

## 8. EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT

### 8.1 DELIVERING A MORE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK

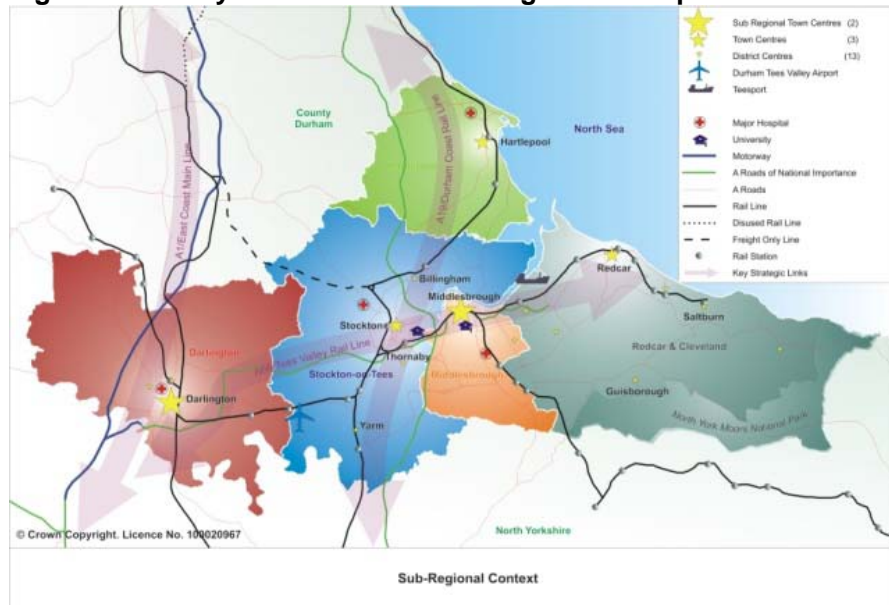
#### Context

- 8.1.1 It is vital that the Borough is accessible by a choice of transport modes and that improvements to the transport infrastructure encourage sustainable travel to and from all the growth areas within it, to neighbouring regional centres and to strategic transport facilities such as Durham Tees Valley Airport, Teesport and the East Coast Mainline. Owing to its location and existing infrastructure, Darlington Borough also has a key role to play in delivering the wider vision for sustainable transport across the Tees Valley. The transport and travel needs of those with impaired mobility (such as disabled and elderly people, parents with small children and wheelchair users) is also integral to this agenda.

#### *Tees Valley Transport Context*

- 8.1.2 Darlington is the gateway to the Tees Valley City Region, and contains many key elements of the sub-regional transport network. Darlington is the point of arrival for those arriving by road via the A1 and A66, by air via Durham Tees Valley Airport and by rail from Bank Top Station on the East Coast main line. Figure 8.1.1 shows the key features of the sub-regional transport network.

**Figure 8.1.1: Key features of the sub-regional transport network**



- 8.1.3 The Council works closely with four other local authorities and both public and private sector partners across the Tees Valley as a member of the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), to promote the Tees Valley City Region for economic growth and regeneration. The LEP's Statement of Ambition sets out a clear vision for the Tees Valley that responds to its economic geography and builds on the strengths of each borough. It makes it clear that good transport within and between the centres of activity is vital. The Tees Valley Economic Regeneration Statement of Ambition and the Economic and Regeneration Investment Plan<sup>8.1</sup> reflect the links between transport, economic growth and regeneration, and set out the priorities for delivering new transport infrastructure across the Tees Valley.

<sup>8.1</sup> published by Tees Valley Unlimited, the Local Enterprise Partnership

<sup>8.2</sup>Including local authority representatives, the Highways Agency, Network Rail, Environment Agency, PD Ports, Peel Holdings, North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC), Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Arriva, Stagecoach, Northern Rail.

