



**DARLINGTON
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
2016-2019**

**Preparation Programme for the
Darlington Local Plan
and other
Local Development Documents**

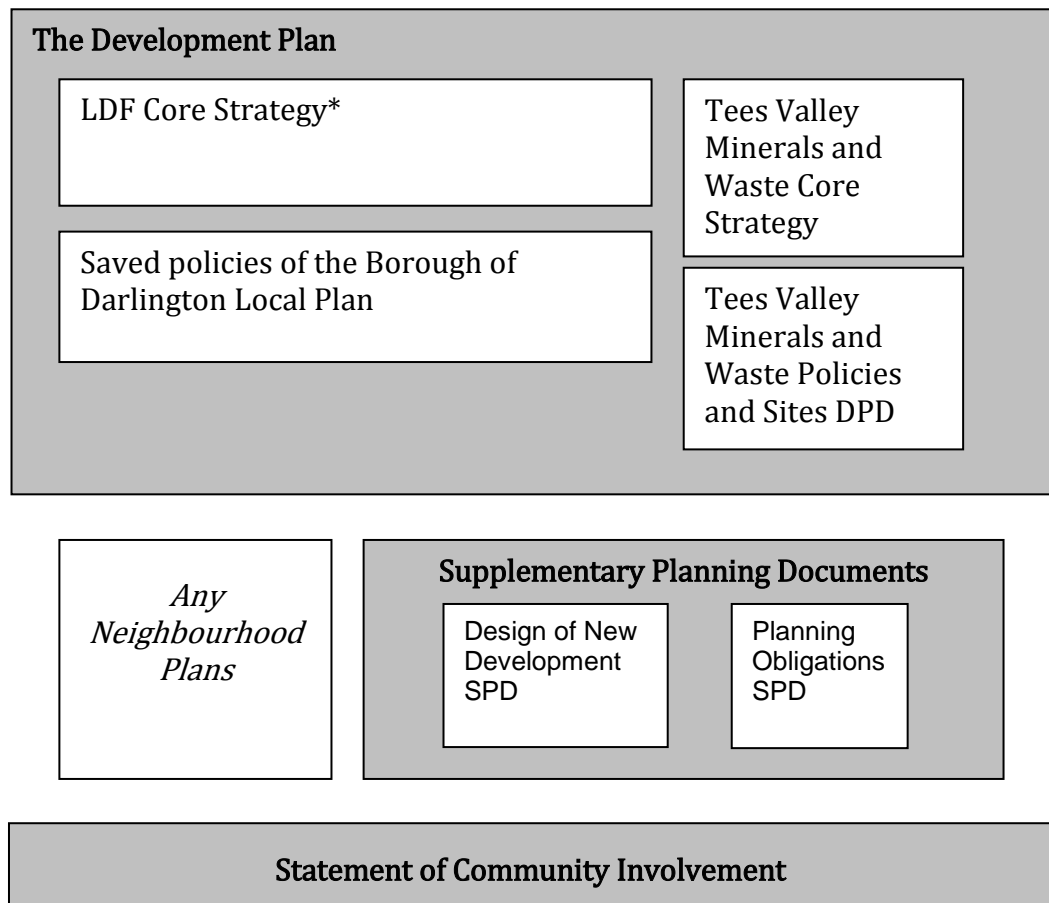
April 2016

**Planning Policy
Economic Initiatives Division**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The LDS sets out the timetable for the production of the Local Development Documents (LDDs) which make up the Council's Local Plan. The LDS must include certain types of LDDs, namely Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The LDS must be made available publically and kept up-to-date. This LDS replaces the 2014 – 2017 LDS and came into effect on 13 May 2016.
- 1.2 Figure 1.1 below shows the Council's current planning policy documents, which are part of, or support the Development Plan. It also shows the relationship of documents to one another. All statutory development plan documents and supplementary planning documents can be viewed on the Council's website, www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy.

