

THEME 4: A CITY WITH ATTRACTIVE AND AFFORDABLE PLACES TO LIVE

Image Terraces

Vision and Objectives

4.130

Vision

Provision of Durham City will have [EQ31] a range of housing types to meet the needs of a sustainable mix of local residents, of all ages and abilities [L9b], and students living in harmony.

4.131

Objectives

1. To change the imbalance towards student accommodation back to a sustainable, balanced community;
2. To provide promote (DCC) housing designed for the needs of older people and for people with disabilities;
3. To provide promote (DCC) affordable housing for all sectors of the community, but particularly for families with children and young people starting out.

[governance of the commons to restore the social balance](http://www.lifewithalacrity.com/2015/11/a-revised-ostroms-design-principles-for-collective-governance-of-the-commons-.html)

<http://www.lifewithalacrity.com/2015/11/a-revised-ostroms-design-principles-for-collective-governance-of-the-commons-.html> [EQ20] Don't think it relevant here.

Context

4.132 Durham City's setting in a surrounding green bowl is of paramount importance. Development of all kinds should be encouraged up to its physical limits. Major physical constraints within the City include the River Wear, its floodplain and its gorge. The scale and design of new buildings need to respect the City's heritage and topography, especially regarding the World Heritage Site and the two Conservation Areas. These special Durham factors require that the best use is made of every piece of land within the urban area and especially the development of 'brownfield' land and the protection of green and attractive open spaces. The over-riding consideration that applies to all development proposals in Our Neighbourhood, including all forms of residential development, is that there shall be no harm to the historic environment, most notably the setting of the World Heritage Site.

4.133 When work started our on the Neighbourhood Plan there were sites within the urban area capable of providing over 1,500 additional dwellings. However, many of these have subsequently been approved for the construction of Purpose Built Student Accommodation. The few remaining sites are therefore extremely precious; it is imperative that our Neighbourhood Plan uses the sites within Our Neighbourhood to contribute as much as possible to the provision of appropriate new dwellings for Durham City as a

whole. Since 2012 a number of sites in Our Neighbourhood including several specifically identified at the time in the County Council's SHLAA (DCC) that could have been for long-term residents have been developed as private PBSAs, i.e.:

- Elvet Studios (Green Lane)
- City Block (formerly The Village @ The Viaduct) (Ainsley Street)
- Ward Court (Former Neville's Cross Club)
- Chapel Heights
- St Giles Studios (110 Gilesgate)
- Kepier Court
- Neville House / Sheraton House
- Duresme House, previously Berendsen Laundry
- Rutherford Court (County Hospital)
- Houghall Court

Other sites could have been for commercial activities, i.e.:

- Dunholm House, The Riverwalk
- Student Castle, Lower Claypath
- Back Silver Street
- The Three Tuns

[EQ20, L9b]

The few remaining areas of land potentially suitable for housing development (DCC) are therefore extremely precious; it is imperative that the Neighbourhood Plan provides development policies that enable such areas of land within Our Neighbourhood (DCC) to contribute as much as possible to the provision of appropriate new dwellings for Durham City as a whole.

4.134 One of the strongest concerns expressed in consultations has been the 'studentification' of former family housing areas of Durham; the NPPF (para. 50 62) expects planning bodies to aim to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed and balanced communities and (para. 91) to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. The severe imbalance in parts of Durham City is damaging to community relations, to quality of life and to the future sustainability of schools, shops and other services and facilities. In 2015 the Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum collected data on residency in Our Neighbourhood (<http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/themes/housing/property-information/>). Most of the information was gathered from public sources, primarily the Valuation Office Agency and Durham County Council, plus estate agents and landlord websites. The database at the time of writing (October 2018) (DCC) has 2,913 permanent residents' dwellings, 2,029 student houses and flats, 26 empty properties, 6,209 other rented properties, 1,403 currently unknown occupants, making 6,586 properties in total. The 2,029 student houses and flats represent 30% of all residential properties in Our Neighbourhood, above the 10% figure for a balanced community. It should also be noted that a number of streets in the Viaduct and Crossgate area have student residencies of ~90+%. [EQ20, L9b]

4.135 A further issue now emerging is that the University of Durham University (2016) is developing has adopted its Masterplan for the growth of the Durham University over the next 10 years. This will be helpful in displaying the Durham University's aspirations for

physical development. If adopted it This growth will, however, further squeeze diminish (DCC) the very limited availability of sites for various forms of residential development unless sufficient College and Purpose Built Student Accommodation is provided within the University estate (L9b and L12b). It is welcome therefore, that Durham University has identified land in its ownership for six new Colleges and PBSAs (DCC).

4.136 Our Neighbourhood Plan has been provided by The County Council has provided an estimate of the overall (DCC) numbers of dwelling units required in Our Neighbourhood, but not for each kind of housing need. Although the new Durham County Plan will set the housing need figure for the whole County and for its five nine (L9b) sub-areas, it will not specify figures of need for Our Neighbourhood. To at least be able to retain the long-term number of residents we would need sites for at least 200 additional dwellings at the very minimum (L9b) (from Appendix D para. 6). The County Council's estimate at the time of writing (October 2018) (DCC - will be revised in due course) is that a minimum of 1,297 new dwellings are required, comprising 639 on sites now under construction, 120 with planning permission but not yet under construction, 488 with planning permission and shown on the Preferred Options Proposals Map, and 50 on a proposed new site (details are in Appendix D). This requirement figure therefore will assist in re-balancing the permanent (DCC) resident population of Our Neighbourhood.