8.1.4 Three transport challenges, based on the national transport challenges in place prior to May 2010, have been prioritised by leaders in the Tees Valley, through the TVU Transport Advisory Panel<sup>8.2</sup>, and confirmed by Transport for Tees Valley. The challenges are to:

- improve the journey experience of transport users of urban, regional and local networks, including connectivity with national & international networks. This could include improved public transport pick up and drop off facilities, public realm improvements between public transport methods, etc;
- deliver quantified reductions in greenhouse gas emissions within cities and regional networks, taking account of cross-network policy measures; and
- improve the connectivity and access to labour markets of key business centres.

### ***Darlington Transport Context***

<sup>8.3</sup>Including One Darlington Perfectly Placed Community Strategy, 2010.

8.1.5 Within the Borough, short and long term interventions to improve the local transport network to meet the Council's and wider community objectives<sup>8.3</sup> for the economy, carbon reduction, health and social inclusion are set out in the Council's Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3)<sup>8.4</sup>. LTP3 seeks to maintain and improve all aspects of the local transport system within tight financial constraints, focusing on maintaining the transport network for all types of travel and managing it to improve reliability and performance. The Key priorities of the LTP3 are reflected in the Darlington Investment Plan. and priorities for delivering these improvements were prioritised as follows:

1. Improvements to Bank Top Station
2. A66 Capacity Improvements
3. A1(M) Junction 58 Improvements
4. Inner Ring Road Realignment

<sup>8.4</sup>Third Local Transport Plan – Transport Strategy 2011 – 2026, DBC, March 2011

8.1.6 The Local Transport Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy both acknowledge that the existing capacity of the road network is a major issue for the Borough in delivering growth over the plan period. Some locations already experience traffic congestion during peak periods and this is likely to increase if no interventions are made. By focussing new development on parts of the Borough which have good access to existing or planned public transport provision, the spatial strategy of the Local Plan (see Policies CS1, CS7, CS5 and CS10 of the Core Strategy) is designed to keep the impact of new development on the transport network to a minimum, but some supporting highway improvements will still be needed to enable regeneration plans to be delivered.

### ***Rail***

<sup>8.5</sup> Office of Rail Regulation / Northern Rail LENNON 2009/10 data

8.1.7 Darlington is the main interchange hub in the Tees Valley for national and inter-regional rail connections, making it a 'gateway' for rail journeys into and out of the Tees Valley. There are over 360,000 annual return trips from Darlington to London stations<sup>8.5</sup>, and strategic rail connections to Scotland, the Midlands and South West, and to Leeds and the North West.

<sup>8.6</sup>Accession output, including walk time between town centres and stations and any wait times

8.1.8 However, in comparison to its excellent north-south connectivity, Darlington is relatively inaccessible from other key centres within the Tees Valley and from nearby employment areas of South Durham via the Bishop Line. Journey times to Darlington from Middlesbrough and Stockton (as adjacent key centres) are relatively poor, taking between 40-60 minutes<sup>8.6</sup>, compared to a journey time of 19-23 minutes for car travel<sup>8.7</sup>, and there are currently no direct train services from Stockton to Darlington. This relatively poor east-west connectivity by rail within the Tees Valley impacts on the external connectivity of the Tees Valley as a whole, reducing the attractiveness of the excellent north-south links from Darlington to potential users from the rest of the Tees Valley. However, capacity issues at

<sup>8.7</sup>AA Online route planner, accessed October 2010, does not include walk time from car park to destination

Darlington are currently a constraint to enhancing these local rail links.

8.1.9 Given the predicted increase in car ownership in the Tees Valley and the advantage of car journey times, increased trips are forecast on the road network. Therefore, improvements to local as well as long distance rail services are sought by 2026.

8.1.10 Ensuring that rail freight can move easily to and from Teesport will be an important issue during the Local Plan period, for example, in the operation of the proposed Hitachi train manufacturing plant at Newton Aycliffe. The Preferred Options for the County Durham Plan<sup>8.8</sup> identifies its site at Aycliffe Business Park, where the Hitachi Rail Plant is due to be located, as being one of the key employment opportunities in the North East and it is intended that components and other supplies required by the plant will be transported by rail as often as possible. There are also plans for a rail freight facility at Newton Park, Newton Aycliffe. For either of these sites to be well served by rail from Teesport, improvements and upgrades to Bank Top Station are required. Teesport is by some margin the most important port in the North East and the fifth largest in the UK (by all freight traffic handled at 35.2m tones) and 4th largest by oil and gas traffic in the UK<sup>8.9</sup>.