Figure 1.1: Planning Policy Documents for Darlington Borough



*Note: Housing supply policies are considered out of date

- 1.3 In November 2015 Darlington Borough Council decided to halt work on the emerging Making and Growing Places DPD allocations document (an adopted Core Strategy was already in place) based mainly on concerns around the robustness of the housing supply and requirement figures. The decision was taken to produce a new comprehensive Local

Plan. For the period before the new plan is adopted, an Interim Planning Position Statement has been produced to provide guidance to developers on the local interpretation of National Planning Policy. A copy is available on the Council's website at www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

3. THE DARLINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2016-19

- 3.1 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the content, timing and resourcing of planning policy document preparation for the next three years, 2016-19. It plans for effective development plan coverage of the whole Borough, and is published to provide up to date information direct to the public about the Council's plan making activities. It will be updated as necessary to ensure it remains realistic and definitive.

The New Local Plan

- 3.2 On 15 November 2015 Cabinet agreed to proceed with a new Local Plan, to replace the existing Development Plan (the LDF Core Strategy (2011) and various saved Darlington Local Plan (2001) policies). The exception to this is the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Policies and Sites DPDs, to be reviewed at a later date. The Council aims to submit the Local Plan for inspection in 2 years (with adoption likely to take another 1 year). The new Local Plan will cover the period between 2016 -2036.
- 3.3 A successful Local Plan will help create the conditions to deliver the following outcomes for Darlington:
- Well planned, high quality, sustainable places
 - Inclusive and accessible places, to serve all needs and communities
 - An attractive place to live, visit and invest
 - Economic growth, new jobs and prosperity
 - A vibrant town centre with strong retail, leisure and commercial sectors
 - Celebrate and protect Darlington's heritage assets and key open spaces
 - Integrated strategic social and physical infrastructure, phased to meet the needs of new development
 - Increased resilience to climate change
 - Greater certainty for residents, investors and stakeholders
- 3.4 **Appendix 1** sets out the timeline and key tasks for preparing the Local Plan. Progress will be monitored against it and revisions made if necessary.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

- 3.5 The Statement of Community Involvement has been split into two parts, Part 1 dealing with Development Plan Documents including the Local Plan, and Part 2 covering the Development management Process.
- 3.6 The SCI (Part 1) will set out how people and organisations can get involved in shaping the Local Plan. Specifically it will explain how and when the Council will engage with people and communities. Thus, throughout the preparation of the Local Plan the Council will consult with individuals, local communities, interest groups, businesses and statutory bodies. The responses to these consultations will be reviewed by the Council and

considered in full, informing the Local Plan as necessary, before a final version is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.

- 3.7 A revised Statement of Community Involvement is needed to reflect, among other things, changes to the plan making process, to respond to the introduction of neighbourhood planning, and in recognition of the greater reliance on electronic communication and information. The SCI will replace the 2010 version.
- 3.8 In addition to the overarching principles set out in the SCI, before all key stages of a Local Development Document, officers will produce an Engagement Plan, setting out details of when and how we will consult/ engage throughout the process. This will ensure consideration is given to the most effective way of communicating the particular issue, and that the methods engaged are proportionate.
- 3.9 The nature of Engagement Plans will be determined depending on the nature of the issues, and those likely to be affected. For example, they could be area based if the particular issue concerns a specific site, or they could target a particular sector. Consultations plans will ensure that consultations always meet statutory requirements.
- 3.10 The SCI Part 2 will set out how people and organisations can get involved in the Development Management process. This will include guidance for developers on the Council's Pre-application support available (including the scale of charges), and the expected nature of pre-application consultation required for certain developments. For members of the public and other stakeholders, the SCI will also explain the opportunities for them to make representations on planning applications, including protocols for attending and speaking at Planning Applications Committee.

