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**MAKING PLACES AND ACCOMMODATING GROWTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
DOCUMENT: ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATIONS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Chris McEwan,  
Economy and Regeneration Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Director of Place**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report is to seek Cabinet’s agreement to undertake targeted consultations on the outstanding issues and options that need to be considered prior to preparing the Preferred Options document of the Making Places and Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document (DPD).

**Summary**

2. Consultations on issues and options is an essential stage in the process of preparing new development plan documents, as it allows those with an interest in the use and development of land to have their views considered at an early stage. Consultations have already been carried out on the options for housing, employment, mixed use and green infrastructure site allocations during the winter, but they still need to be undertaken on matters such as the options for Gypsy and traveller site allocations, revised limits to development, the areas covered by primary and secondary shop frontages, and the boundaries of the town, district and local centres. There may also be a need to consult on further options for development at the Town Centre Fringe, North West Urban Fringe and Eastern Urban Fringe as draft masterplans and other more detailed information becomes available.
3. Previous Borough wide consultations on issues and options has only elicited a low level of response from local people, so it is being proposed that consultations at this stage are targeted at the people who are most likely to be affected. Everyone in the Borough will still have an opportunity to have their say on draft policies and proposals, at the Preferred Options stage in DPD preparation.

**Recommendation**

4. It is recommended that :-
  - (a) Cabinet agree that targeted consultations be undertaken on the remaining issues and options for the Making Places and Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document.

- (b) A temporary delegation be made to the Assistant Director – Policy and Regeneration to agree the consultation arrangements, in consultation with the Economy and Regeneration Portfolio Holder and the Councillors of all wards affected.

**Reasons**

5. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) To ensure efficient and effective use of staff resources in preparing the Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document;
  - (b) To help reduce consultation fatigue amongst the Borough’s residents; and
  - (c) To avoid unnecessary delays in undertaking the early stages of preparing the Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document.

**Richard Alty  
Director of Place**

**Background Papers**

- (i) Borough of Darlington Local Plan, adopted with alterations 2001
- (ii) Darlington LDF Core Strategy, May 2011
- (iii) Darlington LDF Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document: Issue and Options Report, November 2010.
- (iv) Darlington LDF Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD Scoping Report, March 2011
- (v) Darlington LDF Statement of Community Involvement, July 2010

Valerie Adams: Extension 2477

S17 Crime and Disorder	Crime and Disorder is a consideration in developing detailed planning policies and proposals, as it is a design criterion in the Council’s overarching LDF Core Strategy.
Health and Well Being	The Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD will identify land that needs to be reserved for green infrastructure and sport and recreation provision, and will require the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure as part of new developments. This will encourage and enable people to lead more active lifestyles and improve health and well being.
Carbon Impact	A sustainability appraisal will inform preparation of the Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD, and be published alongside it.
Diversity	Equalities Impact Assessment and a Disability Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on each of the issues and options as they are prepared,

	with the findings feeding back into the preparation of the Preferred Options document.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	No.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD will be part of the Darlington Local Development Framework, which is the spatial expression of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.
Efficiency	By targeting consultations, the proposals set out in this report should help to reduce the financial resources required to fulfil regulatory requirements, but they may, cumulatively, require more staff time to complete. It is expected that this can be achieved within existing staff resources across the Council. See also paragraph 10 of this report.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

6. A Making Places and Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document (DPD) is being prepared by the Council, as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. The DPD will allocate land for different land uses and will set out some detailed policies to control specific types and aspects of development. The policies and proposals will be illustrated on an Ordnance Survey base, known as a Proposals Map. Once adopted, the DPD will complement the LDF Core Strategy DPD, which was recently adopted by the Council. Because there are still several stages of preparation to be completed, the DPD is not expected to be ready to adopt until 2013. You can find out more about the DPDs the Council is preparing and their stages of preparation by visiting the planning policy pages of the Council's website, [www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy).
7. There are several stages to the preparation of a DPD. The initial stage is to consider and consult on issues and options. Consultations have already been carried out on an Accommodating Growth Issues and Options Report, and the responses to this consultation were reported to the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 24th March 2011. However, as it was decided to merge preparation of the Accommodating Growth (site allocations) DPD and a Making Places (development policies) DPD, there are some issues and options around which consultations still need to be undertaken. Some further options have also emerged for some of the issues already considered.
8. The Council's Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD Scoping Report indicated that consultations on an Issues and Options Report would take place over the summer. However, rather than produce a document containing all the issues and options and consulting everyone about the document, it is now proposed to undertake targeted consultations with those who are likely to have an interest in the particular issue or may be

most affected if any of the options are implemented. The areas of planning policy where issues and options still need to be prepared and consulted upon include:

- (a) Gypsy and traveller site allocations;
- (b) revised limits to development;
- (c) the areas covered by primary and secondary shop frontages; and
- (d) the boundaries of the town, district and local centres.

9. There may also be a need to consult on further options for development at the Town Centre Fringe, North West Urban Fringe and Eastern Urban Fringe, as draft masterplans and other more detailed information becomes available. Also, the limits to development for the main urban area and the villages will need to be reviewed, to take account of developments that have taken place since the last Local Plan limits to development were defined. Such consultations would be targeted at people living in or having a business in the settlement/neighbourhood affected, and in rural areas, would include the Parish Council as a key consultee. The Economy and Regeneration Portfolio holder and relevant ward members would be briefed and consulted on the consultation before it is undertaken.
10. This revised approach is being proposed to make more effective use of staff resources, to try and limit consultation fatigue amongst local people, and to avoid unnecessary delay in preparing this DPD. The approach proposed still meets all the regulatory requirements for public participation in the preparation of DPDs, and accords with the provisions of the Council's own adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which indicates that the public involvement programme should be matched to the scale and nature of the planning issues that are being dealt with. A six week period of wider consultations to involve all interested parties, including people living and working in the Borough, will be undertaken when the Preferred Options document is published. This is currently expected to be in early 2012.