

Durham City Neighbourhood Plan

Summary of Pre-Submission Consultation Draft

This summary is to help you to make your views known on the Draft Plan, presented by the City of Durham Parish Council.

- You will need a Feedback questionnaire from a 'Drop-in' event or from Durham Town Hall, County Hall reception or Clayport Library, where you can also return the completed questionnaire; or by post to 'Clerk, City of Durham Parish Council, Office 3 D4.01d, Clayport Library, 8 Millennium Place, Durham DH1 1WA'
- You can also go to <http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/the-plan/> where you will find a full electronic version of the Plan, and can also respond online, or by email npf@durhamcity.org.uk
- The Plan was originally produced by local volunteers who came together as the Neighbourhood Planning Forum. A previous draft of the Plan was subject to public consultation in November / December 2017. When the City of Durham Parish Council was created in April 2018 it assumed responsibility for completing the Plan. It is carrying out this further consultation to fulfil a legal requirement and to give people a chance to comment on the way in which the policies have been revised in response to the 2017 consultation. If you want to see what people have said to past consultations on the Plan go to <http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/your-views/>
- To make the policies truly representative of local people's views, it is important that as many people as possible express a view. We welcome your comments. Please give your feedback by 28th June. The consultation starts on 17th May.
- This summary contains 29 policies. Reply on all or any part of the policies in which you have an interest.

Theme 1: A City with a Sustainable Future

What is sustainable development? It is development that meets current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is the so-called 'golden thread' running through the National Planning Policy Framework and this Draft Plan.

How can this be achieved? By making sure that all sites and buildings approved for development contribute to a sustainable future for Durham City. This can only be done by ensuring a successful balance among environmental, social and economic outcomes:

The **environmental function** is to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, all of which are particularly rich in Durham City. This function will include helping to increase biodiversity, using natural resources prudently as we move to a low carbon economy, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change. In Durham City this requires particular attention to building resilience to flooding and safeguarding the high qualities of the built and natural environment.

The **social function** is to support strong, balanced, 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 meet the community's varied needs and support its health, educational, social and cultural well-being.


The **economic function** is to contribute 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. It must also identify and coordinate development requirements, including the provision of a modern transport and communications infrastructure.

Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements of all Development and Re-development Sites Including all New Building, Renovations and Extensions


Development proposals must have the right mix of land uses; use brownfield land to protect the Green Belt; protect wildlife and biodiversity; efficiently use natural and processed resources; show resilience to climate change; improve safety, paving, lighting and signage, and reduce crime; protect heritage assets; incorporate public benefits; and enable ease of access for all by public transport, walking and cycling.

Policy S2: The Requirement for Master Plans

A Master Plan for all large and/or sensitive sites will be required where new development would have a major impact on adjacent areas or would be intrusive in views of the World Heritage site or the surrounding landscape of the City. The Master Plan will need to demonstrate that the development proposed is necessary and desirable and will be carried out according to the highest standards of sustainability as set out in Policy S1. The developer must submit the Master Plan and any subsequent changes to public scrutiny to avoid piecemeal development, and to take full account of representations made.



Isn't sustainability just motherhood and apple pie?



No, these are tough conditions aimed at raising the quality of all development

Theme 2a: A Beautiful and Historic City - Heritage

The City of Durham is one of the most important historic cities in Britain. Its unique townscape forms the immediate setting for the Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site recognised by UNESCO as being of ‘such exceptional cultural significance as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity’. The challenge is to plan for accommodating modern needs while respecting history and heritage.

Policy H1: Protection of the World Heritage Site

Planning policy and processes will protect The Durham Cathedral and Castle World Heritage Site from inappropriate development both within the existing boundary and the proposed extension into the surrounding banks of the River Wear, and its landscape setting. Any proposed developments must safeguard views to and from The World Heritage Site and support and enhance its Outstanding Universal Value.

Policy H2: The Conservation Areas

Development proposals within the Durham City Conservation Area and the Burn Hall Conservation Area will only be permitted if they respect and enhance the distinctive heritage and architectural values and character of the buildings and their setting and promote mixed and appropriate use of land within these areas. Loss of all or parts of buildings that contribute to character and appearance of the area should be avoided.

Policy H3: Our Neighbourhood Outside the Conservation Areas

Localities in Our Neighbourhood outside the Conservation Areas have their own character and this policy is to ensure that developers demonstrate awareness of the need to protect and enhance this character and setting, and to employ high quality and sympathetic design.

Policy H4: Heritage Assets

These diverse heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, are crucial in giving a sense of identity and are an essential part of the collective memory of the community. Proposals will be supported only if they preserve and conserve these assets, and bring them back into appropriate use.

