

General Comments – Referring to more than one site or the proposals as a whole

| General – General and master plan | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL113 | A specific parkland restoration plan should be put in place. | |
| BL049 | Concern that public land owned by DBC may be managed by a private company paid for by the people buying property. They may have undue influence on the future development of this land that may not be in long term interest. | For this land to be kept in perpetuity for the people of Darlington and managed as park land by the Council |
| BL155 | Would be sad if parkland was destroyed as understand it was designated for community use. | |
| BL004; BL014; BL046 | Not what was originally proposed. Who initiated and are developers involved? Why have proposals changed so much since last consultation? | BL014 - Stick with original idea of exec houses. |
| BL006; | A premium price should be sought from builders for such executive housing that will bring good value for money for Darlington rate payers, such housing would further enhance this part of Darlington as a desirable residential location; If development to take place, this area should be allocated as exemplar area for attracting executives to the area, not a place for high density apartments and general housing. | |
| BL008 | Any development will have an impact on the existing neighbourhood and while I have no objection in principle, I would like to make certain that the Council have taken into account the wider 'knock on' effects of increasing population levels in this area. | |
| BL154; BL157 | Open space and green belts are Darlington's special characteristics - Blackwell Grange and its Parkland make a significant contribution to this. Land was sold to the Darlington Corporation- were there any covenants associated with this sale? | |
| BL008; | Council's attempts to increase housing density were inevitable from the outset - the initial proposals were designed to be maximum acceptability to residents as a 'foot in the door' and I expect another attempt to build further at this location at some stage. Perhaps the Council would be willing to provide a covenant on the remaining undeveloped land? | |
| BL019; BL134 | Fully support the Council's proposals and commend the work and consultation undertaken. | |
| BL036 | Supportive of housing in principle - most local residents live on land that was previously of historic interest. | |

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| BL009; BL054; BL050; BL065; BL163; BL165 | Please could you give evidence of this need for housing? Why apartments? Where is evidence of demand for them; housing is only being proposed here to plug holes in council finances. | |
| BL029 | In favour of development needed in the west end however bungalows needed. | |
| BL021; BL054 | Use of greenfield land rather than brownfield land is always a concern. | Use more brownfield sites |
| BL014; BL102; BL152; BL021; BL046; BL077; BL104; BL112; BL142; BL143; BL172 | No amenities in the area, Schools, shops etc. Existing provision insufficient; Additional pressures on already oversubscribed senior schools. Using the car to access facilities is not the way forward. | |
| BL054 | Precious little Industry left in Darlington so houses may be sold to 'incomers' who work elsewhere. | |
| BL160 | Will play little part in attracting business to the area. | |
| BL054 | What about the Hotel? The operators can hardly welcome these proposed developments. It will devalue the hotel property. Much of its promotional literature focuses on its parkland setting. | |
| BL054 | As a result of numerous impacts high council tax rate should be reduced accordingly. | |
| BL050 | The Council state they have been in contact with Historic England, Natural England and Highways England. Please provide the data or correspondence which substantiates their support and acceptance of your proposals and details of the cost of each study undertaken. | Only development with properties similar to those already in existence would be fair and acceptable. |
| BL095 | Require that a local developer is chosen so that people in the town have jobs. | |
| BL069 | Given the amount of new housing already provided in the town, I am not convinced that there is a need for even more housing. | |
| BL075 | Commercial development is not concerned with preserving an attractive area for future generations but in making use of an asset for increased profit, the result is the very destruction which makes Blackwell unique. Deleterious effect on the overall image of Darlington as a place to invest in, visit, relocate to or reside in. | |
| BL092 | Clear that the change of house types is driven by the aim to achieve maximum council tax from residents. | |
| BL0091 | Development could support the River Tees Rediscovered project led by the River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership, seeking to reconnect with people with the river. Highlight the importance of the waterway as a national feature which has had a key role in moulding the physical and cultural development of the area (EA). | |

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| BL083 | Other assets could be sold to reduce the Council debt. | |
| BL112 | The development must be contrary to relevant Council planning policy. | |
| BL118 | Ponds - health and safety issue for families with small children. | Fewer sites would be preferable |
| BL133; BL174 | Would prefer land to remain Parkland but acknowledge need for housing. | |
| BL012 | General support for the proposals to restore the parkland. | |
| BL145 | There are existing buildings (former Green keepers compound) on land to the south east of the Spinney with vehicular access of Carmel Road South and it may be possible to designate this land as suitable for low density (fewer than 6 per hectare) mews type housing development, for this would make attractive use of a brownfield site in poor repair that is not well occupied by the Council. | |
| BL160 | Disappointing to note that Council responses to residents initial major concerns were facile counter arguments. For example, in response to resident's school place concerns, it was intimated that families who may live in executive housing would more over consider boarding / private school options. A real championing of the Council-run state school experience there. | |
| BL162 | Unexplained massive expansion of development plans in areas where no development should be pursued. | |
| BL162 | This heritage asset not the right location for development and DBC clearly demonstrating that they are not sufficiently independent or concerned about the heritage of Darlington to manage the associated consultations. | |
| BL095 | Support application to build houses, with conditions that we keep as much of the parkland as possible so that the area maintains its historic character. | |
| BL110ii | Development out of character for the area and will have a detrimental effect. Apartments not selling elsewhere in Darlington. | |
| BL118 | Footpaths should provide access for non-residents. | |
| BL124v | Will change the character of the area to be like a large housing community, not a town dwelling with an open space feel. | Whole development needs to be rethought to fit with existing housing |
| BL151 | Concern that the previous elegant plan has now doubled in numbers and seeks reassurance that it will not increase further. | |
| BL166; BL169 | If site is built on, should be the highest quality, executive, low density housing to attract high quality professionals who would otherwise be lost to other areas. | |

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| BL013 | Land on Grange Road should be developed instead. | |
| BL162 | Request that the current consultation process be halted and no further action taken until an appropriate independent external arbitrator is involved to review the conduct of this project; DBC ignoring expert independent recommendations. | |
| BL166; BL169 | Would have preferred housing to have been on the Stress Holme Golf Course site - Blackwell must be the most picturesque housing site for miles around. | |
| BL050 | Utilities - This is irrelevant to the consultation process, this only helps the developer. Why was tax payers' money spent on this? | |
| BL133 | If there is to be housing it preferably should be low density, low lying, and high quality executive housing. | |
| BL012 | Has to be some agreement that some (hopefully a lot) of the parkland is ring-fenced and protected from development, not just now but long term. Important part of the project in order to maintain trust and goodwill of local people. | |
| BL006; BL014; BL143; BL044 | High Density housing not appropriate. Urge Council to go ahead with as low a density as possible and to retain as much of the existing open park land as possible. | |
| BL076 | Mix of top end housing and apartments would be acceptable so long as nothing is above three storeys in height. | |
| BL167 | Parkland should be protected for future generations to enjoy. | |
| BL082 | There is now the possibility of far more houses than at first suggested and apartments have also been suggested. | |

Officer comments

The Core Strategy sets out how the borough will help meet a small sub-regional need for small numbers of top-end executive housing, to support economic growth in the borough and wider Tees Valley area, which could reduce in-commuting.

The proposals have been informed by the comments received from statutory consultees, who accept the development of housing in this area in principle. All responses, including those from residents and statutory consultees are available on the DBC website at www.darlington.gov.uk/planning.

Darlington has an aging population and the Council's Supported Housing Strategy Appendix 2 calculates that by 2025 there will be a requirement for an additional 163 Extra Care for sale units and an additional 981 Sheltered for sale units for people aged over 75. These figures do not include the needs of people below the age of 75. The clear message is there is a shortage of choice for people who want to purchase specialist elderly accommodation. This is also identified in the adopted Core Strategy.

