

**THEME 2b: A BEAUTIFUL AND HISTORIC CITY – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
28th March 2018**

The comments have unique codes as follows:

- EQ = electronic questionnaire response
- Q = paper questionnaire response
- EM = email response
- WC = web comment

However, no personal details have been provided.

The letters making comments relevant to this theme are coded as follows:

- L3: County Durham Local Access Forum
- L4: CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)
- L6: Durham Bird Club
- L8: Durham City Cricket Club (DCCC)
- L8a: Response
- L8b: DCCC Development Plan 2017-2022
- L9: Durham County Council (DCC)
 - L9b: Appendices A,B,C
- L12: Durham University
 - L12b: Response
- L13: Elvet Residents Association
- L14: Environment Agency
- L15: Gladman Developments
- L21: Natural England
- L23: Nevilles Cross Community Association
- L25: Persimmon Homes (hard copy and electronic)
- L26: Southlands Management (property owners)
- L28: World Heritage Site

The codes for categorising the comments are as follows:

- c1: outside the remit of the neighbourhood plan
 - c1a: outside the Plan area
 - c1b: planning issue that has to be dealt with by the Council or by other bodies not by a neighbourhood plan
 - c1c: not a planning issue

- c2: a generic style comment of praise, blame, opinion etc not requiring a response just an acknowledgement
- c3: suggesting changes to the policies
- c4: suggesting changes to the projects
- c5: suggesting changes to the other text of the Plan

The issues for consideration are listed under a general section and then under each policy. For clarity, under each section only the relevant text in the columns is included. Similar comments have been grouped together as far as is possible.

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COMMENTS TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION DRAFT	COMMENT CATEGORISATION	PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
General comments about theme, or relevant across policies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views • Projects • Other • Text 		
Views		
EQ05 Some of the best views of the cathedral and castle from surrounding vantage points are disappearing behind maturing trees. Future planting of trees should take this into account i.e. It might be that where some trees are lost to disease , landslides etc they should not be replaced with the same species Copied from Theme 2a	c2. Concern re trees affecting views	Consider policies / text re trees affecting views
Q35 There can be problems with trees within the conservation area. Some do need to have their crowns reduced i) as their height can mean there is a danger that they will fall, ii) their roots can endanger the foundations of buildings, and iii) they can restrict views that 20 yrs ago were beautiful.	c2. Concern re trees affecting views	Consider policies / text re trees affecting views
EQ21 I hope a sensible policy will emerge on the matter of trees. Though they are of huge importance, their impact on light and visual amenity is often not considered.	c2. Concern re trees affecting light and views	Consider policies / text re trees affecting light and views
WC10 Copied to Further Comments and Theme 2b There is too much in this plan to comment on all its details. ... I limit specific comment to one matter, that of trees in the WHS and urban space in general. Your plan (at 2.2.6) encourages 'more proactive tree management'. If this was to be achieved it would be in the face of the Council's current bias in favour of all trees in just about any circumstance and the Cathedral authority's apparent disinterest in protecting its own historic buildings against being submerged in an ever encroaching green blanket of foliage.	c2. Concern re trees affecting views	Consider policies / text re trees affecting views

<p>Trees are fine things in the right place; woods, forests, parks, carefully planned and maintained urban placements spring to mind. At present not enough is done to monitor and manage self-seeded specimens of what can only be described as giant weeds (sycamores, etc.) that are blocking views of the WHS and detracting from, not enhancing, the urban environment. Drains and gutters are blocked by leaves, roofs threatened by overhanging branches, street lights and signs are covered over. I hope that your plan can have some positive impact on this situation.</p>		
<p>Projects</p>		
<p>EQ05 We are very lucky to have so much green space within our area and just outside (old railway paths) I support policies which increase use of and access to these areas whilst enhancing biodiversity/ wildlife habitat. I wholly support the retention of the green belt around Durham. Copied from Further Comments</p>	<p>c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4</p>	<p>Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt</p>
<p>EQ06 The Green belt MUST be protected for future generations.. That includes the proposed Western by Pass through Green Belt land.</p>	<p>c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4</p>	<p>Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt</p>
<p>EQ13 There is a need for a comprehensive record of plant and animal life in the area. University staff did make a limited study, but it should cover the whole region. I think there was also a County Council study in the early 1980s, but am unaware of its current status. Copied from Further Comments</p>	<p>c4. Suggestion for project for a comprehensive record of wildlife.</p>	<p>Consider change to Project 5 re record of wildlife</p>
<p>EQ14 As a unique city, it is up to us, the residents of Durham, to fight to retain it's unique qualities. Loss of green belt, increases in the student population, and over development of unaffordable houses, HMOs and PBSAs, all detract from the beauty of this wonderful city. Copied from Theme 2a</p>	<p>c2. Concern over loss of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4.</p>	<p>Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt</p>
<p>EQ15 Durham is (or was) a lovely green city. But the encroachment by</p>	<p>c2. Protection of Green Belt.</p>	<p>Consider a new Project to monitor</p>

inappropriate new builds has seen a degradation in green space. The green belt must be sacrosanct. No more landbanking to just wait for a week planning policy.	Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q04 The amount of houses is overtaking any green belt area because they are either built ... or overlooked by houses.	c2. Concern over loss of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4.	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q07 Public footpath need improving on/around the Sands area. Copied to Theme 5 River Wear needs to be regularly cleared of debris. 93.1 (?G3.1) Footpaths need improving. 91.4 (?G1.4) Public rights of way need improvement & signage 91.9 / 9.10 (?G1.9 / G.10) clearing of rubbish & waster products on River Wear Copied to Theme 2b	c1c. Maintenance of footpaths outside remit (not a planning issue) c1c. Cleaning of River Wear outside remit (not a planning issue) DCC, EA are also responsible for maintenance and rubbish clearance.	Consider new project re maintenance of footpaths, River Wear etc.
Q13 We must always remember that it is a small city which would lose its charm if it was allowed to spread further out into green belt. The green area surrounding the city must be protected for the future. Copied from Theme 1	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q18. Resurrect the never implemented idea of the Necklace Park G3 and restoration of river and rampart walkways, long neglected. [See also comment under Theme 1]	c1c. Restoration of footpaths outside remit (not planning issue)	As well as Project 18, could footpath management be covered in Project 5?
Q18. I endorse the protection of the Green Belt and biodiversity. I feel that the Green Belt can contribute to "public benefit" it is not simply a barrier to development but a resources as a public green space with access for leisure pursuits (G4) Copied from Theme 1	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q22 Is there a 'friends of the River Wear' organisation providing: - info – opportunities to volunteer (e.g. pulling up Himalayan Balsam!). IF NOT, there should be! IF YES, make it visible.	c4. Set up a 'Friends of the River Wear'	Consider change to Project 5, or new project, about 'Friends of the River Wear'
EQ27 Green belt sites need to be protected. Copied from Theme 1 The green space at the rear of the present County Hall is used by many including deer and other wildlife and it would be a shame to lose it - it is the green spaces that make Durham the city it is. Copied from Further	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt

Comments		
EQ35 green belt is extremely important and is a factor of why people want to live here	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
EQ51 There is plenty of brown areas so need to encroach on green belt land. Copied from Theme 2a	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q56 See above comment, i.e. Protections should extend to the Durham Bowl and the Green Belt. Copied from Theme 2a	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q60 Green Belt shouldn't be built on. Copied from Theme 1	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
Q75 No further encroachment on Greenbelt. Copied from Theme 1	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
WC60 These maps are brilliant. Two suggestions. Could you turn the Emerald Network Map into a printable leaflet with clear links between green areas? People could use it to walk from one area to another as if they were doing an 'Emerald Way' long-distance walk around the city (like the Teesdale Way or Weardale Way along the river Tees and river Wear).	c5. Add footpaths to Emerald Network map c1c. Production of leaflet outside remit (not a planning issue)	Consider adding footpaths to Emerald Network map Consider changes to Policy Implementation Project 1 re leaflet [Also included under Policy G3]
WC95 Copied to Theme 2b Theme 4 Theme 5 3. Erosion of the greenbelt at Maiden Castle by the University should be resisted.	c2. Protection of Green Belt. Addressed to some extent by Policy G4	Consider a new Project to monitor development proposals affecting the Green Belt
WC165 I support the vision and objectives of maintaining and enhancing networks of greenery. One practical suggestion in this regard is to reopen the path from the public toilets at North Road to the train station (The path was	c3. Open up footpath from North Road public toilets to station. Addressed by Project 18	Consider coverage of named path by Project 18