Theme 2b: A Beautiful and Historic City – Green Infrastructure

What is green infrastructure? It is the network of green spaces and natural resources including: the River and riverbanks, streams and ponds; the Green Belt; parks and gardens; the grounds of the public sector organisations and of businesses; individual wildlife sites and habitats; woodland; highway verges; railway embankments; footpaths and green corridors; cemeteries and churchyards; allotments and community gardens; sports and playing fields; amenity green space; trees, hedgerows, grass, vegetation; built structures such as green roofs, green walls, water features, bird and bat boxes and roosting sites.

Policy G1: Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure

This makes clear what is required of planning proposals, in contributing towards the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure, in improving the City's setting, in addressing shortage of open space, in promoting healthy communities, and in meeting the challenges of climate change and flooding. This includes footpaths, green corridors, biodiversity, habitats, protected species and geological features, trees and hedgerows, river banks and dark corridors.

Policy G2: Designation of Local Green Spaces

Neighbourhood plans have a power to identify and designate Local Green Spaces as a way of providing protection against development of green areas of particular importance to local communities because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife. Local Green Spaces have the similar development


constraints as for the Green Belt.

Policy G3: Creation of the Emerald Network

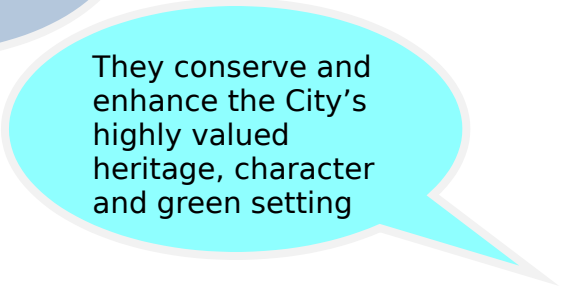
The Emerald Network will help create a network of sites of wildlife importance lying within Our Neighbourhood. Existing rights of way and pavements will provide corridors between sites to enhance access and use by the public. Proposals for improving the biodiversity and amenity of sites or footpaths in the Emerald Network, will be supported, whilst proposals that would damage the wildlife value of the sites would be refused.

Policy G4: Enhancing the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt

Proposals within the Green Belt land in Our Neighbourhood in (i) the Sidegate and Frankland Lane area and (ii) West of the A167 from Browney Bridge to Nevilles Cross, with the purpose of improving access, green corridors, landscape, biodiversity, or for enhancing visual amenity, will be encouraged as long as such proposals enhance the setting of the World Heritage Site, and the Durham City Conservation Area, and do not impair the overall quality of the Green Belt environment.



Why are there so many policies protecting the City?



They conserve and enhance the City's highly valued heritage, character and green setting

Theme 3: A City with a Diverse and Resilient Economy

What kind of economy should we plan for? A sustainable and vibrant local economy: supporting large and small businesses, retail and tourism, which encourages a diverse range of employment; making the most of the available strategic and local sites to diversify the economy; promoting a competitive City centre with balanced retail development, benefiting from online shopping, tourism and leisure.

Policy E1: Larger Employment Sites

Provision will be made for prestige offices, business incubators and start-up businesses on non-Green Belt land at Aykley Heads, and science and high-tech developments, business start-ups and incubators and education uses at Durham Science Park, Mountjoy.

Policy E2: Other Employment Sites

Sites for finance and business services are scarce and so support will be given to three small sites at Blagdon Depot (Frankland Lane), Providence Row (Old Sorting Office), Fowler's Yard, and windfall brownfield sites that become available.

Policy E3: Retail Development

Policy E4: Evening Economy

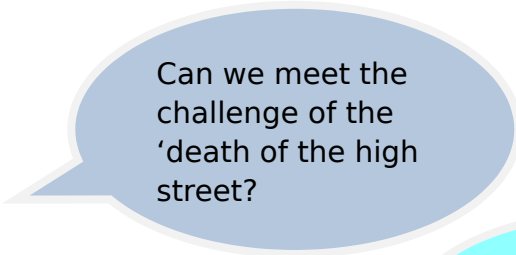
Proposals for retail, leisure and commercial developments that contribute to the creation of a lively and vibrant City centre, but which enhance its character and attractiveness, and positively contribute to the evening economy, will be supported.

Policy E5: Visitor Attractions

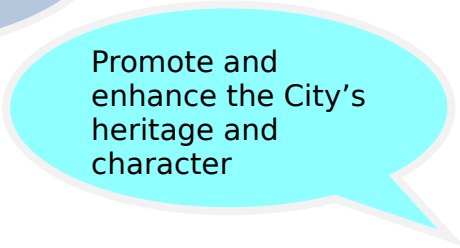
Policy E6: Visitor Accommodation

Proposals for visitor attractions or accommodation will be supported, particularly those which connect with county-wide tourist attractions,

and those with appropriate conditions to protect the City's character.



Can we meet the challenge of the 'death of the high street?



Promote and enhance the City's heritage and character

Theme 4: A City with Attractive and Affordable Places to Live

One of the strongest concerns expressed in consultations has been the 'studentification' of former family housing areas of Durham City, which is damaging to community relations, to quality of life and to the future sustainability of schools, shops and other services and facilities. The planned expansion of Durham University increases demand for student accommodation. The NPPF expects planning policies to aim to create mixed and balanced communities and to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. The policies here seek to change the imbalance back to a sustainable, balanced community and to promote housing for all sectors of the community.