The importance of having local aspirational housing that is attractive to the creative, skilled, entrepreneurial and managerial people who drive the local economy is widely acknowledged in work done for the Tees Valley and Darlington (Tees Valley Economic Regeneration Statement of Ambition, 2010; Tees Valley Sub-Regional Housing Strategy, 2006; and Darlington Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2012). A connection has been made between the purchasers of executive homes and the creation of

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| | <p>jobs (Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Housing Assessment Update, 2009) and its role in helping to achieve regeneration targets. The various studies that have been undertaken were to provide as much information as possible on the site, and the surrounding area, and to inform the development of the masterplan. Spending data is available on the DBC website at http://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/council-information/financial-information/spending-data.aspx.</p> <p>Developing nearer to Grange Road is more sensitive from a Listed Building perspective because it includes both the original and the later access to the building and impacts on views of the primary, front, elevation. In terms of impact on the former parkland, the Blackwell Lane side of the site has already seen housing development in the form of Grangeside and The Spinney. Historic England have advised there is only so far east new development could extend on the site before substantial harm (as identified in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework) would occur. Housing on this part of the site was ruled out early on for this reason. Contributions to support additional school places would be required as part of a legal agreement between the developer and the Council as part of the planning application process.</p> <p>A Parkland Restoration Plan would form part of any planning application.</p> <p>Footpath (and cycle) connectivity to existing residential developments is a key requirement of any new development. Further detail of how this would be achieved would be considered at detailed application stage. Details of heights and precise locations of dwellings would also only be clarified at this stage.</p> <p>Restoration and retention of the remaining Parkland is an important element of the development proposals.</p> <p>All comments received from residents will be considered as part of the decision-making process.</p> | |

| General - Heritage | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL009; BL077; BL078; BL103; BL135; BL145; BL150; BL170 | Why are you proposing so many houses on a historic heritage site; Concern about impact on heritage assets. | BL078- the historic park should not be built on. |
| BL009; BL080; BL112; BL113; BL114; BL115; BL14; BL142; BL143; BL145; BL149; BL150; BL173 | Why have you totally disregarded the Archaeo report commissioned by Council which says zones 2&3 are sensitive areas to change and NO development should be pursued? Blackwell Grange and surrounding parkland a rare and beautiful historical survival from the 18th century with many interesting features which make it well worth preserving as identified in the survey. | BL009; BL113; BL114 -No development should take place. BL114 - Particularly in zone 3. BL115 - Should be designated as parkland |
| BL041, BL086, BL089; BL145 | Object to destruction of historic golf course. | |

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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL009 | Council should follow the recommendations set out in the 2012 Statement of Significance and pursue positive and protective courses of action which seeks designation of the park as a historic landscape, requests funding from Heritage Lottery Fund to perform necessary conservation and restoration work and extends the centre of Darlington Conservation area to include this valuable historic resource. | |
| BL050 | Within Zone 1 of Statement of significance, it states there is scope for high quality, low lying development outside the main designated area of parkland which retains pleasure walks to the perimeter, away from traffic and sustains the existing leafy character of Blackwell. Can you confirm that zone one achieves this? Can you confirm zone two is proposed for low density housing / small business or additional hotel accommodation within the walled garden which references garden hot house architecture? Can you confirm that zone 3 will be developed upon and goes against the report commissioned by the Council? Please send a plan illustrating every property with the number of storeys and their exact location in all of the zones confirming that the criteria in the Statement of Significance will be met. If not, why is this? | |
| BL050; BL114 | Has the Council pursued lottery funding? Is there any evidence of this? | |
| BL065 | Concern regarding loss of ridge and furrow, views of Cleveland Hills and the need to follow English Heritage's initial advice. | Retain the ridge and furrow |
| BL080; BL0092; BL111 | Parkland should be formally designated. Medieval strip system of agriculture and should have full geophysical survey undertaken. | |
| BL145 | No evidence that English Heritage consulted. Instead I am informed that the Planning Adviser at the Newcastle Office may have been consulted informally about development but not safeguarding it. Despite requests from numerous attendees no evidence of this exchange has been provided, possibly because there is none. Certainly that department was not informed about the proposed density of properties presented at the consultation event. Contrary to para 132 of NPPF, no evidence that DBC has demonstrated 'clear and convincing justification'. | |
| BL145 | NPPF requires a higher standard of design where it affects the setting of a Listed Building. Council under a legal duty to have particular regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a listed site of significance, so as drawn the proposal is unacceptable for it is inconsistent with the character of existing housing and the obligation not to have an adverse visual impact appears to have been disregarded. | |

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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL145 | There should be no vehicular access onto the parkland between Grangeside and the Spinney, or from the access road to the hotel off Blackwell lane, as that would be contrary to recommendations of Archaeo-Environment and would endanger the historic Mill Lane and the historic brickwork and paving that is evident there. No evidence as to the feasibility of access was presented at consultation event. | Should not be permitted. Instead, pedestrian access onto the historic Mill Lane should be restored so that the people of Darlington may enjoy the historic parkland. |
| BL145 | The parkland and pleasure walk should be transferred to the Community Land Trust, together with an endowed fund that may be pooled with other investments to provide an income that will fund the cost of maintenance by volunteers. As a charity, the CLT can apply for funds from grant making trusts that are not available to the Council to further enhance the parkland. | |
| BL150 | The historic heritage parkland was gifted to the town for all to enjoy. | |
| BL162 | Irresponsible approach to heritage and environment by a publicly accountable body is a matter of significant public concern. Scoring system used to select the parklands for development is flawed. Status of the Grade 2 * listed perimeter wall under threat. | |

Officer comments

The former parkland, has since 1971 until relatively recently been in use as a golf course. The parkland does not meet Historic England's criteria to be registered as an Historic Park and Garden as a result of the changes that have taken place on the site over the years. There are plans to enhance the former parkland and create a local nature reserve, funded by development on the site.

The Statement of Significance (produced by Archaeo-Environment for the Council) has not been disregarded, but Historic England has provided us with different advice about the development potential of the site. It is not uncommon for professionals to have different opinions on subjective matters, based on interpretation of legislation and policy.

The wall is curtilage Listed so alterations or any loss require prior Listed Building Consent. The wall will remain for the most part with the minimum number of accesses created. Historic England also advised that the boundary between housing and parkland is an important consideration and recommend that a softer transition between private garden and open parkland could markedly improve the quality of both and add to the marketability of the houses.

The site is part of the setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, however this does not mean that no change or even no harmful change can take place. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for less than substantial harm, providing there are public benefits. We have received advice from Historic England that the allocation of the site for relatively low density, top-end executive housing would constitute less than substantial harm. Impact upon the listed building has been assessed and has been guided by advice from Historic England. Their advice gave us a steer that the site has some more development potential than the Archaeo-Environment Report of 2012 advises. Historic England will also advise on any future planning applications for development on the site. Historic England (formerly English Heritage) has been consulted and their response can be viewed online at www.darlington.gov.uk/darlington (Ref No. BL79).

Alternative sources of funding such as Heritage Lottery Fund have been investigated. However, either the parkland fails to meet the criteria for funding and/or the funding organisation requires a 5% contribution for schemes below £1 million or 10% for schemes above £1 million. In addition, revenue funding is time limited after which the scheme is required to be self-financing. Therefore, at present, the proposed residential development plus the levy from new residents is the only mechanism to guarantee

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| | <p>funding for the restoration and enhancement of the remaining parkland, the creation of new wildlife habitats and increased public access. This is the best way, at the moment, of ensuring that the remaining parkland is enjoyed by future generations. However, if new opportunities emerge, alternative ways of funding the restoration and enhancement of the parkland should be considered, particularly to support ongoing maintenance and management that may otherwise fall short of target revenues if development does not progress as quickly or in the amounts being planned for.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the Blackwell area of Darlington has some historic and traditional buildings and is made up of high quality suburbs. Any new development on the Blackwell Grange site should to be guided by the Planning and Design Guidelines which will be prepared if the sites are allocated for development.</p> <p>We have assessed allocating the site for housing development against local and national planning policy and have sought advice from Historic England. They allow for some harm to the settings of Listed Buildings, providing there is enhancement or public benefits, which in this case will involve restoration of the former parkland, creation on new wildlife habitats and increased public access.</p> <p>A Parkland Restoration Plan would form part of any planning application.</p> <p>In relation to evidence of ridge and furrow we will follow Historic England's advice.</p> <p>Detail of the number of storeys and exact location and precise number of properties will be decided at planning application stage, not the site allocation stage we are at now. Residents would have further opportunity to influence more specific detailed elements of a scheme at that stage.</p> <p>A Statement of Significance provides advice about the importance of the site or building rather than prescriptive solutions for that site or building.</p> <p>We have seen no evidence that the former parkland was gifted to the town. There are no covenants preventing residential development and the proposals for the remaining parkland will allow access to the general public rather than just to golf club members.</p> <p>The scoring system used was revisited and, although there is disagreement over some of the results, there was one factual error which has since been rectified. However, this has not altered the overall conclusions that Blackwell is the most sustainable and appropriate location for top-end executive housing.</p> <p>The listed perimeter wall is not under threat from the proposed development as the preferred access is via an existing access to the rear of the Hotel.</p> | |

| General - Trees | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL137 | Should retain as many trees, vegetation and ponds as possible. | |
| BL057 | Should restore the Lime Tree Avenue. | |