<p>closed a couple of years ago when the changes were made to Wharton Park). This path provided a great green network for local people to use to access the train station, it was the quickest route to the Northbound platform; it avoided the pollution of the road; its fine stepped entrance was right next to a pedestrian island, which made the path easy and safe to access from the other side of North Road. With pressure on the roadside footpaths around Station Approach due to increase with the new student accommodation at the old Country Hospital site, reopening the path would make perfect sense to provide these new residents too with a safe, green and convenient route to the station.</p>		
<p>WC191 Copied to Policy G1 Agree, and many paths need to be improved to make them useable.</p>	<p>c1c. Maintenance of footpaths outside remit (not a planning issue)</p>	<p>As well as Project 18, could footpath management be covered in Project 5? Consider if improvement of footpaths may be achievable via Policy T1 if new development occurs nearby and a footpath provides important access.</p>
<p>Other</p>		
<p>EQ13 Clay Lane and adjacent tracks are especially useful, so important to avoid additional lighting here - in a few cases even reduce.</p>	<p>c3. Suggesting lighting restrictions on Clay Lane and adjacent tracks</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policy G1 re lighting. And consider how lighting addressed in Plan [Also included in Policy G1]</p>
<p>Q13 Could the racecourse area incorporating the bowling green be developed as a park. Apart from Wharton Park, which is badly inaccessible, there are no play areas for children in the city. The old swimming baths could be converted into museum or display space & could provide toilet facilities which are missing from this part of the town. For visitors – this area could introduce them to the lovely walks around Durham – Maiden Castle, Houghall & Pelaw Woods all within striking distance of the city centre.</p>	<p>c3. c5. Racecourse and bowling green developed into park</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policies / text re Racecourse and bowling green developed into park, across Themes 2b and 6</p>

Copied to Theme 6		
Q15 These are all sensible policies but has anyone told the university – intent on building on green sites? Also, developers of student accommodation blocks. And the County Council – the planners seem happy to grant permission.	c2. Concern over implementation	Consider strengthening monitoring and implementation section
Q18 A walkable & cycle friendly city requires the connectivity (Theme 2b) of the Green Infrastructure to work in tandem. Copied from Theme 5 I agree that connectivity between green spaces needs greater consideration. Resurrect the never implemented idea of the Necklace Park G3 and restoration of river and rampart walkways, long neglected. [See also comment under Theme 1]	c3. Connectivity between green spaces needs greater consideration.	Consider changing policies re connectivity between green spaces
Q32 Not sure of the status of ‘Burn Hall Conservation Area” - does this protect this private land from development?	c1b. Management Plan for Burn Hall Conservation Area outside remit (for Council)	Check status of management plan Burn Hall Conservation Area with DCC
EQ24 Communicating and planning specific areas of the city for 'Emerald space' is necessary or there may be an unnatural balance in the city towards certain areas.	c3. Balancing green space across Our Neighbourhood	Consider policies re balancing green space across Our Neighbourhood
EQ26 There are areas of City such as the Sands which you would think are safe from development but its use as a car park and subsequent battle to have it restored proves this is not currently the case.	c2. Concern over implementation	Consider strengthening monitoring and implementation section [Also included in Policy G2]
Q38 This is so important – that we do not just protect the green spaces, green belt etc. but seek to enhance them, as an ongoing process, to be appreciated and used by as many people as possible. The argument that the former bowling green, near the former baths, cannot be a park because of the diminishing permanent population is spurious. It is a recreational green space on the riverbank – which is much used by people from around the City, and beyond, on a daily basis. It is in the lee of the Cathedral and W.H.S. with magnificent views across it from both sides of the riverbank. It is an ideal place to house some good quality play equipment, a green gym, a refreshment kiosk, maybe a sensory garden etc. etc. All over the country are such places which are protected from damage in imaginative ways, I quote this area as an example as it was so readily threatened not that long ago by inappropriate development when it should	c3. Bowling Green to be made a park	Consider changes to policies re making the Bowling Green a park

have been protected. I am sure this is true of other areas in and around our neighbourhood too. Copied to Theme 6		
Q57 Will the residents be listened to, if so, will those be listening and is so will they hear what is being said. Consultation in Durham previously has been a joke - decisions are made and then the council claim to discuss with residents, teaching assistants etc. - knowing that there will be NO changes to the decisions already made, planned for and budgeted.	c2. Concern over implementation	Consider strengthening of monitoring and implementation section
Q68 Make these areas more accessible to disabled people. Improvements to the footpaths around the river side are needed to make them wheelchair friendly. These improvements would also make these areas better for the general public.	c3. Changes to policies re access for disabled people	Consider changes to policies re access for disabled people
WC05 More lighting along river bank is needed.	c1b. Installing lighting outside remit (for other bodies)	Where is lighting covered in the Plan?
WC129 At this time Durham City is noteworthy for its green spaces that, with the River Wear, can be found in the very centre of this historic city. However, with the demise of the museum dedicated to the Durham Light Infantry, together with the art gallery, we should all be concerned with the Durham County Council plan for the land that will become available when the County Hall is demolished and which extends, like a finger, towards the railway station and the development at Milburngate where the former passport office is being demolished.	c2. Concerns over development of land at County Hall and Milburngate	Consider how policies would manage such developments
WC138 Copied to Theme 2b Theme 5 Theme 4 Concerning street lighting; upgrading street lights with covers to project the light downwards, this will put the light where it is needed, and we will still be able to see the stars when we look up. Durham's natural luminaire.	C2. Need for horizontal cut off street lighting	Consider where in the Plan lighting is covered
WC182 We fully support the views expressed by young people to those preparing the Neighbourhood Plan that with regard to the riverbank setting and riverside walks, more should be done to improve access and leisure opportunities, so that everyone can enjoy them. In general, although some of the green infrastructure of the City is accessible to disabled people, some	c3. Provide disabled people access to green infrastructure	Consider policies re access for disabled people to green assets

<p>of it is not -- at least not in a safe manner. Again, we urge planners to consult users of the green infrastructure who do have a disability, and to use the advice of those who have expertise in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. Developers should always provide safe pathways allowing access for all people to the City's green infrastructure.</p>		
<p>L14 Biodiversity We encourage sustainable flood prevention measures within new development such as SuDs and we recommend that these are designed in a way that provides additional habitat.</p> <p>Water Quality Although the consultation document makes reference to issues such as flooding, green infrastructure, green corridors and biodiversity, we would support greater references to water quality. In particular, we would welcome references to blue infrastructure and the importance of water for people and the environment. Blue infrastructure is a subset of green infrastructure and included rivers, ponds, streams, wetlands and their riparian margins. Rivers, lakes, coastal and ground waters are an important resource for people, the environment and supporting industry, wildlife, tourism and recreation. We would welcome the inclusion of objectives in relation to The Water Framework Directive (WFD). The WFD is a European Directive that requires all water bodies to achieve good status by 2021. It also aims to prevent deterioration in waterbody status; reduce water pollution; conserve aquatic ecosystems and habitats; reduce the effects of floods and droughts on waterbodies and promote sustainable use of water as a natural resource. We suggest that further detail could be included in the plan regarding the protection of waterbodies from pollution and management of waterbodies so that they reach and maintain a good and sustainable waterbody status. The Northumbria River Basin Management Plan sets out which actions and measures are needed to achieve the objectives of the WFD.</p>	<p>c2. Inclusion of flood prevention measures</p> <p>c3. c5. Inclusion of blue infrastructure</p>	<p>Flood prevention methods covered in Theme 1. Consider whether there is any need to cover these in some way in Theme 2b</p> <p>Consider how blue infrastructure can be covered in text and policies between Themes 1 and 2b.</p>
<p>Text</p>		
<p>EQ20 Although natural water features are included, artificial water features</p>	<p>c3. c5. Add in artificial water features</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policy G1 and</p>

e.g. ponds should be too as they can also support beneficial distributions of species (e.g. newts and mayfly).	as a green asset	text re artificial water features as a green asset [Also included under Policy G1]
EQ31 Slightly amending of the wording of the vision statements to provide consistency of wording with the overall vision would be helpful. For Theme 2b: Durham City's natural green spaces and networks of greenery will be preserved and enhanced for the leisure, health, economic and environmental benefits they provide for residents, visitors and people working in the City.	c5. Change to Vision text	Consider change to Vision text
Q62 St Margaret's Allotments are shown as designated for housing. Is that correct? Copied from Theme 4	c5. St Margaret's Allotments are designated as a Local Green Space in Policy G2. Not for housing	Consider changing housing map colour as it has caused confusion
EM13. Ordnance Survey have launched a new resource which helps you find local accessible green spaces. It's free to use on desktop PCs and downloadable as an app for mobiles too. Interestingly looking at this, one thing that it highlights how living out in rural areas doesn't necessarily mean you actually have public access to much green space! https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/getoutside/greenspaces/	c5. Add in the OS resource	Consider adding in OS resource to text / appendices / references
L4. Green Infrastructure has been identified in the Reports of the Natural Capital Committee as a way to help improve the economic performance of a workforce and enhance well-being, which in turn has benefits for the NHS. We wonder whether there should be a reference to the latest Report in the text.	c5. Addition to references and supporting text	Add to references and supporting text
L9b The county council has previously provided comments upon earlier iterations of the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan (DCNP) which have not yet been addressed. The Neighbourhood Plan Forum are again invited to reconsider the comments previously provided. Vision The county council supports the proposed Vision set out in 4.6. Objectives In respect to Objective 4 the NPPF is a material planning consideration and	c5. Concern over objectives	Support for Vision noted. Consider amending text of objectives