Other Local Planning Documents

- 3.11 A Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by the Council in January 2013. It helps the Council to get contributions from developers towards affordable housing and the costs of mitigating the impact of new development on local infrastructure. The SPD includes a commitment to review the operation of the policies and, in light of the Council's experience using the SPD, changing market circumstances and development costs, government guidance on the use of Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy, it is proposed that a revision of the SPD will be undertaken.
- 3.12 The Design of New Development SPD sets out general and detailed design guidelines for new development to provide a framework to secure high quality, safe, distinctive, sustainable design in new developments. It needs to be revised to reflect changes to Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes, and Development Management amenity issues.
- 3.13 **Table 1 (page 6)** gives an overview of the Local Development Scheme. More detail on the documents that will be prepared over the next three years is given in **Section 5** of this report.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.14 Introduced by the Localism Act 2011, the Council has a duty to support Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums that wish to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. When adopted Neighbourhood Plans form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Local

Plan. Officers have been working with 3 areas, formally designated as Neighbourhood Plan Areas:

- Sadberge Parish Council, (decision subsequently taken by Parish Council not to proceed)
- Middleton St George/Low Dinsdale Parish Councils, and
- Blackwell Neighbourhood Forum.

Other local communities may start work on Neighbourhood Plans during the Local Plan preparation period.

3.15 A limited contingency has been built into the Planning Policy team's work programme to respond to requests for advice and support on Neighbourhood Planning, and the situation will be continually monitored. The Council receives between £5,000 - £10,000 funding (depending whether it is a Parish or Neighbourhood Forum area) for each NP area that is designated.

TABLE 1 – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2014-2017

Document Title	Status	Role and Subject	Chain of Conformity	Commence	Publication	Submission	Adoption
Darlington Local Plan	DPD	Sets out development policies for day to day use in considering a range of spatial development proposals, allocates sites for new development, and identifies areas of constraint. Covers the whole Borough.	National Planning Policy Framework	January 2016	October 2017	March 2018	December 2018
Proposals Map and Insets	DPD	Illustrates on an Ordnance Survey map the policies and allocations of the Local Plan.	Consequential to the preparation of the Local Plan.	Updated as part of Local Plan			
Revised Statement of Community Involvement (Part 1)	DPD	Sets out how people can get involved in the preparation of local planning documents.	N/A	February 2016	April 2016		Summer 2016
Revised Statement of Community Involvement (Part 2)	DPD	Sets out how people can get involved in the Development Management process.	N/A	March 2016	June / July 2016		Sept/Oct 2016
Revised Planning Obligations	SPD	Detailed application of planning obligations	National guidance & Core Strategy	Autumn 2016	Spring 2017		Autumn 2017
Community Infrastructure Levy	SPD	Detailed technical guidance relating to the provision of CIL	National guidance	Autumn 2016	Spring 2017		Autumn 2017
Revised Design of New Development	SPD	Design guidelines for new development	National guidance & Core Strategy	January 2018	Summer 2108		December 2018

4. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

- 4.1 This statement explains the approach to preparing the Local Plan and how resources and risks will be managed.

Relationship with Local Strategies

- 4.2 'One Darlington Perfectly Placed', Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out the community's shared vision and outcomes for the future of Darlington for the period 2008-2026. The Local Plan reflects spatially aspects of the strategy and ensures that the land use requirements arising from it are addressed.
- 4.3 Council, and other local strategies, with land use implications directly inform the preparation of DPDs and SPDs. These can all be found on the Council's website www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy. Key examples include the Housing Strategy, the Economic Strategy, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Parking Strategy and the Sport and Physical Activities Strategy. At a sub-regional level, the Local Plan will be informed by the growth/investment ambitions of the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

Joint Working

- 4.4 The benefits of joint working on issues with strategic cross boundary implications have been recognised for some time by the local authorities within the Tees Valley. The Localism Act 2011 introduced the 'Duty to Co-operate' placing this work on a statutory footing. A Tees Valley Development Plans Officers' Group meets on a regular basis, to share information and best practice, facilitate joint working and explore further opportunities. Membership of the group also includes representatives of Tees Valley (LEP), and approximately every quarter meetings have been opened up to local authorities adjacent to the Tees Valley in County Durham and North Yorkshire.

Evidence

- 4.5 The NPPF states that Local Plans should be based on an up to date and robust evidence base. A large amount of evidence gathered to inform the aborted Making and Growing Places DPD will be used for the new Local Plan, although an assessment will be needed to understand which areas will need updating to cover the extended Plan Period to 2036.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.6 Sustainability appraisal (SA) is carried out for all the development plan documents prepared (and SPDs where screening indicates it is necessary), and is an integral component of all stages of plan preparation. SA identifies the significant environmental, social and economic impacts of the policies and proposals and identifies if/how policies and proposals can be amended to achieve net gains across all three dimensions of sustainability. The process is undertaken to accord with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC).