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| BL054; BL050; BL061; BL077; BL078; BL086; BL102; BL112; BL113; BL125ii; BL127ii; BL101xii; BL096iv; BL144; BL147; BL170; BL173 | Strong views that trees should be protected; It is not clear how many of the trees will be destroyed - even if they are not felled others might suffer and die if their immediate environment is disturbed. Role of trees is important in this area, visual amenity, wildlife habitats, shade, etc. Unclear how many trees will be affected by the development, how TPO's have been taken into account in the site layout, have we looked at tree retention and new planting? What are the distances from the housing plots to the nearest TPO? How many trees are being removed and is there a detailed report detailing all of the trees? What are tree protection measures? | Full details of TPOs and proposed tree removal required |
| BL050 | Tree Survey already carried out as part of Statement of Significance. The findings are clear, why was this carried out again? | |
| BL076 | Relieved to see Grade A trees safeguarded. Others should be retained to enhance the parkland aspect. | |
| BL082; BL084 | There should be no building whatsoever on the historic parkland because of detrimental impact on ancient trees. Currently Carmel Road South is a lovely corridor of trees - what would it be like with housing either side or access roads with their obvious dangers? | |
| BL110ii | Removal of ancient woodland would have a detrimental effect. | |
| BL118 | As many trees as possible should be preserved. | |
| BL151 | Trees and hedge lines should be preserved to mask development - will require close scrutiny if the number of dwellings increase. | |
| BL173 | Damage will be done to the wonderful variety of plant life found in the parkland. The whole area will be ruined forever. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>It is recognised that the existing trees are a very important element of the area and the vast majority will be retained. Any planning application for residential development will be assessed on that basis, together with all other planning considerations. The majority of the protected trees are located on the borders of the parkland and these will remain. However Tree Preservation Orders are not intended to prevent felling forever. There are circumstances where felling a protected tree is acceptable, e.g. dead or dying trees in danger or falling down. However any planning permission given would override any existing TPO's if their retention was incompatible with the permission granted. The TPO legislation does not limit planning, but is considered in detail when looking any planning applications – and if removal of a tree is considered acceptable in the balance of the situation, authorisation can be given. However, there are a great many trees within the site that will not be subject to TPO's but are still high value trees. When assessing the trees generally on site, extra consideration is not given to TPO'd trees per se, but every tree is assessed with regards its retention value both presently and in the future within a potentially different surrounding. Every tree from 6cm stem diameter and up is considered as a material consideration and all trees retained must be offered the same minimum protection as recommended by the British Standards. The number of trees to be felled would be kept to a minimum and remaining trees, including their root systems, will be protected during construction. It is illegal to cut down, top, lop, uproot, cut roots, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a protected tree without the Local Planning Authority's written consent.</p> | | |

The tree survey carried out as part of the Statement of Significance was in relation to the original designs for the historical parkland not in relation to the health, quality and condition of the trees, nor was it comprehensive.

Most of the proposed development is on short cut grass formerly part of the golf course which has very little plant life value.

| General - Wildlife | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL054; BL050; BL065, BL076; BL077; BL078; BL092; BL107i; BL102; BL103; BL111; BL101xii; BL096iii; BL135; BL137; BL150; BL172 | Concerns about impact on nature / wildlife / ecology. Will remove habitats. Rare species including spotted woodpeckers and nuthatches. Also house martins, owls, thrushes etc. Concern about effect the development would have on the ecology of the site, i.e. site clearance, top soiling, increased shading, and increased chemical run-off, less prey. Two deer from Raby Castle | |
| BL051 | A wildlife meadow could be created with local people donating bulbs, cuttings and future maintenance. | |
| BL012; BL051; BL056 | Should be a haven for wildlife, walking (Inc. dogs), space to picnic and play (although no formal children's play area). A nature trail may be a nice inclusion for families. BL051 - The 'wood' should be left intact. Some seats and bins would be welcome. | |
| BL055 | No details of a Wildlife Survey other than bat movements. Particularly keen to see how housing proposals are sympathetic to existing flora and fauna and how species will be encouraged within the proposal (bat/Bird boxes, wall cavities for nesting etc.). | |
| BL050; | Lack of information on impacts of development on ecology of the site, mitigation measures, impacts caused by hard surfaces, management and site maintenance plans and population monitoring programme. Was this survey an independent review? Please could you issue this for review? | |
| BL082; BL084; BL140 | There should be no building whatsoever on the historic parkland because of detrimental impact on wildlife. Foxes, badger, bats, newts and other fauna. | Do not build on the parkland - leave it as an area for all to enjoy |
| BL0091; BL172 | Recommended that existing ponds are retained for biodiversity purposes. Additional ponds should be constructed for attenuation and designed to be beneficial for wildlife, particularly protected species found in the vicinity (EA). | |
| BL0091 | Great crested newts have been recorded in this area. These are protected by law (EA). | |
| Officer comments | | |
| The majority of the former golf course lies within an area at high risk of great crested newts and the remainder lies within a medium risk area. This does not prohibit | | |

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| | <p>development. However, future developers would have to obtain a licence from Natural England before development started. Developers would also have to submit a Phase II Habitat Survey with any planning application for development. The Phase II survey aims to establish the size of populations of the protected species, to maintain conservation status and ensure that no statutory offence is committed during site development.</p> <p>Natural England has set out specific requirements within its response and will maintain a watchful eye over the proposals for residential development. It can also exercise control at the planning application stage, not only as a consultee but also through the issuing or non-issuing of licences. With appropriately designed development and protection of wildlife during the construction phase, the impact on wildlife can be minimised. The proposals to create new wildlife habitats and increase public access will provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural environment and bring benefits for the local community through access to and contact with nature.</p> | |

| General - Access | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL101; BL150 | Concerns about potential access point's impact on adjacent properties or breaking through wall on Blackwell Lane. BL101 - in addition impact on Carmel Road South a concern. | |
| BL041, BL088 ; BL117 | Object to the proposed plan, in particular the access routes from Blackwell Lane BL117 - there are too many proposed access for HE2 & 3. | BL041: Would like access routes to change - access route should be put on Carmel Road instead - not Blackwell Lane |
| BL045; BL110i; BL111; BL113 | Strongly object to any entrance that will damage the existing wood and wall. There is enough provision for existing roads to be used as entrances to any development BL110i - road too busy with poor visibility for new accesses. BL111 - Blackwell Lane heavily used by learner drivers and non-residents parking. | Existing roads should be used as entrances to any development |
| BL147 | All accesses should be off Carmel Road South. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Various potential access points were highlighted through an assessment process and these will be reviewed to find the best solution to serve the development need and minimise impact. The number of junctions will be limited and hence reduce the need to break through the existing boundary wall unless deemed necessary. The existing access point to the rear of the hotel is the preferred option.</p> <p>Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and be positioned accordingly.</p> | | |

| General – Highways | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL002 BL018; BL009; BL029; BL032; BL054; BL061; BL065; BL009; BL0099; BL092; BL107ii; BL101; BL104; BL111; BL124iv; BL125ii; BL127i; BL135; BL137; BL142; BL167BL144; BL143; BL147; BL148; BL150; BL168; BL170; BL172 | Will bring increased traffic; potential impact of traffic on Blackwell Lane and Carmel Road South (including impact of relocation of football ground to Blackwell Meadows); Should be no further access made from Carmel Road South unless a north access to the A1 (M) is built from the A66 (M); Blands Corner is an 'accident waiting to happen'; BL137 - Already extensively used by through traffic. BL170 - Existing problem with HGV's using Carmel Road South. | Be bold as a local authority and designate it all as parkland for the benefit of Darlington people and as a hidden jewel to attract business and visitors as part of the overall economic strategy for this town. BL107ii - suspend process to look at new road proposals that could cope with the densities proposed. BL0125ii - Should limit development to that originally proposed. BL135 - Numbers should be reduced to provide a more sympathetic development. BL137 -Resultant traffic impact should be given further consideration. |
| BL021 | Traffic bottleneck on Carmel Road South (road not designed for this volume of traffic). | |
| BL045 | The entrance (road) at the top of Blackwell Bank is very dangerous. | |
| BL011 | Developer should forward details of the type of housing and predicted flows to Highways England for more detailed consideration. | Collaborative approach between developer, DBC and Highways England requested. |
| BL011 | With its scale and close proximity to A66/Blands Corner development will generate over 30 trips in the peak hour. Initial look indicates it will likely be much higher possibly 200+ trips and would therefore likely require a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. | |
| BL011 | Blands Corner Roundabout is under review for a scheme to relieve current capacity issues as network at capacity on this junction. Development WILL require mitigation. Current proposals for larger roundabout with reduced number of exits. Land adjacent should be able to accommodate. | Collaborative approach between developer, DBC and Highways England requested. |