The County Council's figure of the housing requirement for Our Neighbourhood is in effect the supply of new dwellings 'in the pipeline' and is thereby automatically sufficient. Additional suitable sites would be useful in case of non-delivery of some of the approved sites and would provide flexibility and a contingency provision (DCC). Accordingly, further sites, however small, have been sought and these are included in Policy D1.

Add map of Durham City Local Plan Monitoring Area.

4.137 We do The Neighbourhood Plan does set out qualitative needs: the County's population age structure is projected to shift dramatically (Office for National Statistics, 2016⁸), with the numbers aged 75 and over increasing by over 60% from being 8.6% of the total population in 2014 to 13% in 2035. This makes the provision of suitable accommodation for older people a particular priority. Nevertheless, there are other categories of provision that will be needed, including students, families with children, professionals and people starting out in the housing market [NPPF, para. 61]. [L9b]

Justification

4.138 This justification refers to the Housing theme as a whole. Additional, specific justification for each housing policy is given with the policy itself.

4.139 The results of the Forum survey looking at the public's views about what is good, bad and needs to change about the City (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015) emphasised housing as a key issue. In particular, the responses indicate that

(DCC) there is an urgent need to redress the huge imbalance towards student accommodation, and the various problems this causes and to provide more housing (e.g. affordable housing; housing for families of various kinds including families with children; older people; and young professionals). The particular importance of ensuring provision for families with children is **revealed by the survey in order (DCC)** to restore and sustain community balance, inclusiveness and sustainability, notably with regard to school places and children's and parent's facilities. [L9b]

4.140 The NPPF (para.47 67) states the need for the local **Council Local Planning Authority (DCC)** to identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites (the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)) **in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development**. The **NPPF's** aims are to meet household and population projections, address the need for all types of housing including affordable housing, address the needs of different groups in the community (including families with children and older people) (NPPF para.50 61), and **create sustainable, inclusive and mixed contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced (DCC)** communities. [L9b] However, the **Council Local Planning Authority (DCC)** should also protect the Green Belt (NPPF paras.87-90 133-136) and encourage reuse of brownfield land (NPPF, para.111 117). **These national planning policies apply not just to the Local Planning Authority but to all relevant plan-makers and decision-takers (L9b).**

4.141 The **recent** White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2017a) **and Government Response to consultation comments (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018)** aims to boost housing supply and, over the long term, create a more efficient housing market. **It The Government** proposes to prioritise the use of brownfield land, incentivise housing for rent, encourage the smaller development firms, discourage 'land-banking' and promote good design.

4.142 The Sustainable Communities Strategy for County Durham 2014-2030 (County Durham Partnership, 2014) has a section 'Altogether greener' with the aim of promoting sustainable design and protecting Durham's heritage.

4.143 The Durham City Regeneration Masterplan (Durham County Council, 2014c) and its update (Durham County Council, 2016f) have a number of implementation projects and actions relevant to housing in Our Neighbourhood (a subset of the Durham City area covered by the Masterplan), i.e. ensuring services are in place including schools, and plan for housing allocations in the Green Belt and on brownfield sites. The Masterplan update notes what has been delivered and outlines key future activities. Completed projects include the introduction of an Article 4 direction and **an Interim Student Accommodation Policy a policy framework with which to determine student accommodation proposals (DCC).. Housing allocation plans will be updated in the next SHLAA and the emerging County Local Plan**. Housing allocations are set out in the prevailing **Local Plan, and the Neighbourhood Plan** seeks to supplement these to provide flexibility and contingency in case of non-delivery. (DCC)

4.144 Appendix D provides statistics and discussion on population and households in Our Neighbourhood.

Planning Policies and Proposals for Land Use

4.145

- Policy D1: Land for Residential Development
- Policy D2: Student Accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
- Policy D3: Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)
- Policy D2: Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)
- Policy D3: Student Accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
- Policy D4: Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities
- Policy D5: Meeting Other Housing Needs Affordable Housing
- Policy D6: Design of New and Renovated Building Housing to the Highest Standards

Policy D1: Land for Residential Development

The following sites as shown on the proposals map are allocated for housing development in the quantities indicated [DCC]:

1. Whinney Hill (former Johnston School) (48)
- 1.2. John Street (22)
3. Bernard Gilpin site, The Sands (10)
4. Site of Government Offices, Framwellgate Peth (440)
5. Offices at Diamond Terrace (3)
2. 6. Main Street USA etc. (2)
- 3.7. The Avenue (3)

Development proposals for housing should [DCC]:

1. target occupancy type to rebalance the community towards permanent residents; and
2. use a style sympathetic to that of existing housing in the local area.

High density design in areas that are characterised by existing higher densities will be supported provided that adequate green and open space is included.