<p>it is therefore not an appropriate plan objective.</p> <p>Context The county council welcomes the inclusion of a definition of ‘green assets’.</p> <p>Justification At 4.63 clarity is required as to whether Appendix E is an exhaustive list of green assets within Our Neighbourhood to which policy G1 applies. At 4.76 the text suggests repetition of existing policies.</p>	<p>c5. Need clarity over list of green assets in Appendix E</p>	<p>Consider amending text accompanying policy G1 and text in Appendix E Note: Appendix E is intended to give the context of Our Neighbourhood (at the time of writing the draft), and is as detailed as the access we have to data allows. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all green assets to which Policy G1 applies. [Also included in Policy G1]</p>
<p>L23 G1.2: we agree the definitions of green assets and welcome that, under G1.2, a range of as-yet unidentified green space be identified and included (eg Cross Valley Court and the rail embankment, land at St Cuths Hospice);</p>	<p>c3. Identification and inclusion of green spaces</p>	<p>Consider these green spaces, and relationship to Policy G2 and Appendix E [Also included under Policies G1 and G2]</p>
<p>L28 Comment on Tables C1, C2 and E1 – There is a tendency to concentrate on buildings and not to consider gardens and walks as heritage assets in their own right. The work produced to support the HLF bid for the Riverbanks Gardens in 2008 (Bureau Veritas) concluded that the Riverbanks Gardens are of sufficient heritage significance to be suggested for inclusion on the national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. At the very least this means they should qualify for inclusion as a non-designated heritage asset. The same can be concluded for the collection of reformation gardens /walks at the Castle – The motte and moat walks, North Terrace and Bishops Walk. The other walks – Prebends, Hatfield and Principals, could all also have separate reference. The 18thC landscaping of the Prebends</p>	<p>c5. Suggested additions to Tables C1, C2 and E1</p>	<p>Consider adding in these suggestions to the tables</p>

Bridge approaches and quarry walks on the outer banks can also qualify in their own right as a heritage asset.		
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COMMENTS TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION DRAFT	COMMENT CATEGORISATION	PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Policy G1: Preserving and Enhancing Green Infrastructure		
EQ13 Clay Lane and adjacent tracks are especially useful, so important to avoid additional lighting here - in a few cases even reduce.	c3. Suggesting lighting restrictions on Clay Lane and adjacent tracks	Consider changes to Policy G1 re lighting. And consider how lighting addressed in Plan [Also included in General]
Q57 School playing fields will NO longer be sold off for development? Is that a Vision and Objective for Durham? Durham city needs those open spaces. Copied to Theme 6	c3. Concern regarding potential for school playing fields to be sold off. Consider policy changes to protect school playing fields as open spaces.	Consider policy changes in Theme 2b or Theme 6 to protect school playing fields as open spaces.
Q62 Should the clauses in G1.1 really be “or” ie is it acceptable that complying with any one clause will lead to support? G1.3 – again worried by use of “or”.	c3. Is wording of Policy G1 re use of word 'or' correct?	Consider wording of Policy G1 re use of word 'or'
Q76 G1. What about proposals under 0.4 hectares or 10 housing units? They could still provide some green infrastructure ie hedges, boundary walls, trees, attractive floorscape. Sorry realised this is included later. 3. and retain where possible existing trees and landscape features should be added. G.1.21. May need to define what are good quality green assets, i.e. hedges, trees, walls, verges, private gardens [G1.3] Who decides what is surplus to requirement, this could be very biased if the landowner wants development i.e. County Council or University	c3. How define good quality green assets in G1.21 c3. How determine 'surplus' to requirements in Policy G1.3	Consider wording of Policy G1 plus text
EQ20 Although natural water features are included, artificial water features e.g. ponds should be too as they can also support beneficial distributions of species (e.g. newts and mayfly).	c3. c5. Add in artificial water features as a green asset	Consider changes to Policy G1 and text re artificial water features as a green asset [Also included under General]
EQ42 I support the plan for housing development as described in this section of the plan, particularly with regard to the Offices at Diamond Terrace, and	c3. c4. Protection of Green belt and rights of way in Diamond Terrace area	Consider changes to Policy re protection of Diamond Terrace area

Main Street USA. In both cases the nearby green belt area and right of way/ access for existing residents should be protected/enhanced as the narrow entrance to the area from Framwellgate Peth is already hazardous. Copied from Theme 4		[Also included in Policy G4]
EQ54 Rights of way should not be diverted for development - they are part of our history.	c3. Change to Policy G1.4 re diversion of rights of way	Consider change to Policy G1.4 re diversion of rights of way
WC21 POLICY G 1. I strongly support this Policy, subject to my comment in relation to Policy H 1 [May be the as yet unpublished Management Plan for the Durham City Conservation Area will address this issue?]	c1b. Management Plan for Durham City Conservation Area outside remit (for Council)	Ask DCC again about when the Management Plan will be available
WC153 The phrase "contribute to the network of interlinked green routes" in G1.1 point 4 might be construed (indeed might have been intended) to refer to measures taken within the extent of the development site. I suggest wording be added to make it clear that this contribution can also be made via a Section 106 agreement or similar, to fund improvements made by others (eg the Council's Rights of Way section) beyond the site boundaries.	c3. Reword Policy G1.1.4 re Section 106 agreements etc.	Consider rewording of Policy G1.1.4
WC176 I strongly support this policy, and also WC153 point about the application of G1.1 point 4.	c3. Reword Policy G1.1.4 re Section 106 agreements etc.	Consider rewording of Policy G1.1.4
L4. We believe that saving important green space as is identified in Policy G1.3 is important. Although CPRE did not comment on a recent application in Bowburn where this was a factor, we are aware that planning permission has been given this month for housing on just such a site while an adjacent brownfield site remains undeveloped (planning permission for that site having lapsed). There are two issues in the Theme which cause us a little concern 1) We are concerned at the extent of proposed Policy G1.9 – new or major developments adjacent to the River Wear. Given the sensitivity of this area, we wonder what is potentially being permitted here. is there a plan of suggested sites? [Comment added to Policy G4] We do however note Policy C5 (loss of urban open spaces) which appears	c3. Concern over Policy G1.9 c3. Consider if Policies G1.3 and C5 are duplicates	Consider rewording of Policy G1.9 Consider Policies G1.3 and C5. However, the distinction that was being made was between green open spaces and urban open spaces. The idea was that the two policies were complementary.

to be identical to Policy G1.3 (loss of green assets). Is there any real difference between these proposed Policies? Are both really needed?		
<p>L6</p> <p>As a point of detail, Policy G1.2 mentions bird boxes. The Club is now seeking to promote a little more than this and ask for development to include, where possible, nesting opportunities within the fabric of the building and structures such as swift towers. These will enable birds such as swallows and martins to nest. I believe that, particularly in the work place, bringing nature in like this has benefits for well-being and performance as outlined in the reports of the Natural Capital Committee. As far as protecting biodiversity etc is concerned, the Club fully supports Policy G1.5 to prevent habitats becoming isolated. Further, we represent that it is vital for new development to consider the enhancement of biodiversity as mentioned above.</p> <p>The principle of Policy G1.7 to refuse permission where a habitat is lost is also welcomed. In respect of “offsetting” in certain cases, we note the word “acceptable” in point 1. This is critical – if a habitat is lost, any replacement must be of the same type that is likely to attract similar species to it. There is no point in replacing a riverside habitat suitable for, say, kingfisher with a habitat that is suitable only for garden birds.</p> <p>Clearly this will also be relevant in respect of Policy G1.9, development alongside the river bank. The river bank is of course a sensitive habitat and we are unsure of the extent of this proposed policy but do represent that these habitat issues are important,</p>	<p>c5: Change to text re nesting opportunities</p> <p>c3. Add in enhancement of biodiversity</p> <p>c3. c5. Define the meaning of acceptable 'offsetting'</p>	<p>Consider change to text</p> <p>Consider change to policy</p> <p>Consider changes to policy and/or supporting text</p>
<p>L9b</p> <p>REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING COUNCIL ASSETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aykley Heads/ DLI <p>This site is designated as a Local Green Space as part of the proposed ‘Emerald Network’. In doing so this protected status would be the equivalent of Greenbelt.</p> <p>However, the site is already afforded Greenbelt protection and therefore the proposal seems superfluous.</p>	<p>c2. Designating Aykley Heads/DLI as a Local Green Space is superfluous.</p>	<p>Discuss with Council.</p> <p>Note: Only the DLI grounds are covered in Policy G2 as a Local Green Space. The sites in the Emerald Network (Policy G3), which includes Aykley Heads, as a whole are not designated as Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>Note: Para 4.81 gives NPPF and</p>