| General – Highways | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL012; BL144 | Concerned over how parking and additional traffic will be managed. | Sufficient parking should be provided. |
| BL014; BL081 | Right turn onto Grange Road very difficult. | |
| BL015; BL0099 | Blackwell Lane gets very busy when events are on at South Park. | |
| BL054; BL081; BL137 | Speeding already an issue in the area despite numerous complaints to police and councillors. Particularly on Bridge Road, Carmel Road South and Blackwell. | |
| BL054; BL082; BL0099; BL103 | Concern over use of Blackwell Meadows by the football club using the same roads to access and park. | |
| BL050 | Usually a tool for outline planning permission. Has this really been carried out at this stage? Why was tax payer's money spent on this? | |
| BL057 | Has the Council considered the extra traffic and what are the plans to deal with this? | |
| BL069; BL077; BL078; BL081; BL082; BL085; BL102; BL103 | Concern over highway safety: Increased congestion on Carmel Road due to increased traffic flows, making it difficult to exit Blackwell onto Carmel road and turn right into Blackwell Lane at peak times. This junction is already difficult to cross and there will be issues of highway safety. Increased traffic flow to and from Blands Corner roundabout which is already extremely busy and difficult to negotiate. This area has a lot of elderly people and families whose lives would be put at risk. | |
| BL069 | How will Blands Corner handle the projected future growth in traffic from the new developments? | |

| General – Highways | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL0099; BL095; BL103 | Will become one giant car park, with an extra 4000 plus houses / flats proposed and DFC moving back to Darlington, Rugby club with 250 parking spaces for up to 2000 fans; Support but need to be mindful of parking. | |
| BL110ii; BL101; BL137; BL150; BL154; BL157 | Traffic from the development once built and construction traffic may have a significant effect on road safety. | |
| BL102 | Hundreds of additional vehicles will severely damage the road and become dangerous for residents. | |
| BL111 | Blackwell Lane already as car park for people working in the Town Centre. | |
| BL125ii | No allowance for car parking will have knock on impact on surrounding roads | Impact on development |
| BL142 | When the yellow lines are put on Grange Road, Snipe lane and Carmel Road South, cars will park anywhere in Blackwell vicinity. | |
| BL150 | Highways Agency (England) comments should be sought. | |
| BL150 | Has the construction of the historic lane (Blackwell Lane) been considered? | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>A Transport Assessment is currently being produced in consultation with Highways England that will demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the local and strategic highway and this will help to inform the density of building on site. As part of the assessment accident statistics are reviewed and taken into consideration. This will also include a Travel plan that will assess the needs of non-motorised users. Bridge Road and the A66 is owned and maintained by Highways England. There are proposals to improve Bland Corner roundabout which Highways England are reviewing. Off-site highway improvements to mitigate the development traffic would be highlighted as required within the Transport Assessment.</p> <p>Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and have been positioned accordingly.</p> <p>Proposed junctions on Carmel Road South would incorporate localised widening of the carriageway in order to create a ghost island T junction to help prevent the blocking of mainline traffic by right turning traffic into the sites. Junction assessments will be carried out to ensure the new junctions have sufficient capacity to meet the development need. Generally a ghost island T junction would be sufficient to take the generated traffic from a development of 230 dwellings with mainline flows over 13,000 AADT (Annual average Daily Traffic Flow) as experienced on Carmel Road South. Mini roundabouts would be an unsuitable form of junction on Carmel Road to</p> | | |

| General – Highways | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| | <p>access this development.</p> <p>Traffic regulation orders in the form of double yellow lines are proposed along significant lengths of Grange Road, Carmel Road South, Croft Road and Snipe Lane as part of the DFC planning permission to help regulate parking associated with match days.</p> <p>A construction management plan would be a condition of any granted permission and would control construction routes to site.</p> <p>The highways are routinely inspected for defects and remedial action taken where necessary.</p> <p>Car parking to serve the development would be in line with the Residential Design Guide and Specification for the Tees Valley and would be appropriate to the dwelling size and type proposed.</p> <p>The access point from The Spinney was reviewed as an option however is not one of the preferred access points for vehicles although could form a pedestrian/cyclist route to allow access to the parkland and continue along the former Mill Lane to improve pedestrian permeability to the site.</p> | |

| General – Amenity and Open Space | | |
|---|--|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL001; BL063; BL077, BL009; BL092; BL104; BL112; BL113; BL115; BL132; BL142; BL150; BL164 | Must keep green areas for future generations to enjoy. Parkland would better serve the community. | BL115 - No housing at all. Develop parkland as area of beauty with walks, revamped lake, and picnic areas. BL132 - suggest site is developed as a cycling facility or as a parkland to visit with refreshment facilities |
| BL002; BL0023 | Worried about mess; disruption during construction. | |
| BL002; BL065; BL111; BL113; BL140; B150; BL0067; BL054; BL065; BL133; BL075; BL163 | Will disrupt the lovely area of Blackwell, will affect area and not for better; Will ruin the character of the area; Object to the environmental damage that would ensue as a result of any development; Only decent approach to Darlington will be destroyed. | |
| BL002 | Development very close to house being purchased (not specified). | |
| BL023 | Concern over loss of green space (golf course) which children use for playing. There are not many large green areas on our doorstep. | Would like to have continued use of open space outside our house as place for children to play |
| BL041 | Moved to this area for peace and tranquillity- but now face a noisy road and busy cosmopolitan style housing. | |
| BL012 | Concern that low fences to the fronts of properties will not work. People value their privacy too much. | High walls and screening would be better. |
| BL054 | Will destroy Green belt. | |

| General – Amenity and Open Space | | |
|---|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL054; BL107i; BL101; BL143 | Will devalue and destroy the present views from existing properties. | BL107i - building should be carefully planned and low density, in keeping with the parkland setting |
| BL061 | Concern over loss of green space - should be sold to residents to extend gardens or managed by a group. | All planned building to be stopped |
| BL076; BL143; BL150; BL167 | Loss of privacy and daylight. Increase in light pollution compared to golf course use. BL150 - increased vermin and noise; BL167 - noise | |
| BL082; BL084; BL111; BL137 | There should be no building on this lovely open area of Darlington | |
| BL0099; BL143; BL172 | Detrimental impact on residents with over development, loss of character; visual impact | |
| BL0099; BL142; BL143; BL145 | Loss of privacy for residents, overlooked, with 3 storey buildings; Overbearing to the immediate community and have an oppressive impact on the surrounding area and housing. | |
| BL112 | Noise and Smell mainly from the existing hotel until 2am, late functions with loud music, fireworks, air-conditioning units etc. | |
| BL135 | Important part of the western fringe of the town and a link to the surrounding countryside. | |
| BL144 | Proposed dwelling to the rear of No's 18/20 Upsall Drive too close to these properties. The design size and footprint required to assess the impact of loss of privacy and overlooking | |
| BL145 | Enjoyment of a view is an important part of the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, and the loss thereof will have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of those properties. Would result in housing development adversely affecting the view from the Grade II Listed Grange. No evidence that such matters have been taken into account. | |
| BL145 | A tree planting scheme that affords privacy to residents on Grangeside and The Spinney that complements the trees that encompass the pleasure walk behind the wall that follows Blackwell Lane should be implemented, restoring the walk that joined the pleasure walk with Mill Lane for the benefit of the people of Darlington. | |
| BL147 | There should be no play areas as these encourage anti-social behaviour. | |

| General – Amenity and Open Space | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL163 | The verged area in the Spinney, together with the wooded area running alongside Carmel Road and Grangeside have been used by residents as recreational areas for numerous years - loss of common area would be significant. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Residential development on the site is acceptable in principle. All of the statutory consultees who responded accepted the principle of residential development providing the impact of the development is minimised and mitigated.</p> <p>Although the proposal would involve loss of some open space, it retains the majority of it, and would result in improvements to the remainder of the open space. A parkland restoration plan would form part of any planning application.</p> <p>Loss of value of property is not a planning matter. Research undertaken by London School of Economics found that prices of existing houses sometimes fell while construction was going on, but once the developments were completed, the local areas generally moved with the market. Researchers could find no evidence of longer term negative impacts.</p> <p>Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter, though impact on an individual's amenity and the amenity of an area is. However, it is generally accepted that putting high quality residential development next to existing housing will not detrimentally affect the amenity of existing residents. The residential amenity of existing and future residents would be considered as part of any development design and layout at the planning application stage.</p> <p>Detailed comments and suggestions regarding the development will be taken into account in the detailed design of any development, and residents will have further opportunity to engage in this through the planning application process.</p> | | |