Contributions from conversions of existing buildings into residential use will be supported in principle.

Map 10: Map of Housing Sites {to be updated}

Make sure the colouring of sites in the map is distinctive. [Q62]

146 The Evidence Base for the withdrawn County Durham Local Plan provided potential sites for residential development as are listed in the SHLAA Update 2018 (Durham County Council, 2014a 2018). In Policy D1 we the Neighbourhood Plan endorses these and adds other sites that we have been identified. Sites that are now under development do not need to be allocated (L9b and L15). The number of housing units given for each site is indicative and numbers can be greater or fewer depending on how proposals are designed to deal with topographical and landscape issues and requirements. [DCC]

4.147 The following notes provide additional information about the sites (shown on Map 10 - <http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/the-plan/maps/>). The principles to be followed are: (i) target occupants to rebalance the community away from predominantly student accommodation; (ii) include provision for older people wherever feasible; (iii) style to mirror that of existing housing in the local area; and (iv) use high quality design standards. In all cases the sites have been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process to ensure that the potential social, economic and environmental impacts including those on known heritage assets has been identified (L9b) and appropriate mitigation and/or enhancement measures will be applied in accordance with the sustainability policies S1 and S2 and the six four heritage policies H1 to H6 H4 of this Plan. The number of housing units given below for each site is indicative and numbers can be greater or fewer depending on how proposals are designed to deal with topographical and landscape issues and requirements.

- D1.1 Whinney Hill (former Johnston School) (48): now with planning permission for 75 dwellings but the Plan's aspiration is to keep and renovate the main school building; need to protect existing footpath and provide a minimum 15m buffer of habitat creation against the ancient woodland. Accordingly, in order to provide for the retention of these features, Policy D1.1 allocates provision for only 48 dwellings. Very suitable for older peoples' accommodation or for average density two storey family houses consistent with the rest of Whinney Hill.
- D1.21 John Street (anticipated yield 22): approved for apartments; a good site for older people or for young professionals/young couples starting out. Also a single terrace house could be sited as an addition to the end of the terrace next to the Spiritualist Church.
- D1.3 Former Bernard Gilpin Society, The Sands (10): although approved for 35 units, it would be better to develop it as a completion of Ferens Close plus houses along the front in existing style as average density 2 storey houses. The very bottom of the site lies in Flood Risk Zone 3 and therefore appropriate infrastructure and design measures will be required. Development proposals for this site should undertake a site-specific flood risk assessment.
- D1.4 Site of Government Offices, Framwellgate Peth (4401): planning permission has been given for a mixed-use scheme including apartments. Nevertheless, as by far the largest and most prominent residential development site in Our Neighbourhood, it emerges from the Sustainability Appraisal as an exceptionally sensitive site for which the most rigorous application of sustainability Policies S1 and S2 and heritage Policies H1 to H6 is required for all detailed development

proposals. The location is highly suitable for some older peoples' accommodation with appropriate accessibility provision. The area for the housing units allocated in Policy D1.4 is located in Flood Risk Zone 1 above the lower parts of the Government Offices development that lie in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3.

- D1.5 Offices at Diamond Terrace (3): suitable for terraced houses matching Diamond Terrace, provided that rights of way are protected and there is no incursion on to the Green Belt.
- D1.62 Main Street USA etc.: (anticipated yield 2 or 5): existing space could provide for 2 terraced houses; if the business premises are included then the space could provide for 5 terraced houses, provided that rights of way and trees and surrounding woodland are protected. The site's location and visibility make it very sensitive in relation to the paramount consideration of safeguarding the setting of the World Heritage Site when evaluating specific development proposals.
- D1.73 24 a, b and c The Avenue: 12 apartments have been approved but not commenced 3 terraced houses matching The Avenue style.

4.148 In respect of a further four sites shown on Map 10 (<http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/the-plan/maps/>), the intention is to allocate them they should be allocated in the final Plan if the issues identified below can be resolved:

- D1.84 Former Shell Garage, A167 (anticipated yield 4): this site is not a formal allocation at this stage because it has not been possible to contact the owner has not declared that it is available, but the aspiration is to include it as an allocation in the final Plan. Although approved for 8 units, the surrounding house-style indicates that 4 average to low density 2 storey houses would be more suitable, with access via St Johns Road rather than the A167; important to keep trees on the boundary of the site; may be costly to develop to deal with underground fuel storage tank.
- D1.95 Sidegate electricity sub-station (anticipated yield 12): this site is not a formal allocation at this stage because of constraints including the fact that it lies within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. If this the constraints can be mitigated, It would be suitable for terraced houses matching Sidegate; provided that development proposals protect surrounding trees and woodland habitats and carry out a site-specific flood risk assessment.
- D1.106 Council-owned car park, Sidegate (anticipated yield 20): this site is not a formal allocation at this stage because the owner does not agree at present has not declared that it is available. It is suitable for two or three rows of terraced houses; provided that development proposals protect surrounding trees and woodland habitats.
- D1.117 Small site next to Sainsbury supermarket on A167 (formerly Pot and Glass Public House) (anticipated yield 2): this site is not a formal allocation at this stage because it has not been possible to contact the owner has not declared that it is available, but the aspiration is to include it that it should be included as an allocation in the final Plan. It is suitable for 1 or 2 family houses, average density 2 storey houses; protect mature black poplar tree.

4.149 To maximise the contribution that these and any other sites make towards appropriate residential developments, high densities will be encouraged in areas that are characterised by existing higher densities, provided that adequate green and open space provision is included. Contributions from conversions of existing buildings into residential uses will also be supported in principle (Q19), including residential use of upper floors of retail and commercial premises [EQ31, EQ43, WC33].

4.150 Gavin Barwell, etc. Delete as now covered in 4.141

4.151 In addition to housing sites allocated in our the Neighbourhood Plan (521 new dwellings of various kinds, with a further 38 if particular issues can be resolved), it is estimated that an additional 11% houses would become available from small 'windfall' sites. This figure is drawn from the new Issues and Options consultation document for the new County Durham Local Plan (Durham County Council, 2016c, p3, para 3.10). Indeed, any new sites that come forward that have the potential for mixed residential development will be supported in principle subject as always to relevant NPPF, County Durham Local Plan and our the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Although the possibility of redevelopment of Durham Prison in New Elvet has been raised (WC 50, WC56, WC 57, WC83, EQ42), the Home Office does not envisage closing the Prison in the lifetime of the Plan.

Policy D32: Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

D2.1: The following sites are allocated for Purpose Built Student Accommodation:

PBSA1: Leazes Road

- retain trees and site's leafy character

PBSA2: Howlands -Josephine Butler and Ustinov

- respect the strong radial pattern of the existing buildings

PBSA3: James Barber House

- retain the existing tress trees around the periphery of the site

PBSA4: Elvet Hill car park

- retain the existing trees

PBSA5: Land adjacent to St Mary's College

1. continue the existing built form of the development on the site

PBSA6: Mill Hill Lane and St Aidan's College

- retain the existing tree belt to the east of the site; maintain a central belt of trees through the site; retain the most significant tree groups to the west of the site; and preserve the non-designated asset at St Andrew's College

D32.12: In order to promote the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and maintain an appropriate housing mix, any development proposal for new Purpose Built Student Accommodation, extensions to existing Purpose Built Student Accommodation, or conversions of existing buildings to Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) other than the above six allocations, will be required to

demonstrate:

1. that there is a need for additional student accommodation of this type in this location; and
2. consultation with the relevant education provider pursuant to the identified need; and
23. it would not result in a significant negative impact on retail, employment, leisure, tourism or and housing use and existing residential amenity (L23); and
4. or would support the Council's regeneration objectives; and
3. consultation with the relevant education provider
5. not more than 10% of the total number of residential units within 100 metres of the application site are already in use as HMOs or student accommodation exempt from council tax charges.

D32.23: All proposals for the development proposals of Purpose Built Student Accommodation will not be permitted unless:

not more than 10% of the total number of properties residential units within 100 metres of the application site are already in use as HMOs or student accommodation exempt from council tax charges or the resulting student population is not more than 20% of the total population in that area; and

1. the development is readily accessible on or adjacent to an existing Durham University or Higher or Further Education College (L12b) academic site, or hospital and research site; and
2. the design and layout of the student accommodation and siting of individual uses within the overall development are appropriate to its location in relation to adjacent neighbouring uses; and
3. the design meets the appropriate criteria for student living accommodation as set out in the Building Regulations; and
4. the internal design, layout and standard of accommodation and facilities is of appropriate standard; and
5. the impacts from activities of the occupants of the development will not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity of surrounding residents in itself or when considered alongside existing and approved student housing provision. Prior to occupation a management plan or draft outline management plan appropriate to the scale of the development shall be provided and approved by Durham County Council; and
6. the quantity of cycle and car parking provided is in line with the Council's Parking and Accessibility Guidelines and Policies T3 and T4 of this Plan; and
7. the applicant has shown that the security of the building and its occupants has been considered along with that of other local residents and legitimate users.

D2.4: In order to provide affordable accommodation within Purpose Built Student Accommodation developments, 20% of the total units of accommodation shall normally be required to meet the prevailing definition of affordable. (EQ25, WC 139 and WC 171)

D2.5D3.3 Where appropriate, development proposals in accordance with the above requirements should contribute to the re-use of listed buildings, heritage assets and

other buildings with a particular heritage value. Development will be expected to sustain the significance of heritage assets and seek opportunities to better reveal it.

D2.6: Purpose Built Student Accommodation comprising only self-contained flats, or with blocks/sections of self-contained flats that can be separated from student occupants, should be flexibly designed to enable re-purposing for other types of occupants, such as young couples starting out, or professional people. Such repurposing must include appropriate arrangements for car parking, refuse storage and collection, and management of the flats. [WC19, WC217, WC222, DCC]

Policy D23: Student Accommodation in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

D23.1: In order to promote the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and maintain an appropriate housing mix, development proposals for new build Houses in Multiple Occupation (both C4 and *sui generis*), extensions that result in additional bed-spaces, and changes of use from any use to:

1. a Class C4 (House in Multiple Occupation), where planning permission is required; or
2. a House in Multiple Occupation in a *sui generis* use (more than six people sharing)

will not be permitted if:

- (a) including the proposed development, more than 10% of the total number of properties residential units including those in Purpose Built Student Accommodation within 100 metres of the application site are already in use as HMOs or student accommodation exempt from council tax charges or the student population exceeds 20% of the total population in that area;
- (b) there are existing unimplemented permissions for Houses in Multiple Occupation within 100 metres of the application site which, in combination with the existing number of properties exempt from council tax charges, would exceed 10% of the total residential properties within the 100 metres radius; or
- (c) less than 10% of the total residential properties within the 100 metres radius are exempt from council tax charges but the application site is in a residential area and on a street that is a primary access route between Purpose Built Student Accommodation and the town centre or a University campus

D23.2: In all cases development proposals will only be permitted where:

1. The quantity of cycle and car parking provided is in line with the Council's adopted Parking and Accessibility Guidelines and Policies T3 and T4 T2 of this Plan; and
2. They provide acceptable arrangements for bin storage and other shared facilities and consider other amenity issues; and
3. The design of the building or any extension would be appropriate in terms of the

- property itself and the character of the area; and
4. The applicant has shown that the security of the building and its occupants has been considered along with that of other local residents and legitimate users.

D23.3: Changes of use from an HMO to C3 will be supported. Opportunities to enable this will be explored as they arise in order to assist the re-balancing of neighbourhoods.

PBSAs comprise a number of cluster flats and/or self-contained flats. Each flat in a PBSA is counted as a residential unit.

4.152 Policy Implementation Project 2 in Chapter 5 indicates how policy D2.3 could be taken forward. However, this will be a challenge as this is some evidence that students prefer HMO accommodation to PBSAs or college accommodation (Durham University, Geography Department, 2015) [WC131]

Image viaduct

Justification for Policies D2 and D3

4.153 Student accommodation in Durham City is one of the most frequently mentioned issues in our consultations (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015), and the subject of much debate over many years. Working in partnership with the Durham University and residents' groups, the County Council has adopted an Interim Policy (Durham County Council, 2016h) to deal with applications to develop HMOs (houses in multiple occupation) and PBSAs (purpose built student accommodation) and this has proved to be reasonably effective. is incorporated into The County Council's 'Issues and Preferred Options' document of the emerging County Development Plan (Durham County Council, 2016c, p.42, para 4.59 2018, pages 105-108) proposes significant improvements in the light of experience. This is most welcome as an interim measure. our The Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to make minor but vital further improvements, and these are incorporated into Policies D2 and D3 in order to enable the number of student accommodation units within a PBSA to be counted towards the threshold rather than the whole PBSA simply to be counted as one property. The overriding consideration within these policies on whether additional HMOs or PBSAs are acceptable is the principle laid down in the NPPF (para. 50) which enjoins local planning authorities to "create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities". objective in the NPPF (para. 62) of creating mixed and balanced communities. The context section above explains how 'studentification' can be and has been damaging to community harmony and balance. Whilst the proposed policy D3 on HMOs sets a clear threshold for resisting further HMOs, it is recognised that individual cases of personal circumstances will be additional considerations in deciding on particular cases. [Q76, L17] The interim policy carries forward saved policies H9, H13 and H16 from the Durham City Local Plan (City of Durham Council, 2004; Durham County Council, 2015a).

Insert the studentification map [WC60]

4.154 Implementation of the interim policy **and its successor** depends for HMOs (houses in multiple occupation) upon the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to remove certain householder development rights within a prescribed part of the City. Such a Direction was approved for a large part of the centre of the City and came into force on 17th September 2016. A further Direction for much of Framwellgate and Newton Hall came into force on 17th May 2017. In order to be able to resist the overspilling of HMO developments into the rest of Our Neighbourhood, **we propose** (L9b) a third Direction to cover the remaining part of this area **would be needed**. This is an action which will be for the County Council to take forward. Similarly, an Article 7 Direction to control letting boards across Our Neighbourhood, **which we also propose** (L9b), is the responsibility of the County Council who carried out a public consultation in early 2017 and is now proceeding through the statutory procedures for adoption, hopefully in 2018/19/20.

Policy D4: Housing for Older People and People with Disabilities

Housing for older people

D4.1: In order to help meet the needs of the ageing population in Our Neighbourhood, 10% of private and intermediate housing on sites of **more than** 10 housing units **or greater** must be of types and design appropriate for older people.