		local justification for including sites with other designations in Policy G2 [Also included in Policy G2]
<p>L9b Policy G1 The use of sub headings to break up this lengthy policy is welcomed. However the use of 'or' between each criteria suggests that a development only needs to meet one of these to be acceptable and it is not clear as to whether this is the Forum's intention given the nature of the criteria. Criterion G1.1 & G1.2 It is unclear whether this part of the policy relates to all 'development' (the scope of which extends beyond the provision of new buildings) or just relates to the provision of new buildings. The policy should be reworded to make this clear. Furthermore, it is unclear as to what is meant by 'or equivalent other type of development'. Criterion G1.4 The county council considers this criteria to be inappropriate as it is not justifiable to refuse consent on the basis of a public right of way diversion as this is a consideration governed by a separate legal process. It is considered that this should be reworded so that it does not read as policy and be included within the context section of this chapter. Criterion G1.3 (3) The county council questions the appropriateness of this requirement in terms of whether it would be achievable given the confined nature of the plan area it is unlikely that a developer will be able to identify an alternative site. The policy should recognise that off- site compensation measures may not need to be in the plan area. Section 106 contributions can now be directed to suitable sites further afield. Criterion G1.5 The county council is not convinced that an application could be refused on this matter alone as it is a matter that would need to be balanced with other planning considerations. Furthermore it would be very difficult for the decision maker to define whether an 'island' has been created. It is considered that the wording of this criterion should be amended to read as a requirement rather than an outright refusal. Criterion G1.6 In order to implement this policy green corridors should be mapped. It is not clear as to whether Maps 6 and 7 provide the clarity required to implement this criterion or whether further sites need to be mapped.</p>	c3. c5. Suggestions for improving the wording of Policy G1	Consider changes to Policy G1 and accompanying text. These detailed comments are welcomed. Further discussion with the Council to improve wording

Criterion G1.7 This part of the policy would benefit from rewording. Whilst unclear at present it is assumed that point 1 relates to onsite mitigation and point 2 relates to off-site mitigation to compensate for loss, though this is not sufficiently clear at present.

Criterion G1.8. The county council does not consider that it is appropriate to have 'and' between each criterion given their nature. Furthermore point 2 is not an appropriate policy requirement. The making of a TPO is subject to separate legislation. The policy would benefit from a distinction being made between point 1 & 3 as point 1 explicitly relates to ancient woodland whereas it is presumed that it was the Forum's intention for point 3 to relate to other woodland and trees. Finally the policy would benefit from having a separate criteria relating to replacement of lost trees as at present the policy does not require compensation in response to the loss of ancient woodland. Any compensation for the loss of ancient woodland would have to be the creation of new woodland, greater than the area lost with associated long term funded management preferably adjacent to an existing ancient woodland.

Criterion G1.9 The reference to 'major redevelopments is considered to be superfluous as this is captured in the scope of the term 'new developments'. The county council is concerned that this requirement is written in a manner which does not acknowledge that provision of a pedestrian route along the riverbank cannot always be feasible or desirable. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to use the term 'demonstrate' as opposed to 'provide' It is presumed the Forum's intention is to ensure that a new development can be safely accessed by whatever route is appropriate to that development. The county council considers that in providing such access points regard still has to be had to the impact upon public safety, ecology and/ or heritage.

The county council considers that the criterion should be amended accordingly in the interests of clarity and flexibility.

Criterion 1.10 The county council considers that in providing such access points regard still has to be had to the impact upon public safety, ecology and/ or heritage. It may not always be feasible or desirable to meet this criterion and the policy should be reworded to reflect this in the interests of flexibility.

<p>L9b Justification At 4.63 clarity is required as to whether Appendix E is an exhaustive list of green assets within Our Neighbourhood to which policy G1 applies. At 4.76 the text suggests repetition of existing policies.</p>	<p>c5. Need clarity over list of green assets in Appendix E</p>	<p>Consider amending text accompanying policy G1 and text in Appendix E Note: Appendix E is intended to give the context of Our Neighbourhood (at the time of writing the draft), and is as detailed as the access we have to data allows. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all green assets to which Policy G1 applies. [Also included in General]</p>
<p>L21 Policy G1.3 states that development proposals that would result in the loss of existing green assets would be refused unless it does not have a significant ecological value. However, it is unclear what is considered significant. In addition, this does not take into account any cumulative impacts, i.e. if several developments are approved that individually do not have a significant impact, but together might. It also seems that if the loss is not significant, no mitigation would be required, which again could have cumulative impacts. We welcome Policy G1.5 that includes reference to preventing the creation of islands of biodiversity. This is also linked to Policy G1.3, regarding the cumulative impacts of developments, which could cause fragmentation of habitats. Policy G1.6 refers to green corridors, however, it is unclear what is meant by this. There is no map or definition of green corridors included, and it is unclear if this is similar or different to green infrastructure. Regarding Policy G1.7, it is unclear what is meant by 'serious damage'. It should also follow the mitigation hierarchy (NPPF policy 118) of firstly, avoidance of impacts, secondly mitigation (not just to minimise adverse effects, but to provide enhancement) and lastly, compensation.</p>	<p>c3.c5. Suggestions for amending Policy G1 and accompanying text</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policy G1 and accompanying text</p>
<p>L23 G1.2: we agree the definitions of green assets and welcome that, under</p>	<p>c3. Identification and inclusion of green</p>	<p>Consider these green spaces, and</p>

<p>G1.2, a range of as-yet unidentified green space be identified and included (eg Cross Valley Court and the rail embankment, land at St Cuths Hospice); G1.4 rights of way: we would go further and argue that existing rights of way – which have been mapped in the NX area – should in themselves be protected whether or not they are subject to development proposals. We also propose that rights of way should also be protected from ‘enhancement’, such as low-level lighting or gravelling for cycle use, so that they retain their traditional features. As noted below, and given the topography of the City, these ways are as important as cycle routes and should be given equal prominence; [noted below: We have concerns about the imbalance in information on walking routes outside paved pedestrian routes and cycle routes. Much of the Conservation Area is criss-crossed by traditional walking routes and we would welcome a clear policy on the maintained use of such routes without ‘enhancement’ and mapped along the lines of map 12.]</p>	<p>spaces c3. c5. Additions to Policy G1.4</p>	<p>relationship to Policy G2 and Appendix E [Also included under Policy G2 and General] Consider changes to Policy G1.4 and accompanying text, including a new map</p>
<p>L28 Comment on Policy G1.19 [G1.9] & 1.10 – The reference to dark corridors is particularly useful in relation to the WHS setting and expansion area. The status of the City of Durham Light and Darkness Strategy (Spiers and Major, 2007) has been uncertain as a result of lack of public consultation and Committee approval (a copy can be provided). However, it provides a useful background and can be considered as informative in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan. It could be referenced in the justifications and notes on these policies. The policy could be extended to include a reference – G1.9 & 1.10. Existing green corridors and dark corridors must be retained. New lighting proposals should not harm dark corridors.</p>	<p>c5. Suggestions for additions to supporting text and evidence base for Policy G1.9 and G1.10 c3. Suggestions for changes to Policy G1.9 and G1.10</p>	<p>Consider amending text and adding to evidence base Consider changes to Policy G1.9 and G1.10</p>