| General – Flooding and Drainage | | |
|--|---|--|
| Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL021; BL0048 | Water run-off affecting Woodvale; During heavy rain water pours off former golf course into the back gardens of several properties in Upsall Drive, therefore effective drainage (especially for HE1) must be included to prevent the situation becoming worse. | More exploration into how perhaps the already flood prone Woodvale may be affected |
| BL050 | Why was this survey carried out? To identify flooding? What has been decided on the results of this survey? Have features been identified, and has this assisted in the proposals? | |
| BL0091 | Any development of the site should reflect the Tees Valley Authorities Local Standards for Sustainable Drainage Guidance (EA). | |
| BL0091 | Assessed that site is within FZ1 therefore at low risk of flooding (EA). | |

| General – Flooding and Drainage | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL112 | Drainage and Water Supply will not cope. | No development |
| BL142; BL143 | There are at times flooding in the area adjacent to Grangeside and cause damage to houses in the Grangeside and Spinney area. | |
| BL142; BL143 | The work proposed in the current consultation process may have a detrimental effect on the listed buildings currently on the Parkland in so much that the hotel may suffer from subsidence and / or drainage issues. | |
| BL145 | Council should utilise the natural drainage of the land behind Grangeside to drain into a small pond on the site of the Serpentine lake that was planned in 1802, for the land floods naturally in the winter. Further, there is already a subterranean watercourse (shown on the 1790 map) and substantial historic brick drainage running from the rear of Grangeside over towards the fish pond. The pond will encourage wildlife. | |
| BL160; BL162 | Why have the Council not taken on board the 2012 commissioned Archaeo-Environment report recommendations - especially with respect to flooding? Removal of existing trees will only increase the drainage problem. Paying a premium for executive housing with flooding issues doesn't sound terribly appealing. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Environment Agency information shows that there is no flood risk affecting any of the development sites. However there is some land that experiences surface water drainage problems. This is not a constraint to development, as maintaining green field rates of surface water run-off would be dealt with through the planning application process by way of detailed planning conditions. There is also a strong probability that residential development would actually resolve the drainage problems as this would have an impact on the saleability of the new housing.</p> <p>The Drainage Study demonstrates that there are several drainage solutions, including the opportunity to incorporate a sustainable drainage scheme within the remaining parkland; the latter would have the added benefit of providing the additional habitat for the great crested newts and other species. Therefore drainage is not an insurmountable problem and could actually be improved for existing residents through the new development.</p> | | |

HE1 Comments – Referring to HE1 Specifically

| HE1 – General | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL008; BL049; BL0071; BL078; BL124iii; BL124v; BL149; BL149; BL166; BL169 | I don't think the character of the site will be maintained by building blocks of flats on it, regardless of price; In winter the flats will be very visible from Blackwell Lane (2) will be overbearing | (2) Look at lower level high density schemes that would sit well within the setting not above it |
| BL008 | Developers who build for the retirement market would not be interested in the location due to lack of services and it would be easy for the Council to say that they could not get buyers for the retirement market so the apartments will have to be sold to regular developers. | |
| BL009 | Disgusted at the Council's plans for housing on the historic Blackwell Grange Parkland. | |
| BL009 | Could you tell me the total number of houses / apartments proposed? | |
| BL009 | Totally opposed to flats as they are normally built to rent out. | |
| BL015 | Too many existing apartments in town that are vacant so no need for more` | Should be returned to being a Hotel and Golf Course |
| BL0093 | Will not be demand for the Assisted living units. | |
| BL044 | Concerns about higher density than originally proposed. | The area should be left clear |
| BL012 | Previous experience of living in a flat at Scholars Park and had persistent problems with Anti-Social behaviour (noise, littering etc.) particularly from one flat used for 'holiday let'. | |
| BL031 | Flats should not be visible above the trees on Blackwell Lane | |
| BL054 | Perceived back tracking by the council on the 'top-end executive' offer. Flats and apartments for the elderly are seen as a sop. Would occupancy be conditioned? | |
| BL0048 | What sort of boundary, if any, will be included between the proposed development and existing properties / gardens? | |
| BL071 | There are no blocks of flats or three storey homes on the lane to set a precedent. | |
| BL071 | The hotel has applied to lease the land in a historical walled garden which used for overflow parking on extended terms (possibly 99 years) with the intention of demolishing the only fitness centre in the area and used by many elderly and young residents. Making the hotel less attractive for reservations or future possible leasing as it will have no facilities or sufficient parking for customers and people attending functions. | |

| HE1 – General | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL071 | If the intention is to improve the area for the elderly, independent living should be the way forward rather than the money making for profit ideas of assisted living. Where the only motive is for private companies to make profit for themselves rather than help the character and health of the surrounding area. | |
| BL073; BL078 | Reduce the value of my property. | |
| BL073 | Reason for purchasing family home was to live in a quiet, semi-rural location, with an extremely attractive outlook in an area of natural beauty adjacent to golf club and countryside. This was reflected in the purchase price of our house. | |
| BL156 | Houses proposed at the top of Blackwell Lane appear to be acceptable, although access is not clearly defined. | |
| BL158 | Object to 3 storey apartments because of requirements to increase public services such as drainage and water supply. | |
| BL160 | Dismayed to see the plans increase the dwelling numbers. Has there been any market analysis undertaken to justify the increase? While there is a growing and ageing population it is not feasible to assume that there is a realistic demand for older people wanting to move from their homes. Typically older people only move in response to a crisis (health decline, etc.) there are not pre-emptive decision makers in terms of housing future and there is no mention that these dwellings would be assisted living / warden controlled. | |
| BL160 | It is reasonable to conclude that the more you build, the less 'executive' or desirable the location becomes and thus the price of the new housing and those around it. | |
| BL160 | Despite consultation and objections raised, it appears a done deal in balancing the Council's books. Can the Council Clarify the expected build rate of dwellings? It is unfair to expect residents to endure building site noise, dirt and disruption over a number of years as was intimated in the first round of council's responses. | |
| BL160 | Will play little part in attracting business to the area. | |
| BL160 | Should be reduction in dwellings (but optimal situation would be no dwellings) | |
| BL162 | Scoring system used to select the parklands for development is flawed. | |
| BL162 | Proposed sites inappropriate as the majority of them in areas of historic significance where no development should be pursued, and have been hugely enlarged in the second consultation to include apartment blocks and roads through the parkland as well as possible large breaches in the listed perimeter wall. | |

| HE1 – General | | |
|---------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| | <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The site is part of the setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, however this does not mean that no change or even no harmful change can take place. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for less than substantial harm, providing there are public benefits.</p> <p>The proposed development is sufficiently far away from existing houses (twice the adopted separation distance) and separated by a public highway and a substantial belt of mature trees such that there will be no overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing or loss of privacy.</p> <p>The current proposals are for luxury apartments aimed at the retirement market. We cannot make decisions on what may or may not happen in the future. If circumstances change and an application is submitted to vary the planning conditions, then the variation will have to be considered at that time taking into account all relevant planning matters.</p> <p>On He1, 5 top-end executive houses are proposed and about 48 luxury apartments suitable for older people.</p> <p>The apartments are intended for sale not built to rent.</p> <p>There is a shortage of accommodation for sale suitable for older people.</p> <p>There are other powers to deal with anti-social behaviour, noise and littering. These problems are not generally associated with apartments occupied by older people.</p> <p>At two and a half storeys, roughly the height of the existing houses on Blackwell Lane, the proposed apartments would be below the height of the tree belt along Blackwell Lane.</p> <p>The planning permission would have an age restricted occupancy condition.</p> <p>Boundary treatments will be addressed in the Planning and Design Guidance. However, the general aim will be to keep the open appearance and, where boundaries are necessary for security or privacy, to reflect the boundaries in the parkland for example, hedges, shrubs and wrought iron fencing.</p> <p>While the existing built environment helps to set the context, just because there are no apartments along Blackwell Lane that is not a planning reason for refusal.</p> <p>Until a planning application is submitted, the intentions of the Hotel operators are pure speculation. However, the Council is keen for investment to go into Hotel improvements.</p> <p>There are different models of assisted living from independent living with care services brought in as required (similar to visits from the District Nurse) to residential homes for the elderly. In this case, the proposals are for the former.</p> | |