<sup>8.8</sup>The County Durham Plan – Local Plan Preferred Options, September 2012

<sup>8.9</sup>Department for Transport, UK Port Freight Statistics: 2011 Final Figures

### **Roads**

8.1.11 The main north-south road links to the Tees Valley are provided by the A1(M), a key national motorway network link for the west of the City Region, while the east of the City Region is served by the A19(T). The main east-west links are provided by the A66(T) and A174(T). The Council is a partner in the emerging Tees Valley Area Action Plan which will set out the strategic priorities for the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership. In Darlington, the priorities are to improve key junctions serving the area from the A66(T) Darlington Bypass and the A1(M) to avoid levels of predicted traffic congestion that will prevent regeneration of employment areas.

### **Issues**

8.1.12 The transport network in the Borough needs to sustainably facilitate the economic development of the Borough, building on its locational strengths of strategic road, rail, sea and air links that pass through the area or nearby.

8.1.13 In doing this, the transport interventions need to:

1. enable more jobs and homes without creating unsustainable levels of traffic on the highway network;
2. effectively manage the demand for roadspace from all types of transport;
3. provide everyone with the ability to travel to training and jobs, especially those without access to a car; and
4. improve Darlington's strategic links so that it can continue to play its role as a major gateway to the Tees Valley sub-region.

8.1.14 Transport schemes therefore are focused on

1. supporting and enabling the sustainable development of employment and residential land;
2. minimising vehicle trips and trip lengths, especially single occupancy car journeys;
3. promoting real travel choices for people to choose how they travel;
4. improving the safety and access for disabled people;
5. protecting radial and other key traffic routes within the area; and
6. promoting more active and healthier lifestyles.

### **Options Considered**

8.1.15 This section is intended to replace Section 9 of the adopted Core Strategy, including Policy CS19: Improving Transport Infrastructure and Creating a

Sustainable Transport Network. This is to reflect the more up to date transport approach and investment priorities and acknowledges the more limited funding available now for transport infrastructure schemes.

8.1.16 The option to prepare new policies alongside the Core Strategy policy was considered, but rejected, because it would not provide the necessary clarity about the Council's transport and accessibility approach and priorities to users of the Local Plan.

<sup>8.10</sup> as required by NPPF, paragraph 41 .

8.1.17 In addition to recasting the strategic policy, the proposed policies also provide more detail, e.g. identifying and protecting any routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice<sup>8.10</sup>. An access and accessibility policy (MGP28) is also proposed, to support wider Council and Community Strategy policies and objectives.

**Preparing the Preferred Options for Policies MGP27 – Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network, Policy MGP28 – Improving Access and Accessibility & Policy MGP29 – Parking Provision**

8.1.18 The sustainability appraisal of options indicates that the preferred options for access and accessibility and for public parking are likely to have positive social, economic and environmental impacts, and that for creating and improving disabled access to buildings is likely to have little environmental impact and positive social and economic impacts. An adverse environmental impact arising from the inclusion of a multi storey car park in the public parking preferred option could be mitigated by good design that respects the local character of the built environment. No significant direct social, economic or environmental impacts are likely from the preferred option for private parking standards.

8.1.19 The policies in this section seek to improve the Borough's transport infrastructure to meet the future access and travel choice expectations of local and regional communities and businesses, particularly for areas where strategic growth and development is planned.

***Creating a more Sustainable Road Network (including improvement to bus services & new road based transport technologies)***

8.1.20 The quality of the road network will remain a vital part of any transport strategy as it is shared by several transport modes, including some more sustainable modes, such as public transport and cycling. It is therefore in the wider interest of sustainable travel to have a road network that is as free flowing as possible.