Policy D1: Land for Residential Development

The large increase in purpose built student accommodation in the city means that every remaining site is precious. Land is needed for at least 200 dwellings in the Plan period with dwellings for the growing proportion of the elderly a particular priority. There is land already approved for an additional 1,200 dwellings and the Plan identifies three

more small sites that could provide for 39 dwellings. There are a further four sites where various problems are preventing them from currently becoming available which could provide for a further 38 dwellings.

Policy D2: Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

All developers will be required to prove that there is a genuine need and that there has been full consultation with the education provider. There will need to be proof that no negative impacts will result from the development. It will have to be in conformity with specified requirements, be readily accessible to existing academic, hospital or research sites, and meet stringent design standards.

Policy D3: Student Accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

The spread of conversions to student accommodation needs to be far more strictly controlled. Under this critical policy, applications to convert to an HMO will not be approved if more than 10% of the total number of residential units including those in Purpose Built Student Accommodation within 100 metres of the application site are already HMOs or student accommodation.

Policy D4: Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities

In order to help meet the needs of the ageing population in Our Neighbourhood, 10% of appropriate housing units must be provided on sites of 10 or more housing units. Housing schemes for older people and for people with disabilities will be supported. Extensions to houses and flats to enable residents to continue independent living will be allowed.

Policy D5: Affordable Housing

To change the imbalance arising from the dominance of student and executive housing, this policy requires that housing sites of more than 10 units, 20% of the units must be affordable housing to provide opportunities for young professionals, young couples starting out, families with children, and older people where appropriate.

Policy D6: Building Housing to the Highest Standards

To meet Our Neighbourhood's sustainability criteria and national standards of design, housing must be of high quality design relating to the character and appearance of the local area, aesthetics, form and layout, functionality, adaptability, resilience, and energy efficiency. Housing must meet the Building for Life criteria.

Won't
developers of
student housing
go on winning?

All the more
reason to adopt
tougher policies
now

Theme 5: A City with a Modern and Sustainable Transport Infrastructure

The Durham City Sustainable Transport Delivery Plan provides the context for transport in Our Neighbourhood. Future transport needs will be according to this user hierarchy: walking, cycling, public transport, specialist services, e.g. emergency vehicles, waste collection, other motor traffic. The role for our Plan is to support this through policies which promote and enable sustainable transport.

Policy T1: Sustainable transport accessibility and design

The policy will promote walking, cycling and public transport access in new developments and the minimisation of transport impacts. Developers will need to provide solutions to congestion on pavements and deficiencies in cycle routes. Development sites should incorporate attractive and safe walking, cycling and public transport access. Direct and well-designed links to existing networks are also essential in creating a walkable and cycle friendly City.

Policy T2: Residential Car Parking

This policy covers the design of car parking provision, and the role of controlled parking zones.

T3: Residential Storage for Cycles and Mobility Aids

All new residential development will have to accommodate storage of cycles and mobility aids. Currently, some new houses have no garages and no storage for mobility aids, making this housing unsuitable for people at all stages of their lives. This policy would remedy that deficiency.

Why are there no big transport ideas in this Plan?

Strategic policies would be disallowed by the County Council and we would have to delete them

Theme 6: A City with an Enriched Community Life

What can an essentially planning document do to improve community life? The importance of the Plan is that it has arisen from community concerns, and many of those are about the need to support community life, including health and well-being and an enriched artistic and cultural life for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. The Plan can encourage the provision of these facilities and help to retain and improve those that already exist.

Policy C1: Provision of Facilities for Arts and Culture

This policy sets out the planning requirements for new facilities for arts and culture, or extensions to existing facilities.

Policy C2: Provision of New Community Facilities

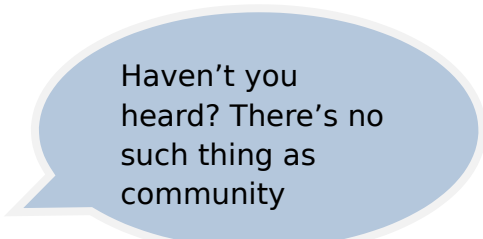
This policy sets out the planning requirements for new facilities such as community and youth centres, sports fields, libraries, and places of worship. An example of such a new facility would be a City Centre Hub, providing a focal point for the whole community, including permanent residents, students and visitors. Such a facility would include an information sharing function, and meeting space.

Policy C3: Protection of an Existing Community Facility


Proposals resulting in loss of a community facility would not be approved, unless it was demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable or needed, and alternative provision is provided nearby.

Policy C4: Health Care and Social Care Facilities

This policy sets out the planning conditions to be met in new proposals.



Haven't you heard? There's no such thing as community



Well, there is in Durham

We look forward to your comments. Thank you