| HE1 – General | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| | <p>Loss of value of a home is not a planning matter. However, research undertaken by London School of Economics found that prices of existing houses sometimes fell while construction was going on but once the developments were completed, the local areas generally moved with the market. Researchers could find no evidence of longer-term negative impacts.</p> <p>If development goes ahead, Blackwell will remain as a quiet suburb. Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter.</p> <p>Northumbrian Water is the organisation responsible for the sewerage system and water supply. NW has raised no problems with providing these services.</p> <p>In terms of the need for accommodation for older people, Darlington has an aging population and the Council's Supported Housing Strategy Appendix 2 calculates that by 2025 there will be a requirement for an additional 163 Extra Care for sale units and an additional 981 Sheltered for sale units for people aged over 75. These figures do not include the needs of people below the age of 75. The clear message is there is a shortage of choice for people who want to purchase specialist elderly accommodation.</p> <p>There is a balance between the amount of development and the continued attractiveness of the parkland setting. However, the proposed development will be high quality, high specification, in a very attractive parkland setting, in a desirable residential suburb. It is reasonable to assume that the prices of the new dwellings will be higher than those of existing dwellings – although, that is not a planning matter.</p> <p>The build rate will be determined by the market.</p> <p>The scoring system used was revisited and, although there is disagreement over some of the results, there was one factual error which has since been rectified. However, this has not altered the overall conclusions that Blackwell is the most sustainable and appropriate location for top-end executive housing.</p> <p>There are no roads proposed through the parkland, only footpaths, and no large breaches proposed in the listed perimeter wall.</p> | |

| HE1 – Master plan | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL012 | Inclusion of apartments would be detrimental to the vision for 'high end executive housing' and will put off some 'high end' purchasers. | |
| BL012 | Majority of flats would be buy to let investments which would be a marked departure from the largely owner occupied properties in the area. Leading to a greater turnover of residents and loss of community feel. | |
| BL057; BL073; BL109ii | Object to apartments. BL109ii - due to impact on setting of listed building. Provision for extra care in HE2 should be sufficient. Object to development of houses, and three storey flats | Prefer original proposal for executive houses |

| HE1 – Master plan | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL109ii | Any housing here should be <6dw/ha and in the style of the Georgian building. Gardens should be designed to flow into the parkland to retain visual openness. | As comments |
| BL125ii; BL156 | Apartments/flats out of character with the area. | |
| BL166; BL169 | Apartments would be better placed in areas which could use a facelift. Other areas could benefit from new apartments, affordable dwellings and rejuvenated business properties. | Remove plans for apartments |
| BL174 | Support the idea of apartments around the hotel compared to many large detached houses - Big is not always better. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Provided the apartments are high quality, luxury apartments there is no reason to suppose they will put off high end purchasers. The planning permission could be conditioned to include an age restriction to the over 55s which should reduce turnover rates. The impact on the setting of the Listed Building is an important consideration and any scheme will be agreed with Historic England. The design and massing of the apartments would be agreed with Historic England.</p> | | |

| HE1 - Heritage | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL043; BL162 | Status of the Grade 2* listed perimeter wall is under threat. | Blackwell Lane wall should be retained |
| BL044 | Concerns over additional loss of parkland. The parkland is an asset of the town. High density housing and apartments will destroy this heritage. | The parkland should be conserved |
| BL0096; BL0097; BL108i; BL159; BL162 | The site is a sensitive area and should be retained as historic parkland. If any development takes place we will have lost the opportunity to save this parkland for future generations. | |

| HE1 - Heritage | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL090 | Concern regarding the likely adverse impact on the Grade II* Heritage asset, particularly DBC's response to Archaeo Environment's 2012 report and DBC's subsequent discussions with Historic England regarding the significance of the site, including the application made by a local resident for the site to be protected as a national heritage asset and the potential for an access to go through the site's historic boundary walls | Further consideration should be given to the impact of building on the Historic Parkland. Council should remove HE1 and undertake works to improve the area (drainage and tree planting). Pedestrian access to Mill Lane should be restored. No vehicular access between Grangeside and the Spinney. Land should be transferred to a Community Land Trust with an endowed fund to create an income for maintenance. Existing building (green keeper's compound) could become low density mews development. |
| BL1081ii; BL1081iii; BL159 | No justification for changing the site's current designation as park land - refers to Archaeo-Environmental Report. HE1 will have the greatest impact on the setting of Blackwell Grange. Building on other areas of park land would not encroach as much. | Site should remain as parkland |
| BL109ii | The site adds to the setting of the Grade II* listed building: tree lined boundary, fence, ridge and furrow and open space. Any housing here would be too close to the building | Remove plans for housing in this area. |

| HE1 - Heritage | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL162 | Have searched the Council's website in an effort to find documentation detailing the reasons behind the decision to set aside the expert recommendations and to propose development plots within the historic parklands and have only found a short reference to this in the Top End Executive Housing Sites Assessment Para 3.9. The wording of the para gives the impression that the AE recommendations have been followed, but in fact as the maps on the following page clearly show, they have not. Para 3.9 says ;the report says there is scope to accommodate some residential development within the grounds provided key features are conserved or enhanced and there is adequate public benefit to compensate for any harmful effect on the heritage assets. As a result of the findings of the study one of the three sites at Blackwell Grange was reduced in area and divided into two, resulting in four sites being proposed in the Preferred options DPD'. This is not in my view a fair summary of the report which makes quite clear that the only areas where there is scope to accommodate residential development are in Zone 1 and Zone 2 on the map on page 3 of that document. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The proposed development has no impact on the boundary walls. The preferred access uses the existing rear access to the Hotel.</p> <p>We have received advice from Historic England who allow for some harm to the settings of Listed Buildings, providing there is enhancement or public benefits, which in this case will involve restoration of the former parkland, enhancement of wildlife habitats and opening up the remaining parkland to the public. The impacts of the apartments upon the listed building will be assessed and will be guided by advice from Historic England. Historic England will also advise on any future planning applications for development on the site.</p> <p>The Statement of Significance (produced by Archaeo-Environment for the Council) has not been disregarded, but Historic England has provided us with different advice about the development potential of the site. It is not uncommon for professionals to have different opinions on subjective matters, based on interpretation of legislation and policy.</p> <p>Historic England has considered the application to have the park and gardens added to the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England and have decided not to add the grounds of Blackwell Grange to the Register.</p> | | |

| HE1 - Trees | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL031; BL043' BL020i | Concern over loss of trees. | Blackwell Lane trees should be retained |
| BL108v; BL159 | Concern that accesses on Blackwell Lane would result in detrimental effect on protected woodland. | The site should remain as parkland |
| Officer comments | | |

The number of trees to be felled will be kept to an absolute minimum and remaining trees, including their root systems, will be protected during construction.

| HE1 - Wildlife | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL044 | Concerns over additional loss of habitat. | The area should be left clear |
| BL158; BL020i | The proposed development can only be detrimental to wildlife (newts and bats) - strongly objects on these grounds. Report by Natural England should have been available during the consultation period. | |
| <p>Officer comments The proposals to create new wildlife habitats and increase public access will provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural environment and bring benefits for the local community through access to and contact with nature. There is no report by Natural England, only the consultation response which has been published since the end of the consultation period.</p> | | |

| HE1 - Access | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL017; BL038 | Object to access 2; Disagree with access 2 - a crossroad or mini roundabout opposite Hartford Road would be safer. | |
| BL109ii | Support for Council's preferred access using the existing road to the rear of the hotel to protect wall, trees and fence. | |
| BL015; BL031; BL042; | Number of flats that might be accessed from Blackwell Lane will result in too much traffic using the entrance at Blackwell Lane. | BL031- Access should be via the hotel access only. BL042 - Flats should not be concentrated in one area where high volume of vehicles will turn into one entrance (Blackwell Lane). The number of flats should be spread out with access from Carmel Road also. |
| BL014 | Blackwell Lane Access very poor. Narrow and poor visibility with parked cars. | |
| BL052 | Concerns with access 4 which is opposite their property regarding existing levels of Traffic on Blackwell Lane. | Move access 4 or at least provide no access through to Grange Road. |

| HE1 - Access | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL0049 | Entry points of Carmel Road South will cause further congestion on already busy road that is a narrow entry point to the town. May mean that alteration to the nearby large roundabout would have to occur plus possible detrimental widening of Carmel Road South. | Entry via Blackwell Lane onto Blackwell Grange Site. Entry via the old Golf Club onto Blackwell Village site |
| BL108; BL159 | Accesses 2 and 3 would compromise highway safety on Blackwell Lane. | Land should remain as parkland |
| BL158 | Any access will destroy valuable protected trees and the historic wall. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The existing access point to the rear of the hotel is the preferred option.</p> <p>Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and be positioned accordingly.</p> | | |