8.1.21 Although congestion in and around Darlington is less than in many other parts of Britain, new development planned across the region will add significantly to trips on the strategic and local highway networks. Without action, both will become more congested and unsafe as traffic levels increase, deterring or restraining development unless action is taken to improve capacity.

***Strategic road network***

8.1.22 The strategic roads through the Borough (A1(M) and A66(T)) are forecast to come under increasing strain during the plan period, as a result of background traffic growth and traffic generated by specific proposed new developments<sup>8.11</sup>. Improvement works at the following locations on the strategic highway network are likely to be prioritised within the plan period:

- A1(M) Junction 58 (Faverdale)
- A66(T) Morton Palms – Junction with Yarm Road
- A66(T) Great Burdon
- A66(T) Blands Corner

<sup>8.11</sup> Tees Valley Area Action Plan, Tees Valley Unlimited and the Highway Agency, November 2009

8.12 Core Strategy  
Policy CS4 and  
Planning  
Obligations SPD

8.1.23 Initial work suggests that improvements can be largely accommodated within the existing highway network or on land in the ownership of the relevant highway authority, so it is not proposed to safeguard any land for them. The Council has been working with the Highways Agency and other Tees Valley Local Authorities to produce an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Tees Valley region. Schemes identified through the AAP will be submitted to funding bodies such as the forthcoming Local Transport Board for financial support and the Highways Agency. In addition major developments within the vicinity of these junctions may be required to contribute towards funding in the form of developer contributions<sup>8.12</sup>.

8.1.24 A longer term improvement to the strategic road network has been identified for the provision of north facing entry and exit slip roads at the A1(M) Junction 57 with the A66(M). This junction is within North Yorkshire County and therefore out of the scope for this plan, but would provide improved road access to and from Durham Tees Valley Airport, Teesport and the wider Tees Valley area.

#### ***Local highway network extensions***

8.1.25 As part of the overall mixed use development of Central Park (see draft Policy MGP4), a new spine road is proposed, linking Haughton Road and Yarm Road. This will enable greater public transport choices for accessing and serving the site. The junction with Haughton Road is already in place, but a newly created junction onto Yarm Road is required to open up the South of Central Park for development. It is therefore critical to the delivery of this key site to safeguard the land required for this junction.

8.13 Town Centre  
Fringe Masterplan  
DBC/HCA/EA, May  
2013.

8.1.26 Significant local highway works are required In the Town Centre Fringe to deliver the vision of the Masterplan<sup>8.13</sup> and the provisions of draft Policy MGP4. Principally, it is proposed to re-align the ring road from Northgate so that it links to Greenbank Road, using land to the west of the existing ring road, and also to realign the section of the ring road in the opposite direction between Northgate and Victoria Road. Detailed design of the re-alignment has not yet been undertaken, but the options are limited by recognised constraints. It is therefore proposed to safeguard the land that is likely to be needed to deliver these realignment works.

8.1.27 There is also a longer term aspiration of the masterplan to reinstate some of the historic street patterns around the Town Centre Fringe and create more local linkages between the Town Centre Fringe and surrounding areas. These could include a link road from Valley Street North to Cleveland Street and a similar link from Chestnut Street to Eastmount Road. Development of such links will be encouraged and the proposed routes of the links safeguarded.

8.1.28 As part of the development of the North West Urban Fringe (see draft Policy MGP5), a link road connecting Edward Pease Way with Newton Lane will be required. The detailed alignment of this will be identified through the masterplanning process for the area as a whole.

8.1.29 The Council also remains committed to mitigating congestion at 'pinch point' junctions and funding for such is being pursued as a priority. As these works can generally be achieved within the existing highway, no land safeguarding for these schemes is required.

#### ***Local highway network improvements***

8.1.30 The Third Local Transport Plan highlighted that bus patronage is falling and steps must be taken to reverse this trend. Evidence was also provided of poor public

<sup>8.14</sup> Within the urban area of Darlington, these Core Routes are identified as Key and Secondary Public Transport Corridors (as identified on the Policies Map )

8.1.31 A Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (TVBNI) Scheme is focussing on upgrading 'Core Routes'<sup>8.14</sup> – main bus routes across the Tees Valley, usually linking urban areas or connecting with emerging rail proposals. Improvements will include bus priority measures to improve the punctuality and reliability of buses, enhanced passenger facilities including routes to and from bus stops, and changes to vehicles and ticketing. The recently completed North Road junction improvement has already achieved significant improvements, reducing journey times for a number of 'Core Route' services passing through. There are a few remaining reconfigurations of existing junctions and road layouts to be carried out, e.g. Parkgate and Inner Ring Road at Stonebridge, by 2015.

8.1.32 It is important to take steps to protect the legacy of previous and current sustainable transport programmes such as Local Motion, Cycling Demonstration Town and TVBNI during the plan period in order to achieve and sustain improved bus patronage. There is also an ongoing review of how Darlington Town Centre could improve its function as a public transport hub this could include improvements to waiting facilities and alterations to how services enter and exit the town centre.

#### ***Walking and cycling***

8.1.33 Providing convenient access to an extensive, efficient and attractive footpath and cycle path network makes a major contribution to achieving sustainability and transport objectives, including improving health and well being amongst the local population that uses it, particularly where they are used for travel that may otherwise have been by private car, e.g. for journeys to work, shops, schools and other community facilities.

8.1.34 A key priority for improving the walking and cycling network is identified in the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan and draft Policy MGP3. The inner ring road, in its current form, effectively severs the town centre from other key facilities and transport infrastructure such as the Civic Theatre and Bank Top Station in the Town Centre Fringe. Proposals to realign and improve the inner ring road include safer, more convenient and quicker access across it, on foot or by bike.

8.1.35 Elsewhere, for cycling, National Cycle Route 14 is being developed between Darlington and Stockton and beyond to North Yorkshire, and Regional Route 52 runs inside the southern edge of the Borough. The Council has recently improved the cycle network between Darlington and Newton Aycliffe improving and creating around 2.6km of cycle path along the A617, Durham Road within the Borough and more works funded beyond the Borough boundary, to encourage more sustainable journeys to work between the two settlements. All these routes and future improvements will be safeguarded, promoted and developed as necessary.

8.1.36 For walking, the existing network of public rights of way is safeguarded by draft Policy MGP23, and new provision will be made within the Strategic and Local Green Corridors identified in the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy. These corridors have a key role to play in improving connectivity, particularly to the town centre, for pedestrians and cyclists.

#### ***Creating a more sustainable rail network***

8.1.37 The Council is working with other local authorities along the route of the East Coast Main Line (ECML) and with other Tees Valley local authorities to make the case to Government and the rail industry for further investment in the East Coast

Main Line. Such investment is seen as essential to improve journey times, service reliability, service frequency and the line capacity that is needed to support the movement of people and freight envisaged for Darlington and the Tees Valley, as set out in Darlington's Economic Strategy and the Tees Valley Statement of Ambition. The local authorities are keen to have a strong partnership with the rail industry, to create a vision for and the strategic development of the ECML and connecting services and routes, both for passengers and freight. Improvements that may be brought forward within the Plan period are:

- a) a revised platform layout and better passenger facilities at Darlington Station, either for local train services only or for ECML/High Speed 2 and local train services;
- b) a new station serving Durham Tees Valley Airport located near the access road to the Airport. This station would be served by improved local train services that are being introduced as part of the Tees Valley Metro project; and
- c) modifications to rail infrastructure to permit larger shipping containers to be moved on freight trains, thus increasing the competitiveness of local businesses including Teesport.

### ***Durham Tees Valley Airport***

- 8.1.38 Durham Tees Valley Airport is essential to the economic performance of the Tees Valley, and the Council will continue to work with the airport and regional partners to promote more use of the airport. Other than potential improvements to rail (see paragraph 8.1.37 above), other matters relating to airport development are covered in draft Policy MGP7.

