon indeed a figure for housing need in Our Neighbourhood. This will be a gross figure, not broken down into particular needs such as affordable, elderly, student, etc.

## Durham City Neighbourhood Plan - Update on Sites Proposed in the Regulation 14 Consultation Draft Plan of November/December 2017

At the time of the previous AECOM assessment, the initial trawl for sites for residential development had produced 21 possible sites for consideration. However, field inspections showed that 5 had obvious inaccessibility, topographic or sensitivity problems. Environment Agency, County Council and AECOM comments took out 6 of the remaining 17 sites and reduced the size or capacity of 3 others. Seven of the eleven sites were firm allocations; the other four were aspirations to allocate if the ownership/potential flood risk issues could be overcome. The resulting policy numbering of sites is given in brackets in the following list of all 21 sites considered.

The update as of 31 March 2018 housing base date position is in red.

1. (D1.1) Whinney Hill (former Johnston School): **allocate** at indicative 48 units (the SHLAA 2013/14 figure of 77 units is reduced to 48 because the County Council's environmental assessment team consider that the landscape quality and shape of this site merits a lower figure). **The site was given planning permission for 75 dwellings and is now under construction, so it is a pipeline contribution towards meeting need and is no longer a Neighbourhood Plan allocation.**
2. Land at 6th Form Centre, currently a car park: possibly 14 units but **dropped** because it likely to be retained by the Centre and also may be subject to flooding. **Still dropped.**
3. (D1.2) John Street: **allocate** 22 units as possible apartments from previous approval. **Retain as an allocation following dismissal of an appeal against refusal of proposed 60 bed PBSA.**
4. (D1.3) Former Bernard Gilpin Society, The Sands: **allocate** 10 units despite having approval for 35, to match existing estate. **The approved scheme is now under construction, so it is a pipeline contribution towards meeting need and is no longer a Neighbourhood Plan allocation.**
5. (D1.8) Former Shell Garage, A167: **aspire to allocate** 4 units rather than SHLAA's 8, to match existing houses. **The owners have been identified and notified of the proposed allocation but have not responded. The site has been tidied up and is temporarily occupied by Keepmoat as a car park for the construction vehicles associated with the nearby PBSA construction.**
6. Bede College: possibly 58 units but **dropped** because it is to be redeveloped by the University of Durham who own the site. **Now a proposed PBSA site in County Plan Preferred Option and will be recommended for support by the Forum.**

7. Hollow Drift, Green Lane: possibly 35 units but **dropped** because it is to be redeveloped by the University of Durham who own the site. **Now a PBSA site proposed by Durham University but not in Preferred Option and is being assessed by AECOM.**
8. (D1.4) Site of Government Offices, Framwellgate Peth: **allocate** 440 units as approved in mixed-use scheme including apartments. The proposed allocation originally used the boundary of the whole multi-use planning permission; the County Council's environmental assessment team note that the riverside part is subject to flooding. Accordingly, the boundary has been revised to contain only the residential area, which is at the top of the whole site and well away from any possible flooding. **The planning permission is for 441 units, no construction has started yet but the developers are proposing changes which, if approved, would reduce the number of dwellings. The first change (to an hotel) would reduce the number by 38; the second (to an office block) would further reduce the number but quantum unknown.**
9. (D1.9) Sidegate electricity sub-station: **aspire to allocate** 12 units. **Now being assessed by AECOM as part of the Lovegreen site.**
10. Lovegreen car park: 4 units but **dropped** because the whole site is subject to flooding. **Now being assessed by AECOM.**
11. (D1.10) Council-owned car park: possibly 30 units but **aspire to allocate** 20 units instead because the County Council's environmental assessment team consider that this site merits a lower density than we envisaged. **Now being assessed by AECOM.**
12. (D1.5) Offices at Diamond Terrace: **allocate** 3 units. **Retain.**
13. (D1.6) Main Street USA : **allocate** 3 units (current planning permission for 5). **Retain but as 5 units.**
14. Field at bottom of Potters Bank on the right: possibly 5 units but **dropped** because the County Council's environmental assessment team note that this is too sensitive a site to be capable of acceptable residential development. **Still dropped.**
15. (D1.11) Small site next to Sainsbury supermarket on A167: **aspire to allocate** 2 units. **The owners have been identified and notified of the proposed allocation but have not responded. Retain as 2 units.**
16. (D1.7) Number 24 a, b and c The Avenue: **allocate** 3 units. **Now has planning permission for 12 units but no work started so retain but as 12 units.**

17. Site behind Observatory Hill: possibly 20 units but **dropped** because the County Council's environmental assessment team note that this is too sensitive a site to be capable of acceptable residential development). **Still dropped.**

18, 19 and 20. The Downs: three suggested areas, **rejected** as all far too steep to develop. **Still rejected.**

21. Adj St Cuthbert's Cemetery: **rejected** as too steep and impossible to provide satisfactory access. **Still rejected.**

In addition, Durham University has submitted to the Forum seven potential sites for Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSAs).