

CHAPTER 1: FOREWORD

1.1 The most important feature of a neighbourhood plan is that it is prepared and agreed by local people. The work is normally carried out by a parish or town council on behalf of its local community. In our area there is no local council at present as we are 'un-parished'. In order for the plan to be prepared, the County Council has enabled the setting up of the Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum.

1.2 The Forum has adopted the name 'Our Neighbourhood' for the area covered by the Plan, which is shown on Map 1 on page 4 (<http://npf.durhamcity.org.uk/the-plan/maps/>). It has taken nearly three years to prepare and has provided the opportunity for continuous consultation throughout. It is now time to find out what people who live and work in the area, and those who visit, think of the policies and proposals in this draft Plan.

1.3 There are four matters to be borne in mind when assessing the content of this draft Plan:

1. Its policies, when agreed, will have statutory force, i.e. they will be relevant in the consideration of planning applications by the County Council, and they will need to be in compliance with the current adopted development plan, which is the saved policies of the City of Durham Local Plan;
2. Quite early in the lifetime of our Neighbourhood Plan a new local plan - the County Durham Plan - will be adopted. Our policies will then need to be reviewed, and if necessary changed, to bring them into compliance with this new County Durham Plan. We will seek to future-proof our Neighbourhood Plan by having regard to the emerging County Plan;
3. The Plan should be read as a whole - the planning policies all relate to one another even though they appear under different themes, so common aspects only appear in one policy to avoid repetition;
4. Our Neighbourhood Plan presents an opportunity go beyond the planning policies in identifying the actions needed by statutory, community and other bodies to achieve the vision and objectives of the plan.

1.4 We hope that many people will take the opportunity to contribute to making our Neighbourhood Plan one which is effective and truly representative of the wishes of local people for a sustainable future for this beautiful and historic city.

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