Accommodation that would meet this requirement are:

1. level access flats; or
2. **level access** bungalows; or
3. sheltered housing; or
4. extra-care schemes; or
5. **housing products that meet the specific needs of a multi generational family.**

[L25]

If this is not feasible on the development site, then the required number of housing units appropriate for older people must be built within, adjacent to or nearby Our Neighbourhood. [DCC]

D4.2: Housing schemes that are solely for older people are encouraged and will be supported. [DCC]

D4.3: **New provision for older people should either be located close to shops, healthcare services and other essentials, or provide access to such facilities by being near a public transport route, as well as being served by appropriately designed and sited pavements and footpaths.** [EQ21, EQ22, WC177,DCC]

D4.4: **Purpose Built Student Accommodation comprising only self-contained flats, or with blocks/sections of self-contained flats that can be separated from student occupants,**

should be flexibly designed to enable re-purposing for older people as occupants. Such repurposing must include accessibility provision appropriate for older people and appropriate arrangements for car parking, refuse storage and collection, and management of the flats. [WC19, WC217, WC222, DCC]

Housing for older people and for people of all ages with disabilities [DCC]

D4.25: Adaptations Extensions to houses and flats, including and other building works within the curtilage of a residential property, which are needed to enable a resident to continue to live there rather than go into a nursing or residential care home and which also require planning permission will be permitted providing they are in keeping with the building and its surroundings. [L9b]

Housing for younger people with disabilities [DCC]

D4.6: Provision of units designed for younger people with disabilities within a housing development, and housing schemes that are solely for younger people with disabilities, are encouraged and will be supported.

Provision of nursing homes and residential care homes are covered in community Policy C4.

object [L215] we are a bit more stringent than the DCC in their Policy 16, but we demonstrate our need in Appendix D and addition to para. 4.156.

Our Neighbourhood provides a topographical challenge in the provision of housing sites suitable for older people. Section 106 money could be used to provide suitable public transport facilities, pavements and footpaths across Our Neighbourhood that are designed for older people and for people of all ages with disabilities. [EQ22, Q69, L25, DCC]

Of the specific sites listed in Policy D1, site D1.1 (John St) would be appropriate for housing for older people.

Justification

4.155 The NPPF (para.50 61) covers the provision of a mix of housing meeting the needs of different groups in the community, including older people and people with disabilities. states that " the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students ...". The NPPF Annexe 2 defines the housing needs of older people as: "People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and through to

the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.” The NPPF government’s Planning Practice Guidance [L9b] notes that:

The need to provide housing for older people is critical given the projected increase in the number of households aged 65 and over accounts for over half of the new households (NPPF PPG para. 021 ID: 2a-021-20160401)

4.156 The figures in Appendix D show that 33% of the long-term (i.e. non-student) population are retired, and 11% are aged 75 or over. [L25] The increase in the numbers and proportion of the population that are in the older age groups is a challenge across many areas of national policy, not just housing. Locally, it has been highlighted in our consultations as a key issue for our the Neighbourhood Plan (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015). Accordingly, we have The Neighbourhood Plan sets out this policy to implement the expectations of the NPPF and of Parliamentary Committees and pressure groups.

4.157 Durham County Council’s (2016d) strategic housing market assessment surveyed housing needs for older people:

... modern properties aimed at the elderly, dementia schemes, extra care schemes, ground floor apartments and 2 bed bungalows were highlighted as key areas. In terms of stock shortages amongst older people stakeholders recognised; energy efficient homes for life, extra care facilities, sheltered accommodation and affordable rent schemes as priorities. (para 6.16)

4.158 As well as providing for older people in new builds through the policy set out above, much of the existing housing stock in Our Neighbourhood could be suitable for older people either as it is or by adaptations and conversions. This is also a good use in principle for surplus PBSAs (purpose built student accommodation).

4.159 New provision for older people should meet particular criteria relating to access to shops, medical services and other essentials, either by being close or by being on a readily accessed public transport and appropriately designed and sited footpaths and cycle paths. Of the specific sites listed in Policy D1, sites D1.2 (John St) and D1.5 (Government offices) would be appropriate. Moved into Policy D4.2 and text below the policy.

4.160 The 2011 Census gives a figure of 3% of the population of Durham City who are sick or with disabilities. As with older people, the aim of this policy is to enable independent living in a person’s own home. One way is through adoption and use of the relevant optional housing building regulation standards. Housing regulations cover These optional building regulations include a standard for accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2) Category 2: UK Government, 2016). [L9b] This comprises the optional requirement of:

- (1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to—
 - (a) gain access to; and
 - (b) use, the dwelling and its facilities.

- (2) *The provision made must be sufficient to—*
- (a) *meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older or disabled people; and*
 - (b) *allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of occupants over time.*

4.161 **We The Neighbourhood Plan** would strongly encourage developers to implement this **housing optional building** regulation in building new houses or renovating existing houses. [L9b] **This is optional unless the requirement is implemented through the Local Plan.** [L15] **We also urge Durham County Council to adopt these optional requirements in policies in the forthcoming County Local Plan.** (NPPF PPG paras. 005 to 007, 009 to 012 ID: 56-005-20150327; 008, ID: 56-008-20160519). **The developing County Durham Local Plan contains the requirement that housing for older people must be built to Building Regulations Requirement M4 (2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings).** It is good practice for new buildings to be checked by a qualified access consultant for accessibility. [Q68]

4.162 Recognising both that people often wish to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, and that in any case places may not be available in care homes, this policy facilitates **adaptations extensions** to allow people to continue living independently for as long as possible. **Additionally, adaptations of existing buildings, which would not be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan, would be very suitable for this goal.** **The County Council's Older Persons Accommodation and Support Services Strategy (Durham County Council, 2010c) supports this approach.** In making adaptations it will not usually be possible to bring the accommodation up to the standard of building regulations for access to and use of buildings (M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings; M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings; M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings (UK Government, 2016), but this should be regarded as a target to be approached as far as is possible. Sometimes the only practical way to adapt a home to allow somebody to continue living there will be by carrying out work that is not acceptable as a permanent modification. The policy permits this to be done as a temporary expedient. [L9b]

4.163 Particular policies for the provision of nursing homes and residential care homes are set out in community Policy C4.