### **Improving Access and Accessibility**

- 8.1.39 Development that offers better access for all forms of travel will help the borough to become more sustainable, healthy, green and prosperous. Sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling, public transport and alternative fuel vehicles will be promoted through travel planning as well as good design. The 2009 Carbon Reduction Strategy for Transport<sup>8.15</sup> identifies some key technological improvements including the use of electric and low emission vehicles; the development of a recharging network for such electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles; the development of sustainable biofuels and alternative fuel sources; and improved broadband coverage to help reduce the need for travel.
- 8.1.40 Development proposals that are likely to generate significant additional journeys should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan whilst smaller developments will require Transport Statements.
- 8.1.41 Additional transport infrastructure and other measures will be required for areas of new development, so that people living and working there can make sustainable and efficient travel choices. The kind of transport links and demand management measures needed to ensure that growth takes place as sustainably as possible were considered when the strategic locations in this Core Strategy were selected (Policy CS1), and are expanded on further in draft Policies MGP3 to MGP6 of this document. Proposals that link into the multifunctional sustainable transport routes identified in the emerging Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy will be encouraged particularly at the strategic development locations. Parking should be provided at levels appropriate to the use and location and should promote sustainable transport choices (Policy CS2).
- 8.1.42 Physical infrastructure interventions, such as access roads, will be combined with travel information and marketing measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport wherever possible, particularly on or near Key and Secondary Public Transport Corridors as identified on the Policies Map. Travel

<sup>8.15</sup> Carbon Reduction Strategy for Transport, Low Carbon Transport: A Greener Future, DfT, July 2009

plans and developers planning obligations (Policy CS4 & Planning Obligations SPD) will be the main tools used to embed sustainable travel choices and behaviours into new developments from the outset.

8.16 Including Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways

8.1.43 Whilst most roads have a footpath along side and the Rights Of Way network<sup>8.16</sup> provides a comprehensive network of footpaths and bridleways in both the urban and rural areas, there are still gaps in the walking network for some, meaning it is difficult to connect to other modes of transport such as rail or bus. During the plan period, the Council will seek to improve these connections particularly where they are poor near to proposed development.

8.1.44 Darlington has over 40km of dedicated off road cycle routes based around seven radial routes which start in the town centre and end in various locations on the edge of the urban area. The routes are signed using specially approved cycle signs which show times rather than distances and are colour coded depending on the route. There is also a circular route which connects the main radial routes to each other and provides a longer leisure route for cyclists. Work in recent years has focussed on connecting rural communities to the urban area of Darlington and also connecting to County Durham in the north where a significant number of commuter journeys begin or end.

8.17 Revised Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document, DBC, July 2011

8.1.45 Access to sustainable transport should also be integrated into the design of new developments from the outset, and some guidance is provided within the Design of New Development SPD<sup>8.17</sup>. The Borough already has an extensive network of cycle routes, but more needs to be done to make cycling a more attractive option compared to the private car. Larger employers, particularly within the urban area, will therefore be encouraged to provide facilities such as secure cycle parking, changing and showering facilities, where practicable.

8.18 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed A Vision for Darlington: 2008 – 2021 p.20

8.1.46 The creation of safe and convenient access for all to all buildings and spaces is also a priority to help ensure that everyone can help create and benefit from a more prosperous Darlington<sup>8.18</sup>. The Core Strategy (Policy CS2) seeks to ensure links to existing networks are convenient for all, including those with disabilities, and the proposed Policy MGP28 below seeks to take this a step further, promoting suitable access to individual buildings and places, and encouraging developers to design in access arrangements and facilities that are in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

8.19 NPPF Paragraphs 39 and 40

### Parking

8.1.47 National policy<sup>8.19</sup> requires local authorities to consider setting local parking standards for new development and to ensure there is an improved quality of parking in town centres that is convenient, safe and secure.

8.20 Tees Valley Design Guide & Specification: Residential and Industrial Estates Development, Tees Valley Authorities

8.1.48 There are already local parking standards for new development and changes of use in place, set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide<sup>8.20</sup>, and further advice on integrating parking within new development is included in the Council's Design of New Development SPD<sup>8.17</sup> this should include appropriate provision for disabled parking and secure motorcycle parking.