- 4.7 In the past, resource considerations have meant specialist officers from Durham County Council have been commissioned to carry out the work. The option to out-source this work will be considered for the new Local Plan.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 4.8 Equalities Impact Assessment and Disability Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken and its findings used to feedback into further policy development throughout planning policy document preparation. It is reported on at key stages in the process. It is undertaken in-house within the team, with the views of protected characteristics groups being sought at key stages.

Staff Resources

- 4.9 The Planning Policy team is within the Economic Initiatives Division of the Economic Growth Directorate. It leads the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy documents. The team currently includes a full-time Principal Planning Officer (Planning Policy), four full-time Planning Officers and 1.5 Technical Officers. The Place Strategy Manager and the Assistant Director (Economic Initiatives) assist with various aspects of preparation including providing the strategic steer, the Member interface and public consultation.
- 4.10 Success in achieving the milestones set out in this LDS will depend on the amount of non plan preparation work the team does, on the amount and timeliness of help from colleagues across the Council in specific policy areas, such as transport and housing, and on there being no further cuts to the staffing resources available for planning policy work.
- 4.11 A Local Plan Steering Group (LPSG) is also in place to ensure input into planning policy document preparation from across the Council. The group informs the recommendations that are placed before the Joint Management Team (JMT) or Chief Officers Board (COB), and/or Members.
- 4.12. Consultants are also used on specific pieces of work, particularly work carried out jointly by the Tees Valley authorities, and specialist technical studies and work. Officers from Tees Valley Unlimited provide some statistical information and manage specific joint commissions of the Tees Valley authorities, such as for the economy and infrastructure.

Financial Resources

- 4.13 A consolidated budget has been established across the Economic Initiatives Division which covers the costs associated with Local Plan preparation (consultant's fees for evidence gathering, consultations and printing).
- 4.14 Further evidence gathering and consultation work during the preparation of the Local Plan will give rise to a continuing need for resources for these activities. There will also

be a need to carry out a Public Examination into the Local Plan in 2018, and a budget of £80,000 has been reserved for that.

- 4.15 The programme proposed in the LDS assumes that the budgetary resources that have been allocated to Planning Policy work in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan are available in their entirety.

Monitoring

- 4.16 Up to date information about the Council's progress in plan preparation will be included in the Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), together with any reasons why plan making targets have not been met, and reporting on the effectiveness of and delivery against saved Local Plan and Core Strategy policies. As this is now primarily for the public and not Government, it is published in a more accessible Factsheet format, as soon as is convenient after the end of the reporting year (31st March). It includes the following information:

- Progress in preparing the Darlington Local Plan, compared with the milestones set out in the latest LDS, reasons for and proposed actions to address any slippage
- Any factors affecting the current year's LDS milestones and planned action.
- The need for new evidence or research.
- A review of policy effectiveness.
- A graph and tables showing future housing provision against housing requirements.

Risk Assessment

- 4.17 A risk assessment has been carried out for the LDS. The key areas of risk have been identified below as well as the actions that will be put in place to mitigate the risks:

Risk Identified	Mitigating Actions
Implications of changes to the national planning system and policy framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to date with best practice, Inspectors and Court decisions relating to plan preparation. • Keep up to date with changes to national policy and implications for the Local Plan process • Maintain up-to-date local evidence base.
Not meeting 2017 government deadline for Local Plan adoption, leading to intervention by SoS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to date with Government criteria for intervention and consider likelihood of intervention. • Maintain up-to-date LDS showing key milestones towards adoption. • Maintain progress against milestones.
Ability to maintain staffing levels as Council continues to implement budget cuts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review the plan preparation programme through this LDS and its updates to match any changes in staff resources, changes of planning policy workstreams and other policy workstreams that staff are required to contribute to. • Flexible use of Planning Officers from other Sections to support Local Plan • Recruit extra (temporary) staff, where necessary, to meet peaks in workload around key stages of plan development
Staff turnover, maternity leave or long term illness within core team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise recruitment activity as soon as notice given. • Manage workloads to reduce stress. • Spread knowledge within core team to ensure a back-up if specialist absent. • Use short and medium term work experience placements for mutual benefit.
Completion of evidence base takes longer than expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear specification in consultancy briefs, and tighter project management of consultancy commissions. • Ensure core team is kept abreast of latest good practice cited on discussion