COMMENTS TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION DRAFT	COMMENT CATEGORISATION	PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Policy G2: Designation of Local Green Spaces		
Q16 I would be unhappy with a Business Hub at Aykley Heads. I would prefer to maintain that as a green space. Copied to Theme 3	c2. c3. Maintain Aykley Heads as a green space. Addressed by Policy G3	Consider change to Policy G2 re Akyley Heads
Q24 Add Botanical Gardens to local green spaces.	c3. Suggesting change to Policy G2 re Botanical Gardens	Consider change to Policy G2 re Botanical Gardens
Q57 Residents are NOT aware of Neighbourhood Plans to identify and designate Local Green Spaces!	c2. Lack of knowledge of Local Green Space powers	Consider text explaining Local Green Spaces
Q69 Presumably the section on the DLI grounds will have to be rewritten. While the idea of a reprovided Arts facility is supported there also needs to be proposals for the reestablishment of a modern museum for the County Regiment in a more accessible location with adequate parking. Copied to Theme 6	c3. c5. Change Policy G2 re DLI grounds	Consider changes to Policy G2 and text re DLI grounds
Q76 This list seems rather limited and does not seem to include a considerable amount of land and green space owned by the University and other bodies such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Botanic Gardens and surrounding areas • the cricket field and surrounding areas • the colleges - St Johns, St Chad etc. • Palace Green and the Close • Wharton Park • trees/vegetation adjacent Akyley Heads ?Hair • Crook Hall and land beyond here • the Sands, Kepier site and land beyond • Durham School • St Margaret's allotments 	c3. Addition of other sites to Policy G2	Consider addition of other sites to Policy G2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Botanic Gardens and surrounding areas • the cricket field and surrounding areas • the colleges - St Johns, St Chad etc. • Palace Green and the Close • Wharton Park • trees/vegetation adjacent Akyley Heads ?Hair • Crook Hall and land beyond here • the Sands, Kepier site and land beyond

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham School • St Margaret's allotments
EQ26 There are areas of City such as the Sands which you would think are safe from development but its use as a car park and subsequent battle to have it restored proves this is not currently the case.	c2. Concern over implementation	Consider adding the grass area on the Sands as a Local Green Space. [Also included in General]
EQ41 The Local Green Spaces to the north of the city, even taking into account the Emerald Network should be enlarged. It's not clear why all the non-agricultural green areas in that zone are not designated as such, and I think it would be good to do so.	c3. Make land to the North of the city Local Green Spaces	Consider changes to Policy G2
WC133 Conversations with members of the public at drop-in events made be realise that we need to review the proposed local green spaces by comparing maps 6 and 7 together. Map 7 shows more green areas than map 6. In particular, people thought that the Botanic Gardens should be designated as a local green space.	c5. Comparing/combining maps 6 and 7 c3. Add Botanic Gardens to Local Green Spaces	Consider comparing/combining maps 6 and 7 Consider making the difference between Policies D2 and D3 clearer in the text c3. Consider amending Policy D2 to add the Botanic Gardens [Also included under Policy G3]
WC158 Although it is not so well-used for walking as Observatory Hill, the top of Whinney Hill is accessible from a public footpath and is a significant viewpoint from the south-east of the city towards the World Heritage Site. I would support this being added as a local green space, but I am not sure whether it is already in green belt and whether designating it a local green space would give it added protection. The hill across from Whinney Hill, on the other side of the A177, which I think is called Mount Joy, also gives good views over the city, but does not have public access officially, though there are several well-worn paths over it. Most of the green spaces are woodland so it would be good to protect the few open spaces.	c3. Add Whinney Hill to Local Green Spaces	Consider amending Policy D2 to add Whinney Hill
WC175 I strongly support this policy, as well as WC158 observation about the desirability of adding Whinney Hill.	c3. Add Whinney Hill to Local Green Spaces	Consider amending Policy D2 to add Whinney Hill
WC180 Several of the Local Green Spaces mentioned in this policy are not	c3. Improve access to Policy G2 sites for people with disabilities	Consider changing Policy G2 re access for disabled people

<p>accessible to some disabled people. These people are therefore not able to enjoy the acknowledged benefits they provide. More could and should be done to provide safe access to more of these valuable spaces, so that those benefits can be more widely shared by residents and visitors.</p>		
<p>WC193 I support this policy but I don't understand why some of the designated green spaces seem to end where there do. for example, the River Wear Corridor G.1.1.1 could be continued much further down-stream.</p>	<p>c1a. Green spaces and parts of the River Wear outside our area are outside our remit</p>	<p>Make it clearer in text that the Neighbourhood Plan is restricted in area coverage</p>
<p>WC209 I consider that the University's Botanical Gardens should be added as a Local Green Space. My reasons are: the botanical gardens are of natural interest being supported by the university in scientific and botanical research; the area contains many beautiful areas of woodland and open spaces which are attractive to residents and tourists throughout the year; and the gardens adjoin valued woodland with well used footpaths that connect to the historic setting of Durham City.</p>	<p>c3. Add Botanic Gardens to Local Green Spaces</p>	<p>c3. Consider amending Policy D2 to add the Botanic Gardens</p>
<p>L8a. In anticipation of the Club's 200th anniversary we have prepared a Club Development Plan that we attach [L8b]. "Development" in that context is primarily a reference to sporting and club development rather than built development as such. We are ambitious in terms of both coaching and on-field development of the Club. We also need to ensure that we are able to maintain the financial viability of the Club through use of the Clubhouse. As with all sports clubs we envisage the on-going need for small-scale, minor development (eg fencing and nets for example) that we accept must respect the sensitivity of the setting. In the longer term we do face the issue of the fitness for purpose of the clubhouse/pavilion as further noted below. The green setting of the city, views of the World Heritage Site and the character and value of the riverside in particular are appreciated by the Club and the Plan's recognition of their value and need for protection are supported. The Club echoes the widespread support for the riverbank setting and riverside walks as an important attribute as to what is good about the City (paragraph 4.80.1). These are indeed factors and qualities that make our Green Lane ground one of the most attractive cricket grounds in the region. It is not by chance that the Club's address is Green</p>	<p>c3. Expanding definition of riverside to include adjoining sports fields (G2.1.1)</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policy G2.1.1 L8a makes comments about Themes 2a, 2b and 6 where the issues overlap. Need to ensure across the Plan that policies are consistent with each other, and not contradictory or repetitious.</p>

<p>Lane - the ground is very literally a Local Green Space that is deserving of protection. We indeed consider that the Plan would benefit from making it explicit that the riverside setting includes adjoining playing fields. A wide interpretation should be given to riverbank and riverside setting.</p>		
<p>L23 G1.2: we agree the definitions of green assets and welcome that, under G1.2, a range of as-yet unidentified green space be identified and included (eg Cross Valley Court and the rail embankment, land at St Cuths Hospice);</p>	c3. Identification and inclusion of green spaces	Consider these green spaces, and relationship to Policy G2 and Appendix E [Also included under Policy G1 and General]
<p>L9b REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING COUNCIL ASSETS • Aykley Heads/ DLI This site is designated as a Local Green Space as part of the proposed 'Emerald Network'. In doing so this protected status would be the equivalent of Greenbelt. However, the site is already afforded Greenbelt protection and therefore the proposal seems superfluous.</p>	c2. Designating Aykley Heads/DLI as a Local Green Space is superfluous.	Discuss with Council. Note: Only the DLI grounds are covered in Policy G2 as a Local Green Space. The sites in the Emerald Network (Policy G3), which includes Aykley Heads, as a whole are not designated as Local Green Spaces. Note: Para 4.81 gives NPPF and local justification for including sites with other designations in Policy G2 [Also included in Policy G1]
<p>L9b Policy G2 Designation of Local Green Spaces The county council is concerned that it is not clear as to why some sites have been identified as Local Green Space and others have not. LGS designations can include areas that providing habitats for wildlife and natural corridors, however parts of the River Wear corridor are very narrow and whether the area proposed as LGS would function as corridors is debatable. The council is aware of a number of sites with similar credentials which have not been subject to this designation. An evidence base which shows a wider set of possible Local Green Space sites that were</p>	c2. Concern over criteria for inclusion of sites in Policy G2.	Discuss criteria with Council. Note: Procedure was as follows: (i) identification of potential sites from NPF's priority survey, City local plan, requests to all residents groups in Our Neighbourhood; (ii) assessment of potential sites from local knowledge using NPPF 'criteria' given in paras 76,77,78) giving