8.21 Darlington Parking Strategy 2014-2026 Due for consultation Summer 2013

8.1.49 In relation to town centre parking, the emerging Parking Strategy<sup>8.21</sup> indicates that by 2020, it is expected that demand for parking will exceed supply based on current provision<sup>8.22</sup>. At the same time, there is likely to be development pressure, particularly within the Inner Ring Road, on some of the sites currently used for parking.

8.1.50 The emerging Parking Strategy proposes a zonal approach to provide enough convenient parking options to support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.



<sup>8.22</sup> total weekday peak demand by 2020, will increase from the current level of about 3,250 to 4,148 spaces, exceeding current capacity (3,776 capacity) total Saturday peak demand by 2020, with all developments in place, will increase from the current level of about 3,405 to 4,358 spaces, exceeding current capacity (3,797 capacity)

Darlington Local Plan: Making and Growing Places Preferred Options, June 2013

There will be a small number of time limited short stay parking spaces in central locations with wider short stay provision within the Inner Ring Road (area identified as 'Town Centre' on the Policies Map). Outside of the ring road will be generally be protected for long stay parking.

8.1.51 Because of the issues identified in paragraph 8.1.49 above, further car parking provision will be required within the plan period. A need for a multi-storey car park around the Beaumont Street/Feethams area within the ring road is identified<sup>8.21</sup>. Work is currently ongoing to examine the viability of appropriate sites and once a suitable site(s) are identified, land will be safeguarded for car parking use.

8.1.52 The Council will also continue to annually review parking charges and ensure they are set so as to not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centre. Steps will also be taken to make parking more convenient, with new pay and display machines and a greater range of payment options including pay on foot.

<sup>8.23</sup> Traffic Regulation Order

8.1.53 The Council will continue to support and facilitate sustainable development of businesses in the town centre by offering contract parking for operational needs to businesses with more than 5 employees<sup>8.23</sup> who have an employee travel plan in place. This initiative recognises that businesses located in the town centre can be more sustainable in terms of the transport movements that they generate, yet need convenient parking for operational purposes to keep commercially competitive.

<sup>8.24</sup> NPPF Paragraph 35

8.1.54 National Policy<sup>8.24</sup> also requires plans to exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes including incorporating facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. To encourage the use of electric vehicles, it is therefore proposed that any development involving the creation of car parking areas of 50 or more spaces provide at least one double electric vehicle charging point and for each additional 50 spaces up to a maximum of three double charging points.

<sup>8.25</sup> NPPF Paragraphs 29-41

8.1.55 The draft policies proposed are consistent with national planning policy<sup>8.25</sup> and support the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy<sup>8.26</sup>. Land required for future transport proposals will, where possible, be protected or safeguarded as an integral part of other land use proposals to ensure they are deliverable.

<sup>8.26</sup> Core Strategy objectives 2 and 8

8.1.56 Sustainability appraisal... (to follow).

***Draft Policy MGP27: Delivering a More Sustainable Transport Network***

*In order to deliver a transport system which is balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, the Council and its partners will work together, where appropriate using developer contributions, to make the best use of and improve existing transport infrastructure within and connecting to the Borough, having considered first solutions to transport problems that are based on better promotion, management and the provision of sustainable forms of travel.*

*To achieve this, the following priorities and actions have been identified:*

***For the road-based transport network this will be by:***

- 1. mitigating against congestion at pinch points and continuing to actively manage roads that are under its control as local highway authority;*
- 2. working with the Highways Agency to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network; and*
- 3. providing new local access roads to open up the locations for development identified in the Core Strategy and this document.*