Risk Identified	Mitigating Actions
	fora and other sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure team carries out appropriate CPD to keep up to date with best practice. • Allow contingency in LDS for project overrun.
Increased volume, complexity or scope of non Local Plan work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of extent of non Local Plan work handled by core team. • Assess options for further redeployment from within or outside of the Council.
Key stakeholders/ partners, such as infrastructure providers, unable to provide information or other input at key stages in the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure commitment to contributing to Local Plan at the highest level in partners organisations, highlighting role of Local Plan in delivering the sustainable community strategy. • Provide stakeholders/partners with good notice of what will be required of them, and when. • Investigate ways of pooling resources to achieve desired outcomes.
Volume and complexity of representations and comment exceeds expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with key stakeholders, developers, landowners and other local interests throughout the policy development • Build capacity outside of team to deal with processing representations received, e.g. colleagues within section and wider Division • Clarify through SCI how representations will be handled and do not respond on an individual basis.
DPDs prepared are not found sound, have to be withdrawn, or are subject to legal challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking against the tests of soundness at each key stage of the plan preparation process, making use of the PAS self assessment toolkit. • Carry out community engagement in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. • Be diligent in undertaking and recording actions against new 'duty to co-operate'.
Change of political priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member involvement throughout the plan preparation process.

5. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT (LDD) PROFILES

5.1 This section provides a standard profile for each of the LDD's we intend to prepare, as identified in **Table 1**.

Local Plan	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Borough-wide detailed generic development policies, policies related to specific designations and environmental safeguarding areas and land allocations for different types of new development, cross referenced to a Policies Map.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington
Status:	Development Plan Document
Review	Considered through the Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report.
TIMETABLE:	
Commencement of process	January 2016
Consultation on Strategic Issues and Options (Reg 18)	April 2016 to September 2016
Pre-submission publication (Reg 19)	October 2017
Submission to Secretary of State (Reg. 22)	March 2018
Pre-hearing meeting	April/May 2018
Hearing Sessions Commence	May/June 2018
Estimated Date Adoption	December 2018
PRODUCTION:	
Organisational Lead:	Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Place Strategy
Management Arrangements	Cabinet Place Scrutiny Committee and Members Panel Joint Management Team & Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team Local Plan Steering Group
Internal Resources:	Economic Initiatives Division, Communications Unit, Xentrall Design and Print Unit, Development Management. Input from other divisions of the Council as required.
External Resources:	Consultancy and development industry support for specific aspects of preparing and updating the evidence base, such as master planning and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The SA work may be contracted out to a specialist consultancy. External contractor preparing, publishing and maintaining on-line Policies Map.
Evidence Base	The Sustainable Community Strategy for Darlington, a range of technical studies (available on the Council's website) and previous consultation responses, sustainability appraisal and other assessment work carried out by the Council.
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	Consult Council Members. Consult local people, including Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, business groups, business operators and government agencies, in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI.

Revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	
DOCUMENT DETAILS	
Role & Content:	Sets out how people, groups and organisations can be involved in the plan-making process (Part 1) and have their say in the preparation and consideration of planning applications (Part 2)
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington
Status:	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	Not applicable
Review	A revision to the Statement of Community Involvement is needed to reflect changes to the local plan making process, respond to the introduction of neighbourhood planning and increased reliance on electronic access to information, and to explain the Development Management pre-application process.
TIMETABLE:	
Commencement of Part 1	February 2016
Consult on revised draft SCI (Part 1)	April/May 2016
Adopt revised SCI (Part 1)	Summer 2016
Commencement of Part 2	March 2016
Consult on revised draft SCI (Part 2)	June/July 2016
Adopt revised SCI (Part 2)	September/October 2016
PRODUCTION	
Organisational Lead	Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Place Strategy (Part 1) Development Management (Part 2)
Management Arrangements	Cabinet; Place Scrutiny Committee Chief Officers Executive Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team Local Plan Steering Group
Other Internal Resources	Communications Unit Xentrall Design and Print Unit.
External Resources	None.
Evidence Base	
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	Council Members, local people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies. More widespread engagement with targeted community groups and stakeholders if changes that will significantly affect specific groups are proposed. .