| HE1 – Highways | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL008; BL073 | I use the local area roads in car and on bicycle, and pavements on foot and am very aware of the traffic flows at all times of day and night. Am well placed to provide DBC an insight into how the proposed development will affect the residents in the immediate vicinity. The updated proposal will place pressure on the existing highways infrastructure. | |
| BL008 | Bridge Road is a totally inadequate conduit between the A1 and A66 and any increase in traffic levels on this road is sheer stupidity. There are regular traffic incidents at the junction with Blackwell and as a cyclist; I will not use it for fear of my life. | |
| BL008; BL071; BL0093; BL160 | Traffic build up around the Blands Corner roundabout is a common occurrence at all times of the day. Have seen a number of scary incidents in car and on bike here, often involving larger trucks. Development of any kind around this point and more traffic moving out from Blackwell Lane onto Carmel Road will add to traffic build up. | |

| HE1 – Highways | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL160 | Major concerns remain (safety and noise) in terms of revised 'preferred access points' in development. Proposed access points four and five are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in the peak times / school run) is of great concern (and seemingly poor planning). I missed any mention of any proposed traffic calming measures though a greater number of dwellings on all sites will mean greater traffic onto Blackwell Lane. If this goes ahead, an access point with a roundabout at the junction of Hartford Road and Blackwell Lane seems more appropriate. | Removal of proposed access points four and five as they are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in peak times / school run) is of great concern. Addition of access point onto Grange Road - the largest access point to the hotel. Inclusion of traffic calming measures. |
| BL008 | Darlington's long suffering football team are about to make a return to the area which will put extra pressure on the roads round about. Whenever an event occurs at the rugby club that its car park cannot cope with its user's park all along Grange Road down to Blands Corner roundabout. There are often near hits with people getting in and out of car and cars pulling into and out of parking spaces. If you add extra development you are asking for trouble along Blackwell Meadows if traffic handling measures are not introduced. | |
| BL008 | As a cyclist, the quality of the road surface on Grange Road, especially on the way into town, is atrocious and extra traffic will only make it worse. | |
| BL008 | Dangerous pinch point at junction of Blackwell Lane and Grange Road, traffic builds up and turning left or right at this point is always a risk - regular incidents here. Police figures are not accurate as some incidents go unreported. Increase in road users will increase risk and it is only a matter of time before something serious happens. A lot of road users on Grange Road do not adhere to speed limits. | |
| BL015; BL034; BL044; BL101 | Concerns relating to traffic congestion. | The area should be left clear |
| BL015 | Speed bumps needed on Blackwell Lane. | |
| BL052 | If connected through it could be used as a cut through to Grange Road. | Move access 4 or at least provide no access through to Grange |

| HE1 – Highways | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| | | Road. |
| BL0096; BL0097 | Would increase traffic flow and that in turn would result in parking issues, additional noise and cause stress to residents. | |
| BL071 | Flats are aimed at couples who will have a car each, meaning cars into three figures just for them. | |
| BL071 | We will need extensive traffic lights, pelican crossings and traffic calming measures to secure residents and child safety. | |
| BL071 | The flats should be moved closer to the entrance on Grange Road where you have good safe access to high density living such as flats. | |
| BL149 | Blackwell Lane already a rat-run known to the police. Additional development will make this worse. | |
| BL156 | Flats will have a greater density than other types of housing and therefore a greater increase in traffic on Blackwell Lane | |
| BL158 | Object to 3 storey apartments due to highway safety being compromised due to traffic generation and inadequate capacity. Car parking and pedestrians and cyclists will also have significant issues | |
| BL160 | There is poor public transport and social infrastructure on all proposed sites. Blackwell Lane is not a bus route, there are no doctor surgeries, pharmacies, and cafes - the types of services older and typically less mobile people will want to use. I also fail to see how the targeted demographic for these apartments will walk across the parkland, past the hotel, etc. to get to a bus stop. It is not feasible to assume that this demographic will either own or be able to drive a car. The site is just as unfeasible as the Council believed Stressholme to be for development. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>A Transport Assessment is currently being produced in consultation with Highways England that will demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the local and strategic highway and this will help to inform the density of building on site. As part of the assessment accident statistics are reviewed and taken into consideration. This will also include a Travel plan that will assess the needs of non-motorised users. Bridge Road and the A66 is owned and maintained by Highways England. There are proposals to improve Bland's Corner roundabout which Highways England are reviewing. Off-site highway improvements to mitigate the development traffic would be highlighted, if required, within the Transport Assessment.</p> | | |

| HE1 – Amenity and Open Space | | |
|---|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL002 BL017 BL039 BL009; BL035; BL073; BL104; BL124i; BL124ii; BL150; | 3 storey apartments will ruin many people's views from their homes; Too high. | No apartments - bungalows, detached or semis would blend in with the area |
| BL020 BL020i; BL034; BL166; BL169 | Concern regarding sudden addition of apartments to the plan. Should be located off Grange Road to minimise impact. | BL034- Apartments should be removed |
| BL020 BL20i; BL034 | Concern regarding loss of green outlook and loss of natural space. | |
| BL042; BL071 | Our bungalow on Draycote Crescent has benefit of being very quiet - concerned volume of traffic associated with the new flats will change this. | |
| BL043 | Concern over height of flats. | Height of proposed flats behind Blackwell Lane should be 2 storey maximum |
| BL052 | Green space in and around residential areas should be retained for the wellbeing of the people living in the area. | Lowest density housing possible should be provided. |
| BL0096; BL0097; BL009; BL093; BL101; BL108v; BL145; BL149; BL150; BL159 | Residents would lose their privacy by being overlooked by any development; Loss of light; 43 Blackwell Lane - bought our property knowing we would have complete privacy, no support for any development that would have windows overlooking us. | |
| BL0096; BL0097 | Development would result in more street lighting and that would increase more light pollution in the area. | |
| BL0048 | Would like untidy dense uncontrolled undergrowth of gardens in Upsall Drive to be removed and kept at bay as part of any development. | |
| BL071 | The flats between HE1 and HE2 should be moved further away from the lane and ideally be replaced with bungalows, as there is a shortage of them in the area. | |
| BL071 | Flats often end up in the hands of buy to let landlords, and we will have letting signs all the way along the lane. | |

| HE1 – Amenity and Open Space | | |
|---|---|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL090; BL0093; BL101; BL145; BL158 | Concern regarding the effect on the character of the neighbourhood, visual impact, overlooking and loss of privacy - particularly with reference to the setting of the listed building (references correspondence with Historic England). Concerns regarding design and layout of new dwellings, specifically the greater density and proximity to existing properties. Considers the enjoyment of a view part of residential amenity. Overshadowing. | Further consideration should be given to the impact of building on the Historic Parkland and Blackwell Grange. Council should remove HE1 and undertake works to improve the area (drainage and tree planting). Land should be transferred to a Community Land Trust with an endowed fund to create an income for maintenance. Existing building (green keeper's compound) could become low density mews development. |
| BL101; BL158 | Intrusion from odour, general disturbance and an enormous amount of noise nuisance. | No new housing |
| BL125ii | Proposed dwelling to the rear of 18 & 20 Upsall Drive is too close to existing properties - loss of privacy and overlooking. | Should be re-sited |
| BL158 | Apartments/flats would be detrimental to existing residential amenity, overdevelopment of a wooded landscaped area and historically significant wall. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter, though impact on an individual's amenity and the amenity of an area is. The residential amenity of existing and future residents would be considered as part of any development design and layout at the planning application stage. Detailed comments and suggestions regarding the development will be taken into account in the detailed design of any development, and residents will have the opportunity to engage in this through the planning application process.</p> <p>Although the proposal would involve loss of some open space, it retains the majority of it, and would result in improvements to the remainder of the open space as well as making it publically accessible for the enjoyment of future generations.</p> <p>The proposed development is sufficiently far away from existing houses (twice the adopted separation distance) such that there will be no overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing or loss of privacy.</p> <p>The land immediately adjacent to Blackwell Lane will be managed by a Trust who will ensure that fly posters and inappropriate letting signs would be removed.</p> <p>The high quality of the proposed development in this quiet setting will appeal to people who appreciate the quality environment. Why would they create problems of odour, general disturbance and noise?</p> | | |

| HE1– Flooding and Drainage | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL149 | My house and that of my neighbour (on Upsall Drive) suffer from flooding whenever the ex-golf course land is saturated. Reducing land to absorb water will only increase risk and frequency of flooding. | Remove development from He1 and He2 |
| <p>Officer comments This is not a constraint to development, as maintaining greenfield rates of surface water runoff would be conditioned through the planning process. There is also a strong probability that the residential development would actually resolve the drainage problems as this would affect the saleability of the new houses.</p> | | |