*Specific priorities for the road network will be:*

4. *safeguarding the route of the proposed re-aligned Inner Ring Road and associated junction improvement between Parkgate and St. Cuthbert's Way;*
5. *safeguarding the route of a proposed link road from Eastmount Road to Chesnut Street;*
6. *safeguard the land required for the junction for the second phase of the Central Park spine road to join Yarm Road;*
7. *supporting the ongoing provision of the Tees Valley Bus Improvement Scheme and protecting the 'key and secondary public transport corridors', as identified on the Policies Map, and other related infrastructure from inappropriate development. Proposals for new built development along these routes must demonstrate that connections to these routes are sufficient or shall provide improved connections where necessary.*
8. *protecting the land required for an improved junctions at Yarm Road/A66(T), Little Burdon A66(T) and Blands Corner A66(T);*

**For the rail-based transport network this will be by:**

9. *improving inter and sub-regional links to neighbouring centres by ensuring that the Borough is served by high quality public transport links*
10. *improving connectivity between other forms of sustainable travel and the rail network mainly by providing improved interchange facilities;*
11. *in the long term (to 2026), investigating the extension of rail facilities through to Central Park and a new halt at Morton Palms.*

*Specific priorities for the rail network:*

12. *supporting the implementation of the Tees Valley Metro and safeguarding its route and any ancillary land required, including the creation of a relocated rail halt serving Durham Tees Valley Airport.*
13. *supporting the improvement of Darlington Bank Top Station. Any ancillary land required to accommodate trains using the East Coast Main Line, the forthcoming High Speed 2 line, local routes and improved interchange facilities will be safeguarded.*

**For the cycling, walking and other sustainable transport this will be by:**

14. *protecting existing footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways from development which would impair their functioning for recreation or as alternatives to the private car for accessing employment opportunities, shops and other community facilities.*
15. *supporting the development of the 'Strategic' and 'Local Green Corridors' identified in the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy and safeguarding their routes from development which would impair their functioning for recreation or as routes for pedestrians and cyclists to access employment opportunities, schools, shops and other community facilities.*

**Draft Policy MGP28: Improving Access and Accessibility**

*The Council will seek to promote public transport and other non-car based modes of travel especially in the Urban Area and Larger Villages. Improvements to access and accessibility will be sought by locating development where good access to public transport is available or can be provided, backed by measures to reduce the need for travel and effective provision for cyclists, pedestrians and people with impaired mobility.*

*Development will be appropriately located to minimise the need to travel by car and the number and length of car trips made to access local amenities. Transport improvements will be focussed on the strategic development locations, as identified in Core Strategy CS1.*

*In order to achieve this:*

- a) *major new developments<sup>8.28</sup> or concentrations of smaller developments which combined have a major impact will be required to include new footpaths and cycle routes, with links into existing networks and any proposed extensions to them.*
- b) *proposals for new buildings or the change of use or alteration of existing buildings to which the general public and employees have access will be required, where practical and reasonable, to provide suitable access and facilities, particularly for people with disabilities.*
- c) *new developments within the urban area, should include facilities to encourage cycle travel, such as secure cycle storage and where possible, changing and shower facilities.*

<sup>8.28</sup>As defined by The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010

**Draft Policy MGP29: Parking Provision**

*The Council will continue to ensure there is an adequate supply of safe, secure and convenient public parking for vehicles within and adjacent to the town centre.*

*Priority will be given to:*

- a) *providing short stay parking within the 'Town Centre' as identified on the policies map and long stay outside it; and*
- b) *safeguarding land at Beaumont Street/Feethams for a multi-storey car park.*

*Throughout the Borough, new development (including change of use) will be required to provide safe and secure space for vehicle parking and servicing within the site. Provision should be made for residents, employees, customers, deliveries, visitors and others who may visit the premises, including people with disabilities.*

*The number of spaces provided and the nature of the provision will have regard to local circumstances and the standards set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide or any successor.*

*New commercial developments and public facilities creating over 50 parking spaces should provide at least one double electric vehicle charge point (2 spaces). For each additional 50 parking spaces one double charging point should be provided up to a maximum of three (6 spaces).*

**Making it Happen**

- 8.1.56 The Council will work with partners and neighbouring authorities to deliver the package of proposals outlined above, to enhance the movement of people, goods and information, and to manage trip demand.