Revised Planning Obligations SPD	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Borough wide detailed technical guidance relating to the provision of planning obligations for a range of physical, social and green infrastructure from new development. It includes standard charges and formulae. The SPD develops and reflects the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Core Strategy Policy CS4.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington
Status:	Supplementary Planning Document – adopted January 2013
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework and Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy
Review	The current SPD includes a commitment to review the operation of the policies and, in light of the Council’s experience using the SPD, changing market circumstances and development costs, and government guidance on the use of Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy, it is proposed that a revision of the SPD will be undertaken.
TIMETABLE:	
Commence preparation of Draft Revised SPD	Autumn 2016
Consultation on Draft Revised SPD	Spring 2017
Estimated Date Adoption	Autumn 2017
PRODUCTION:	
Organisational Lead:	Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Place Strategy
Management Arrangements	Cabinet Place Scrutiny Committee Joint Management Team / Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team Local Plan Steering Group
Internal Resources:	Asset Management Working Group Input from other divisions of the Council as required Communications Unit Xentrall Design and Print Xentrall Web Team
External Resources:	Viability information provided by the District Valuer.
Evidence Base	Economic Viability of Housing Land and Non Housing land studies and addendum, various needs analyses; national guidelines; Sustainable Community Strategy, Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	Council Members, local people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies, in accordance with the Council’s adopted SCI.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Borough wide detailed technical guidance relating to the provision of CIL for a range of physical, social and green infrastructure from new development. It includes standard tariffs. The CIL compliments the Planning Obligations SPD.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington
Status:	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework
Review	The Council considered to need to introduce CIL in September 2014 and at that time decided not to pursue the option. Changes in national guidance on the use of CIL and limitations of S106 Agreements, have meant the Option for introducing CIL will be assessed again.
TIMETABLE:	
Commence preparation of Draft Revised SPD	Autumn 2016
Consultation on Draft Revised SPD	Spring 2017
Estimated Date Adoption	Autumn 2017
PRODUCTION:	
Organisational Lead:	Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Place Strategy
Management Arrangements	Cabinet Place Scrutiny Committee Joint Management Team / Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team Local Plan Steering Group
Internal Resources:	Asset Management Working Group Input from other divisions of the Council as required
External Resources:	Viability information provided by District Valuer..
Evidence Base	Economic Viability of Housing Land and Non Housing land studies and addendum, various needs analyses; national guidelines; Sustainable Community Strategy, Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	Council Members, local people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies, in accordance with the Council's adopted SCI.

Revised Design of New Development SPD	
DOCUMENT DETAILS:	
Role & Content:	Sets out general and detailed design guidelines for new development to provide a framework to secure high quality, safe, distinctive, sustainable design in new developments.
Geographical Coverage:	Borough of Darlington
Status:	Supplementary Planning Document – adopted July 2009
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework and elements of Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy
Review	It needs to be revised to reflect changes to Building Regulations, Code for Sustainable Homes, and Development Management amenity issues.
TIMETABLE:	
Commence preparation of Draft Revised SPD	January 2018
Consultation on Draft Revised SPD	Summer 2018
Estimated Date Adoption	December 2018
PRODUCTION:	
Organisational Lead:	Director of Economic Growth
Lead Section	Place Strategy
Management Arrangements	Cabinet Place Scrutiny Committee Joint Management Team / Chief Officers Board Economic Growth Senior Leadership Team Local Plan Steering Group
Internal Resources:	Development Management Communications Unit Xentrall Design and Print Unit.
External Resources:	None
Evidence Base	
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	Council Members, local people, Darlington Partnership, Parish Councils, development industry representatives, government agencies, in accordance with the Council’s adopted SCI.