Policy D5: Meeting Other Housing Needs Affordable Housing

D5.1: Any scheme for new residential development, **or for conversions of existing sites,** on sites of **more than** 10 housing units, **or greater,** must include **15% 20%** [PO, Q60] as affordable housing.

Affordable housing should be located on the proposed site. If there are very strong reasons why this is not feasible, then the affordable housing should be located within adjacent to, or nearby Our Neighbourhood.

D5.2: Proposals by developers/owners of PBSAs to make self-contained suites available for young professionals, young couples starting out, people leaving home for the first time, and/or older people where appropriate, will be supported. new clauses under D2 and D4

D5.3: Development proposals that provide residential accommodation in upper floors of commercial properties (outside the primary and secondary frontage) for these categories of need will be supported, as long as they do not result in a loss of existing commercial space. MOVED TO THEME 3, Policy E4.3.2 and amended

If the percentage of affordable units is not a whole number then round to the nearest whole number as follows: if the number is followed by .5, .6, .7, .8, or .9, round the number up; if the number is followed by .0, .1, .2, .3, or .4, round the number down. [Q62, L4, DCC]

object [L215] we are a bit more stringent than the DCC in their Policy 16

A recent House of Commons Briefing Paper (Wilson and Barton, 2018, p.5) looked at affordable housing and noted that "There is no all-encompassing statutory definition of affordable housing in England". The NPPF defines affordable housing in Annex 2 covering social housing for rent and intermediate housing for sale or rent. There are proposed amendments to NPPF guidance on this topic with the overall premise that affordable is at least 20% below market rent or market value.

Affordable housing in Our Neighbourhood is affected by a premium on the value of housing caused by three main factors: (i) the strength of the buy to rent market because of the large number of students as a percentage of the population (53%), (ii) the high level of provision of new executive housing, and (iii) the large number of residential properties that are listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets. This means that 80% of market value is way beyond most people's income levels. To achieve more realistically affordable houses to revitalise Our Neighbourhood requires more creative mechanisms than dependence on the market. For example: Durham County Council owns property in Our Neighbourhood that could be developed for realistically-affordable housing; Durham University could support its expansion by providing realistically-affordable housing for young academics starting out in the profession. [L13]

Affordable accommodation is also an issue for students. Durham Student's Union (2018a,b) have been carrying out a campaign to address the cost of Durham University college accommodation. Though this does not include private PBSAs many of these charge higher levels than the colleges. Durham University provide bursaries to assist qualifying students with their accommodation costs but PBSAs do not provide any 'affordable' (at 80% of market rent) accommodation. [L12b]

Justification

Image suburbia

4.164 Residential development in Durham City has in recent years been predominantly for students and for so-called 'executive housing'. [Q24] Our consultations (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015) show that family housing and affordable housing, for renting and for buying, are a particular need in Durham City and that appropriate provision is needed here for people starting out in the housing market, for families with children and for young professionals. The NPPF (para.50) expects that such categories of need are recognised. Changes in law nationally tilt the provision from renting to owning and do not protect the affordable price in perpetuity. our The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to keep both renting and buying as options. Provision can be made by new build or by conversions of former Houses in Multiple Occupation.

4.165 Large tracts of the centre of Durham City consist of terraced housing that is almost entirely given over to student accommodation. In the interests of fostering balanced and sustainable communities as envisaged by the NPPF (para.50) and our Policy D1, we The Neighbourhood Plan attaches great importance to securing the reversion of some Houses in Multiple Occupation back to family homes and general housing, as covered in Policy D2.3.3.

Policy D6: Design of New and Renovated Building Housing to the Highest Standards

D6.1: All new and renovated housing, and extensions and other alterations to existing housing that need planning consent, must be of high quality design relating to the character and appearance of the local area, aesthetic qualities, and external and internal form and layout, and to functionality, and to adaptability and resilience. [DCC]

D6.2: Houses and housing developments should meet the Building for Life Criteria, or other national standard of equivalent or higher level.

D6.2: Houses and housing developments must meet the Building for Life Criteria by avoiding any red traffic light scores and achieving as many green traffic light scores as possible. Application for accreditation of sites is not required. EQ05] [L25] [L15]

can we produce aims (?targets) for amount of each type of housing and its quality?
[EQ24] No

This policy should be used in conjunction with Policy S1, policies H1 to H4, policy G1, and policies T1 to T23

Justification

4.166 The NPPF (Section 7 para 124) sees good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, and states that **planning policies should aim to ensure that the design of developments and of buildings will add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, respond to local character and history, create safe and accessible environments, and be visually attractive.** "Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development." (para 125).