<p>systematically considered and the selection criteria (which should include that set out in paragraph 77 of NPPF) that led to sites being selected or discounted and boundaries being drawn has not been made available. Therefore the council is unable to determine whether the site selection and boundary extent is justified and robust. The council is also concerned that land owners (of which the council is one) were not contacted to discuss these proposals prior to this consultation.</p> <p>Of particular concern is the fact that the policy fails to set out criteria for determining planning applications falling within these areas, including any exceptions. It is not considered appropriate that the policy merely repeats the requirement set out in paragraph 78 of NPPF particularly given that much of Green Belt policy is not in itself relevant to the purposes of LGS designation.</p> <p>Site specific comments The River Wear Corridor</p> <p>As noted previously, the county council is concerned that corridor as mapped is an extremely narrow but extensive strip of land of variable character / accessibility that may be difficult to defend as LGS in its entirety. Parts of the corridor as mapped are areas of narrow river bank in open countryside with no public access.</p> <p>With the exception of the peninsula banks and small stretches near Baths Bridge and Freeman's Reach (which already lie within the Conservation Area) it lies entirely within the Green Belt. It isn't clear what additional protection if any LGS Designation would bring and particularly if the Policy itself only references 'NPPF policy for green belt'.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to focussing on those river banks not within the green belt that have a strong function as local green space – and in particular the peninsula banks.</p> <p>It isn't clear why the corridor on the peninsula banks should be so narrow - excluding the wider banks with their network of paths and restricting itself to the immediate riparian strip at the water's edge. We would recommend that the River Wear Corridor around the peninsula is redrawn to take in the full extent of the river banks – and certainly those areas with public access – rather than the very narrow strip along the water's edge which is currently shown. Something closer to the area mapped as Peninsular Woodlands</p>	<p>c3. c5. Suggestions for improving/amending Policy G2.</p>	<p>selected sites; (iii) agreement of sites at Forum meeting; (iv) removal and amendment of sites in response to DCC's health checks.</p> <p>Consider changes to Policy G2 and accompanying text. These detailed comments are welcomed. Further discussion with the Council.</p> <p>Note: Para 4.81 gives NPPF and local justification for including sites with other designations in Policy G2</p>
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under G3.1.10 would be more appropriate.

Observatory Hill

We note that 1.2 Observatory Hill now includes the former parkland setting of the Observatory to the west. As noted previously we would recommend that, if it is considered appropriate to identify this area as LGS, the area should be enlarged to take in the field falling from Elvet Hill / St Aidan's south of Potter's Bank, St Cuthbert's Cemetery, and the field north-west of St Mary's crossed by footpath 40 (below). [See map]

Flass Vale Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve and North End allotments and leisure gardens;

As noted previously, with the exception of a small parcel south-west of Flassburn Road (which is within the LNR) the whole area is included in the Green Belt. The county council does not consider that it is clear what additional protection if any LGS designation would bring particularly as the Policy itself only references 'NPPF policy for green belt'. This puts into question whether this proposed designation is justified.

St Margaret's Cemetery plus St Margaret's allotments

We note that this now includes the whole of the cemetery as advised.

DLI Grounds

As noted previously, the whole site is included in the Green Belt. Again the county council does not consider that it is sufficiently clear what additional protection if any LGS Designation would bring, again particularly as the Policy itself only references 'NPPF policy for green belt'. This puts into question whether this proposed designation is justified.

Woodland on the south side of the City, comprising Maiden Castle Wood, Great High Wood, Hollingside Wood and Blaid's Wood.

All of these woodlands lie within the Green Belt. As with previous sites it is not clear what additional protection if any LGS Designation would bring.

As noted previously it is not clear why the woods in the dene south of Blaid's Wood and connecting with Hollingside Wood and Low Burnhall Wood should be excluded as they are of a similar character with similar levels of public access and link together to form a single unit.

If these woodlands area identified as LGS consideration should be given to including their full extent: something closer to that shown below. [See map]

Battle of Neville's Cross: the undeveloped area of the battlefield site

<p>within Our Neighbourhood. The whole undeveloped area of the battlefield is included in the Green Belt. Again the county council consider that it is not clear what additional protection if any LGS Designation would bring for the same reasons set out in respect to previous sites.</p>		
<p>L12b G2.1: Green spaces within Our Neighbourhood that are of significant environmental, landscape or historical value are designated as Local Green spaces. These areas, as shown on the proposals map, comprise: 1. The River Wear corridor that lies within Our Neighbourhood; and 2. Observatory Hill; and 6. Woodland on the south side of the City, comprising Maiden Castle Wood, Great High Wood, Hollingside Wood and Blaid's Wood; and There are several University sites allocated under this policy. Reviewing Map 6 in general it appears the majority of these allocations abut operational land but do not impinge it. Part of the allocation on Observatory Hill is a DU site. The University views this land as operational or with operational potential and would not wish this to be allocated as Local Green Space. Please see the amended Map 6 attached with the area for deletion marked in red.</p>	<p>c2. Objection to inclusion of part of Observatory Hill site</p>	<p>Objection noted. Consider amending site boundary Discuss with University and Council Note: L9b comment which suggests extending the Observatory Hill site</p>
<p>L15 Policy G2: Designation of Local Green Spaces The plan intends to designate parcels of land as Local Green Space (LGS). In order to designate land as LGS the Town Council must ensure that it is able to demonstrate robust evidence to meet national policy requirements set out in the Framework. The Framework makes clear at §76 that the role of local communities seeking to designate land as LGS should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development for the wider area. Paragraph 76 states that: <i>'Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.'</i></p>	<p>c2. Criticism of the criteria used to determine the inclusion of local Green Space sites, particularly that they should not be an extensive tract of land</p>	<p>Criticism noted Consider the criteria for selection of LGS sites, size of individual sites, and overall size Note: The approximate areas of the land shown on Map 6, measured by mapping software from the KML file areas in Map 6: G2.1.1: River Wear corridor Low Burnhall to Shincliffe Bridge:</p>

<p>Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.'</p> <p>Further guidance is provided at §77 which sets out three tests that must be met for the designation of LGS and states that:</p> <p><i>'The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>-Where the green space is reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;</i> <i>-Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreation value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and</i> <i>-Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.'</i> <p>The requirements of the Framework have now been supplemented by the advice and guidance contained in the PPG. Gladman note paragraph 007 of the PPG which states,</p> <p><i>'Designating any Local Green Space will need to be consistent with local planning for sustainable development in the area. In particular, plans must identify sufficient land in suitable locations to meet identified development needs and the Local Green Space designation should not be used in a way that undermines the aim of plan making.'</i></p> <p>Of further note is paragraph 015 of the PPG (ID37-015) which states,</p> <p><i>'Paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land. Consequently, blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. In particular, designation should not be proposed as a 'back door' way to try to achieve what would amount to a new area of Green Belt by another name.'</i></p>		<p>16 ha.</p> <p>Shincliffe Bridge to Baths Bridge: 3.9 ha.</p> <p>North bank, Pelaw Woods to New Elvet Bridge: 0.8 ha.</p> <p>New Elvet Bridge to Framwellgate Bridge, both banks: 4 ha.</p> <p>Downstream of Pennyferry Bridge (both banks): 4.7 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.2: Observatory Hill. 12 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.3: Flass Vale. 17 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.4: St Margaret's allotments and cemetery. 4.9 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.5: DLI Grounds. 1.2 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.6: Woodland on the south side of the city</p> <p>Maiden Castle Wood: 8.1 ha.</p> <p>Great High Wood: 19 ha.</p> <p>Hollingside Wood: 11 ha.</p> <p>Blaid's Wood: 5.3 ha.</p> <p>G2.1.7: Battle of Neville's Cross. 34 ha.</p>
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Designation of LGS should not be used as a mechanism to designate new areas of Green Belt (or similar), as the designation of Green Belt is inherently different and must meet a set of stringent tests for its allocation (paragraphs 82 to 85 of the Framework).

The issue of whether LGS meets the criteria for designation has also been explored in a number of Examiner's Reports across the country and highlight the following decisions:

- The Blackwell Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Report recommended the deletion of two LGS designations measuring approximately 19ha and 32ha respectively and found both designations did not have regard to national policy which states that LGS should only be used where the area concerned 'is not an extensive tract of land.'
- The Seldlescombe Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Report recommended the deletion of an LGS measuring approximately 4.5ha as it was found to be an extensive tract of land.
- The Oakley and Deane Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Report recommended the deletion of an LGS measuring approximately 5ha and also found this area not to be local in character. Thereby failing to meet 2 of the 3 tests for LGS designation.
- The Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Report identified that both sites proposed as LGS in the neighbourhood plan 'in relation to the overall size of Alrewas Village' to be extensive tracts of land. The Examiner in this instance recommended the deletion of the proposed LGSs which measured approximately 2.4ha and 3.7ha.

It is noted that several of the sites are quite extensive in size and are unlikely to be appropriate for LGS designation.