4.167 It was commented on in the results of the survey of local opinion that the City has been blighted by poor building design from the 1960s and 1970s (though some of this is being addressed by new developments in progress to replace such buildings). There are also some examples of modern architecture that complement the historic character of the City such as the Calman Learning Centre on South Road and the café/meeting room in Wharton Park. Newer building developments in the outer areas of the City have tended to be of uninspiring, standard-product semi-detached and detached houses. But options for better design of new housing exist.

Design of housing is a huge topic. [Q62, L9b] Much of this is covered by building regulations (UK Government. Planning portal) and is outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. The view taken in this Neighbourhood Plan is that there are a few key principles of importance to the local community. These comprise:

- sufficient space, with housing designed to achieve at a minimum the government's nationally described space standard (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015) [WC196, WC216]. Durham County Council is urged to adopt this optional standard in the Local Plan: Durham County Council is currently collecting evidence on this issue (Durham County Council, 2018b, p.146)
- accessibility. [Q68] the developing Durham County Council's Local Plan contains the requirement that housing for older people must be built to Building Regulations Requirement M4 (2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings). The Neighbourhood Plan would like to see, as a general aim, all housing to be built to this standard.
- energy efficiency. [EQ45, WC71] Theme 1 policies address this aspect.
- aesthetics [Q76], to achieve housing that is sympathetic to their area, but not a pastiche. Theme 2a policies address this aspect.

4.168 The RIBA (2009) discussion paper noted that "the design quality of many developments built before the credit crunch was inadequate, with only 18% of schemes rated as 'good' or 'very good'" and that "many buyers of new homes have concerns over a lack of space and an inconvenient layout." (p.1) It concluded that "there is a huge potential for the market for new homes to be expanded by placing more emphasis on design quality and providing a more diverse product." (p.1) Concerns about lack of space were reiterated in RIBA (2011): consumers felt that new houses failed to provide adequate inner and outer space. Over 90% of these houses did not meet minimum size standards

set by the 'Nationally Described Space Standard' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015) and were smaller than new houses in Western Europe. Ipsos MORI and RIBA (2012) surveyed the housing needs and expectations of consumers and the key findings were (p.4-5):

- Large windows for natural light, large rooms and high ceilings;
- Large main living area for eating and socialising;
- Layouts which take into account technology used within the home;
- Space for private time away from other members of the household;
- Private space outside, particularly for families, or access to green public space in urban locations;
- Long-term and short-term storage for functional items, and for personal possessions;
- Dedicated space for domestic utility tasks, such as, washing, drying and ironing clothes, as well as for storing vacuum cleaners, rubbish bins and recycling;
- Options for different layouts, with flexibility.

4.169 Access to high speed Internet and mobile access in the home for both leisure and home working is crucial. The provision of this technology infrastructure needs to keep pace with new technological developments, e.g. the need for electric car charging points. [WC34]

Locality has produced guidance on design in neighbourhood planning Design Council and Cobe (2016). It states (p.5) that good design means "solutions that put people first by addressing the way the building or space functions – thinking about what it is used for and how it is used; ensuring it is designed to last and valued by those who use it." It also states that good design should be functional, support a mix of uses and tenures, be adaptable and resilient and have a distinctive character. It also supports use of the Building For Life criteria.

4.170 The Building for Life criteria (Birkbeck and Kruczkowski, 2015) are a set of quality tests agreed nationally by The Design Council, and the Housebuilders' Federation and Design for Homes to ensure that the design of new homes and their neighbourhood the spaces that surrounds them are as attractive, functional and sustainable as possible. There are 20 tests or criteria, and house-building schemes that achieve a score of at least 14/20 meet the Building for Life standard. The scheme uses 12 question that are scored using a traffic light system. The Design Council offer an accreditation scheme that developers can apply for related to proposals that have received planning approval.

The 12 Building for Life questions are:

- Integrating into the neighbourhood (covering Connections, Facilities and services, Public transport, Meeting local housing requirements)
- Creating a place (covering Character, Working with the site and its context, Creating well defined streets and spaces, Easy to find your way around:)
- Street & home (covering Streets for all:, Car parking, Public and private spaces, External storage and amenity space)

Durham County Council have adopted an in-house review process to assess schemes against the Building for Life Standards. Their related Supplementary Planning Document formalises the review process and establishes the guidelines and standards for its operation (Durham County Council, 2018a). The aim is to use this process to obtain improvements in the design of proposals submitted by developers. It is linked to the County Durham Plan Policy 31: Sustainable Design in the Built Environment (Durham County Council, 2018b, p.143). Durham County Council's Building for Life review process covers all major residential-led schemes of 50+ units (or 1.5 hectares+), as well as any smaller schemes in particularly sensitive locations at the discretion of Durham County Council. It would seem appropriate that all developments within Our Neighbourhood should be reviewed, because of the sensitivity of the World Heritage Site and the Durham City Conservation Area.

[L9b]

Many policies in this Neighbourhood Plan would contribute to the achievement of green traffic light scores to these Building for Life questions, e.g. policies S1, H2, H3, G1, T1, T2, and T3.