COMMENTS TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION DRAFT	COMMENT CATEGORISATION	PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Policy G3: Creation of the Emerald Network		
Q62 G3 – the linking public footpaths are not defined.	c5. Add footpaths to Map 7	Consider adding footpaths to Map 7
EQ31. Policy G3: Amend the final section of this policy to provide for disabled people as follows: G3.2: Development proposals to improve the biodiversity and / or amenity of sites or footpaths in the Emerald Network will be supported. G3.3: Development proposals to improve accessibility of sites and footpaths for disabled people, and to provide facilities and amenities for disabled people will be supported. G3.4: Proposals that would result in a deterioration in the wildlife value of a site in the Network will be refused.	c3. Amend Policy G3 to provide for people with disabilities	Consider amending Policy G3 to provide for people with disabilities
Q43 Although G3 is a great proposal, it is not expressed as a policy i.e. G.3.2 is the policy and G.3.1 is the area to which it applies.	c3. Changes to Policy G3 wording	Consider changes to Policy G3 wording
Q59 G3: links?	c5. Add footpaths to Map 7	Consider adding footpaths to Map 7
Q76 Can St Margaret's allotments / cemetery be included? Can the cricket ground/racecourse be included?	c3. Include St Margaret's cemetery/allotments and cricket ground/race course as a Policy G3 site	Consider including St Margaret's cemetery/allotments and cricket ground/race course as a Policy G3 site
WC60 These maps are brilliant. Two suggestions. Could you turn the Emerald Network Map into a printable leaflet with clear links between green areas? People could use it to walk from one area to another as if they were doing an 'Emerald Way' long-distance walk around the city (like the Teesdale Way or Weardale Way along the river Tees and river Wear).	c5. Add footpaths to Emerald Network map c1c. Production of leaflet outside remit (not a planning issue)	Consider adding footpaths to Emerald Network map Consider changes to Policy Implementation Project 1 re leaflet [Also included under General]
WC132 Conversations with members of the public at drop-in events alerted me to the need for the map of the emerald network to show the public rights of	c5. Add footpaths to Map 7	Consider adding footpaths to Map 7

way linking the green areas.		
<p>WC133 Conversations with members of the public at drop-in events made be realise that we need to review the proposed local green spaces by comparing maps 6 and 7 together. Map 7 shows more green areas than map 6.</p>	c5. Comparing/combining maps 6 and 7	<p>Consider comparing/combining maps 6 and 7 Consider making the difference between Policies D2 and D3 clearer in the text [Also included under Policy G2]</p>
<p>WC154 I refer you to my comment against Policy G1 [WC153]. Section 106 money could and should be used to improve public footpaths within and between the sites that comprise the Emerald Network. I think the reference here to PUBLIC footpaths is important. I am not sure that all of the linking footpaths are on the definitive map of rights of way. Steps should be taken to upgrade these permissive paths and to ensure that new paths are fully public. These can only be modified or extinguished following a proper legal process, but permissive paths can be changed at the whim of the owner.</p>	c3. Reword Policy G3 re Section 106 agreements etc. for footpath improvement	<p>Consider rewording of Policy G3 This needs to be done in conjunction with policies T1/T2 which also encourage connections beyond site boundaries. These policies need to be consistent and work together.</p>
<p>WC179 We welcome the creation of the Emerald Network in the City. We trust that steps will be taken to ensure that as many as possible of the spaces mentioned will be safely accessible to disabled people. These spaces are indeed a leisure asset, with a potential for improved wellbeing, for all local residents, including disabled residents.</p>	c3. Amend Policy G3 to provide for people with disabilities	<p>Consider amending Policy G3 to provide for people with disabilities</p>
<p>L3. The notion of the Emerald Network (policy G3) is particularly welcome, building, as you say, on the redundant concept of a Necklace Park. Indeed, given the current physical and mental health challenges in County Durham and abundance of evidence proving the remedial impact of green spaces on people's well-being, the need for such a facility is more urgent than ever. To this end we recommend that ambition should extend to developing new rights of way as well as promoting and enhancing existing provision, and should like to see Section 106 monies earmarked to provide links not only within the neighbourhood area but to green spaces beyond. WE also believe that a high profile, well maintained environmental network accessible to all, regardless of age or disability, would add another string to</p>	<p>c3. Addition to Policy G3 re use of Section 106 monies to improve footpath links c4. Add LAF to list of key stakeholders for Policy Implementation Project 1</p>	<p>Consider amending Policy G3 Add LAF as a key stakeholder to Policy Implementation Project 1 Consider if improvement of footpaths may be achievable via Policy T1 if new development occurs nearby and a footpath provides important access.</p>

<p>the local economy by attracting more visitors. Marketing and design will be key to the Emerald Network's success and we would be happy to see the LAF added to the list of key stakeholders (paragraph 5.5) with a view to ensuring an independent perspective on any access proposals in the implementation phase.</p>		
<p>L25 G1.3 should read; ...2 the affected site or assets can be demonstrated to be surplus to local requirements (with e.g. reference to the current Open Space Needs Assessment) [delete and] OR 3. a compensatory amount of green assets or an equivalent or better quality is provided in, or adjacent to, Our Neighbourhood. Persimmon Homes objects the to reactive nature of G1.8 point 2 which appears to suggest that on receipt of a planning application the Neighbourhood Plan will consider applying for Tree Protection orders to protect trees. This approach would add uncertainty to developers as there would be a threat that post-submission of an application TPO's could be retrospectively applied which may fundamentally impact on proposed site layout and potentially impact on the viability of schemes which will have already required significant investment in preparing and submitting the application.</p>	<p>c3. Suggested changes to wording of Policy G1.3.2 c2. Objection to G1.8.2</p>	<p>Consider changes to Policy G1.3.2 Consider deleting G1.8.2</p>
<p>L9b Relationship with and implications on existing and emerging policy ...Furthermore as a note of caution the council wishes to draw to the Forum's attention that there is a need for the Forum to check and keep under review all linkages with existing strategies and plans associated with the area to ensure alignment, particularly in respect to the proposed 'Emerald Network'. In respect to the setting up of a heritage, leisure & arts trail which relates to the DCNP's proposed 'Emerald Network' the plan does not reflect the fact that this is already in hand with the parks & Garden's Project Saints Trails, though the county council recognises that other trails could be considered. ...</p>	<p>c2. Overlap of Emerald Network with DCC planned trails</p>	<p>Discuss with Council</p>
<p>L9b</p>		

<p>Policy G3: Creation of the Emerald Network The council is concerned that land owners (of which the council is one) were not contacted to discuss these proposals prior to this consultation. Therefore the deliverability of this proposal is uncertain. The council is very concerned that this policy is not sufficiently explicit. The role of the Emerald Network in enhancing biodiversity needs to be an unambiguous aim. As such the county council is very concerned that it will just deliver for public access / recreation at the expense of the existing biodiversity value, especially as many of the sites are ancient woodland and increasing access links to and through these sites will have impacts on biodiversity. Criterion G3.2 the county council considers that the policy should recognise that there may be instances where appropriate mitigation can be secured to offset harm, for example in relation to recreational use of ancient woodland which would arise as a consequence of the policy relating to the Emerald Network. Furthermore it is not clear what is meant by improving 'amenity of sites'. The policy should that acknowledge that amenity improvements can have negative impacts on biodiversity. The county council considers that the policy should be reworded to clarify these points.</p>	<p>c2. Concern over notification of landowners.</p> <p>c2. Concern that improved access will affect the biodiversity of the sites</p> <p>c3. c5. Concern over clarity of policy and suggestions for rewording</p>	<p>Concern noted. Note: The Council and the University received a number of previous drafts of the Plan which included this Policy and the named sites. Contact with site owners during the pre-submission consultation was as rigorous as proportionate for a Neighbourhood Plan Discuss with Council</p> <p>Consider changes to Policy G3 and accompanying text.</p>
<p>L12b Policy G3: Creation of the Emerald Network Page 54 Map 7 on page 56 G3.1: An Emerald Network is designated which comprises sites of wildlife interest within Our Neighbourhood linked by public footpaths. These sites comprise designated wildlife sites, such as Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland Sites, key green sites, such as parks and gardens, and the River Wear and the riverbanks. The sites included in the Emerald Network are: 5. Low Burnhall 6. Durham University Botanic Gardens; and 7. Hollingside Wood, Great High Wood, Little High Wood, Blaid's Wood; and 8. Houghall/Maiden Castle 9. Pelaw Wood & 10. Peninsular woodlands</p>	<p>c2. Objection to inclusion of parts of sites G3.1.6 and G3.1.9</p>	<p>Consider amending site boundary Discuss with University</p>

<p>There are several University sites allocated under this policy. Reviewing Map 7 in general it appears the majority of these allocations abut operational land but do not impinge it.</p> <p>Part of the allocation for G3.1.6 has expanded beyond the Botanic Garden boundaries and includes part of the Howlands Farm residential site. We require the boundary to be redrawn to remove this operational area.</p> <p>Part of the allocation for G3.1.9 has expanded beyond the boundary of the wood and includes part of the College of St Hild and St Bede residential site. We require the boundary to be redrawn to remove this operational area.</p> <p>We reserve the right to object to the other allocations if it could affect operations.</p> <p>Please see the amended Map 7 attached with the area for deletion marked in red.</p>		
<p>L15 Policy G3: Creation of the Emerald Network This policy states that proposals that would result in a deterioration in the wildlife value of a site in the network will be refused. Gladman is concerned with this policy as currently proposed as it fails to recognise that development could enhance existing biodiversity values near or in the network. Further, the Parish Council does not have the ability to 'refuse' planning applications as this responsibility falls solely to the Council who will need to determine development proposals through the planning balancing exercise.</p>	c3. Changes to Policy G3 needed	Consider changes to Policy G3
<p>L21 The Plan does not identify strategic green infrastructure, but does include the term 'emerald network'. It is unclear how this network differs from green infrastructure and what additional protection or policies on enhancement it carries.</p>	c2. c3. c5. Concern over purpose of Policy G3	Consider clarifying purpose of Policy G2 and amending policy text and accompanying text
<p>L23 G3: G2.1.2 should be included in Policy G3.</p>	c3. Suggesting an additional site (Observatory Hill) for Policy G3	Consider addition of site

COMMENTS TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION DRAFT	COMMENT CATEGORISATION	PLANNING ISSUE OR ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Policy G4: Enhancing the Beneficial Use of the Green Belt		
EQ18. Policy G4 - define 'improvements' for 'better access'	c3. Provide definitions of terms in Policy G4	Consider providing definitions of terms in Policy G4
EQ42 I support the plan for housing development as described in this section of the plan, particularly with regard to the Offices at Diamond Terrace, and Main Street USA. In both cases the nearby green belt area and right of way/ access for existing residents should be protected/enhanced as the narrow entrance to the area from Framwellgate Peth is already hazardous. Copied from Theme 4	c3. c4. Protection of Green belt and rights of way in Diamond Terrace area	Consider changes to Policy re protection of Diamond Terrace area [Also included in Policy G1]
Q63 Arguments of 4.86 and 4.87 seem sound. But wording of Policy G4 may offer hostages to fortune. References to Green Belt might be best limited to simple repetition of N.P.P.F. text – or of PPG2.	c3. Amend wording of Policy G4	Consider amending wording of Policy G4
Q65 Allowing developments within the Green Belt on the grounds of “opportunities for outdoor sport or recreation” could allow developments which in my view would be inappropriate for a green belt as is happening at the university’s Maiden Castle sports area. (Buildings, artificial ? Lights, hard surfaces)	c2. Objection to Policy G4	Consider changing Policy G4
Q76 I'm not sure if this policy is sufficient reason to allow development in the Green Belt. I feel very uneasy about the wording and this could lead to potentially huge chunks of our green belt being developed. I cannot support this policy. I strongly recommend that it is reworded.	c3. Amend wording of Policy G4	Consider amending wording of Policy G4
WC24 POLICY G 4. I strongly support this Policy and suggest that the inclusion of the following additional words at the end would improve it further: "...will be encouraged and supported where to do so would not in any way serve to impair the overall quality of green belt environment.	c3. Amend wording of Policy G4	Consider amending wording of Policy G4
L4. There are two issues in the Theme which cause us a little concern	c3. Concern over Policy G4, final bullet point	Consider changing Policy G4

<p>2) The final bullet point of Policy G4 (development proposals in the Green Belt), which would permit “improvements to damaged and derelict land” causes us concern. While this appears laudable, will it encourage landowners to let their land become “damaged or derelict” to improve their chances of winning planning approval?</p>		
<p>L9b Scope of the DCNP ...the county council is conscious that the plan strays into a number of strategic planning matters which are already adequately covered by the local policy framework and/ or National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ... • Cover control of development in the designated Green Belt....</p>	c2. Objection to Policy G4	Consider changes to Policy G4
<p>L9b REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING COUNCIL ASSETS ... • The Aykley Heads site ...Notwithstanding this, the main concern to the county council is the exclusion of any Green Belt land from the Aykley Heads employment site identified in Policy E1, particularly in light of the fact that there has been no discussion with the council as landowner about this....</p>	c2. Concern over exclusion of Green Belt in Akley Heads site	Discuss with Council. However, protecting the Green Belt was a significant issue for respondents to the NPF's Priority survey.
<p>L9b Policy G4: Enhancing the beneficial use of the Greenbelt The county council firmly considers that greenbelt policy is a strategic planning matter which is not within the scope of a neighbourhood plan. Notwithstanding this objection to the scope of the plan in this respect, it is acknowledged that Forum are seeking to address a planning matter relating to paragraph 81 of NPPF to enhance the Greenbelt. However, it is the council’s interpretation that the intention of paragraph 81 is to direct plan makers to identifying specific proposals which will result in the beneficial use of the Greenbelt. However the Forum has failed to do this by merely repeating the opportunities recognised as being appropriate by NPPF and converting these into policy. In doing so it is unclear as to how this policy would be applied in relation to exceptions proposals or proposals where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, as it reads as an additional requirement on development over and above strategic policy where that may proposal may already be acceptable in those strategic</p>	<p>c2. Objection to Policy G4 on strategic grounds</p> <p>c3.c5. Need for major changes to Policy G4 if included</p> <p>c5. Amend text in para 4.86</p>	<p>Objection noted Discuss with Council</p> <p>Consider scope and purpose of Policy G4.</p> <p>Change text in para 4.86</p>

<p>policy terms. There is also the serious risk that the policy could be misinterpreted given that there is no reference in the policy to the need for a proposal to demonstrate exceptional circumstances or be one of the exceptions set out in paragraph 89-90 of NPPF. The fact that reference to this is made in the justification is not considered to be sufficiently robust. At 4.86 It is not considered that the justification presented is appropriate given that it is a view, rather than a judgement based upon evidence. Whilst the county council firmly considers that this policy should be deleted in its entirety if it is to be retained the matters raised should be clearly addressed.</p>		
<p>L12b Justification for Policy G4 page 57 at Paragraph 4.86 The NPPF (section 9) attaches great importance to the Green Belt and to its protection from development protect greenbelt. Inappropriate development "should not be approved except in very special circumstances" (NPPF, para 87). The Forum and local people, as shown by responses to the Forum's survey (Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum, 2015) and by community bodies such as 'The Friends of Durham Green Belt', do not consider that there are any very special circumstances (NPPF, para 88) present in Durham City that would merit development on the Green Belt (except for permitted development allowed by the NPPF (para. 89, 90)). Therefore no policy in our Neighbourhood Plan includes development on the Green Belt. The Green Belt is particularly important to Our Neighbourhood because of one of its purposes "to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns" (NPPF para. 80). This paragraph appears contradictory. What weight is to be given to the comment regarding the forums survey responses and Friends of Durham Green Belt that there aren't any special circumstances in Durham City for development on the green belt, as the next sentence says that there are sites which do have special circumstances? In planning terms it is for the applicant of a development proposal to demonstrate 'very special circumstances' in accordance with the NPPF. The NPF should ensure that this policy doesn't contradict existing planning policy. Neighbourhood plans cannot seek to allocate areas of land for</p>	<p>c2. Suggestions for amending para 4.86</p>	<p>Amend para 4.86. Consider relationship between Policy G4 and site allocation E2.1.1</p>

<p>development within existing green belts. This position was reaffirmed in the response to recommendation 7 of the CLG Select Committee Inquiry into the operation of the NPPF (full report: goo.gl/oaVKvs).</p> <p>The plan contradicts this with the allocation of E2.1.1 which is in the Green Belt</p>		
<p>L26 I partially agree</p> <p>With regards to draft Policy G4, the supporting text on page 57 includes a broad statement that “The Friends of Durham Green Belt’, do not consider that there are any ‘very special circumstances’ (NPPF, para 88) present in Durham City that would merit development on the Green Belt (except for permitted development allowed by the NPPF (para. 89, 90)”. This goes beyond the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan given that it relates to the Durham City Local Plan boundary which is a wider area. Furthermore, it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan does not prejudice the emerging County Durham Plan and we therefore suggest that this sentence is removed.</p>	<p>c5. Suggestions about text in para. 4.86</p>	<p>Consider changes to para 4.86</p>