HE2 Comments – Referring to HE2 Specifically

| HE2 – General | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL008; BL035; BL049; BL071; BL073; BL104; BL149; BL149 | Character of the site will not be maintained by building blocks of flats on it, no matter how much money they will be sold for; In the winter the flats will be very visible from Blackwell Lane (2) | (2) Look at lower level high density schemes that would imaginatively sit well within the setting not above it. |
| BL008 | Do not believe that by the Council saying they will be exclusively for the elderly, that they will actually be used for this purpose. Developers who build for the retirement market would not be interested in the location due to lack of services and it would be easy for the Council to say that they could not get buyers for the retirement market so the apartments will have to be sold to regular developers. | |
| BL009 | Disgusted at the Council's plans for housing on the historic Blackwell Grange Parkland | |
| BL009 | Could you tell me the total number of houses / apartments proposed | |
| BL009 | Totally opposed to flats as they are normally built to rent out | |
| BL009 | Three storey flats too high | |
| BL015 | Too many existing apartments in the town that are vacant so no need for more | BL015 - Should be returned to being a Hotel and Golf Course |
| BL027 | How high will flats be built | |
| BL044 | Concerns relating to density of dwellings, particularly with respect to increasing the density of housing above the original 6 per hectare | The area should be left clear |
| BL012 | Previous experience of living in a flat at Scholars Park and had persistent problems with Anti-Social behaviour (noise, littering etc.) particularly from one flat used for 'holiday let'. | |
| BL031 | Flats should not be visible above the trees on Blackwell Lane | |
| BL034 | Concern regarding sudden addition of apartments to the plan. Should be located off Grange Road to minimise impact. | Apartments should be removed. |
| BL054 | Perceived back tracking by the council on the 'top-end executive' offer. Flats and apartments for the elderly are seen as a sop. Would occupancy be conditioned? | |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - Support for the principle of development in this location has previously been received through the site allocation process and pre-application advice. Note the Council's existing policies on housing suitable for older people and commissioned their own Care Needs Assessment in January 2015 which identified further need for extra care/sheltered housing within the local area. Includes indicative site plan for development of the site. | |

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| BL064 | Hotel operator - an extra care/sheltered housing facility at HE2 would help meet housing need (including Use Class C2), stimulate the housing market, provide facilities for the wider community and facilitate the long term retention of the hotel. | |
| BL071 | There are no blocks of flats or three storey homes on the lane to set a precedent. | |
| BL071 | If the intention is to improve the area for the elderly, independent living should be the way forward rather than the money making for profit ideas of assisted living. Where the only motive is for private companies to make profit for themselves rather than help the character and health of the surrounding area. | |
| BL073 | Object to development of houses and three storey flats | |
| BL071 | The hotel has applied to lease the land in a historical walled garden which used for overflow parking on extended terms (possibly 99 years) with the intention of demolishing the only fitness centre in the area and used by many elderly and young residents. Making the hotel less attractive for reservations or future possible leasing as it will have no facilities or sufficient parking for customers and people attending functions. | |
| BL0073 | Reduce the value of my property | |
| BL073 | Reason for purchasing family home was to live in a quiet, semi-rural location, with an extremely attractive outlook in an area of natural beauty adjacent to golf club and countryside. This was reflected in the purchase price of our house. | |
| BL160 | Dismayed to see the plans increase the dwelling numbers. Has there been any market analysis undertaken to justify the increase? While there is a growing and ageing population it is not feasible to assume that there is a realistic demand for older people wanting to move from their homes. Typically older people only move in response to a crisis (health decline, etc.) there are no pre-emptive decision makers in terms of housing future and there is no mention that these dwellings would be assisted living / warden controlled. | |
| BL160 | It is reasonable to conclude that the more you build, the less 'executive' or desirable the location becomes and thus the price of the new housing and those around it. | |
| BL160 | Despite consultation and objections raised, it appears a done deal in balancing the Council's books. Can the Council Clarify the expected build rate of dwellings? It is unfair to expect residents to endure building site noise, dirt and disruption over a number of years as was intimated in the first round of council's responses. | Removal of all HE2 dwellings proposed. |

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| BL162 | Proposed sites inappropriate as the majority of them in areas of historic significance where no development should be pursued, and have been hugely enlarged in the second consultation to include apartment blocks and roads through the parkland as well as possible large breaches in the listed perimeter wall. | |
| BL162 | Important that careful thought should be given to the future of the entire site including the Grange, which although currently leased to Forestdale Hotels, belongs together with the parkland to the town of Darlington. | |

Officer comments

The site is part of the setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, however this does not mean that no change or even no harmful change can take place. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for less than substantial harm, providing there are public benefits.

The proposed development is sufficiently far away from existing houses (twice the adopted separation distance) and separated by a public highway and a substantial belt of mature trees such that there will be no overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing or loss of privacy.

The current proposals are for luxury apartments aimed at the retirement market. We cannot make decisions on what may or may not happen in the future. If circumstances change and an application is submitted to vary the planning conditions, then the variation will have to be considered at that time taking into account all relevant planning matters.

Measures are in place through environmental health regulations to control statutory nuisance for things like noise and litter. However, these problems are not generally associated with apartments occupied by older people.

At two and a half storeys, roughly the height of the existing houses on Blackwell Lane, the proposed apartments would be below the height of the tree belt along Blackwell Lane.

Building on the Grange Road of the site is more sensitive from a Listed Building perspective because it includes both the original and the later access to the building and allows for views of the primary, front, elevation. In terms of impact on the former parkland, the Blackwell Lane side of the site has already seen housing development in the form of Grangeside and The Spinney. Historic England have advised there is only so far east new development could extend on the site before substantial harm (as identified in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework) would occur. Housing on this part of the site was ruled out early on for this reason.

While the existing built environment helps to set the context, just because there are no apartments along Blackwell Lane that is not a planning reason for refusal.

There are different models of assisted living from independent living with care services brought in as required (similar to visits from the District Nurse) to residential homes for the elderly. In this case, the proposals are for the former.

Until a planning application is submitted, the intentions of the Hotel operators are pure speculation. However, the Council is keen for investment to go into Hotel improvements.

Loss in value of homes is not a planning matter. However, research undertaken by London School of Economics found that prices of existing houses sometimes fell while construction was going on but once the developments were completed, the local areas generally moved with the market. Researchers could find no evidence of longer-term negative impacts.

In terms of the need for accommodation for older people, Darlington has an aging population and the Council's Supported Housing Strategy Appendix 2 calculates that by 2025 there will be a requirement for an additional 163 Extra Care for sale units and an additional 981 Sheltered for sale units for people aged over 75. These figures do not include the needs of people below the age of 75. The clear message is there is a shortage of choice for people who want to purchase specialist elderly accommodation.

There is a balance between the amount of development and the continued attractiveness of the parkland setting. However, the proposed development will be high quality, high specification, in a very attractive parkland setting, in a desirable residential suburb.

The build rate will be determined by the market.

There are no roads proposed through the parkland, only footpaths, and no large breaches proposed in the listed perimeter wall.

| HE2 – Master plan | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL012 | Inclusion of apartments would be detrimental to the vision for 'high end executive housing' and will put off some 'high end' purchasers. | |
| BL012; BL071 | Majority of flats would be buy-to-let investments which would be a marked departure from the largely owner occupied properties in the area. Leading to a greater turnover of residents and loss of community feel. We will have letting signs all the way along the lane. | |
| BL109 | Extra care accommodation has some merit, although expected yield may not be achieved. Support proposal to demolish existing gym and replace with sympathetically designed apartments, but concerned about building in other areas due to car parking requirements near the hotel. | Proposals should pay full regard to the sensitive historic setting. |

| HE2 – Master plan | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL151 | Not clear whether development will extend beyond the walled garden or not from description/plans. Concern regarding hotel parking being built on and replacement provision. | |
| BL155 | Previous plans were reasonable but new plans involve selling land off to developers and putting in apartment blocks and care/assisted living blocks are unreasonable, all with access via the hotel drive. | Go back to original plan. |
| BL156 | Apartment blocks proposed at rear of the hotel are acceptable as they are in a well landscaped area and accessed by an existing private road. | |
| BL174 | Support the idea of apartments around the hotel compared to many large detached houses - Big is not always better. | |

Officer comments

Provided the apartments are high quality, luxury apartments there is no reason to suppose they will put off high end purchasers. The planning permission could be conditioned to include an age restriction to the over 55s which should reduce turnover rates. The impact on the setting of the Listed Building is an important consideration and any scheme will be agreed with Historic England. The design and massing of the apartments would be agreed with Historic England.

The proposals extend into two parcels of land beyond the walled garden.

| HE2 - Heritage | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL043 | Concern over loss of wall | Blackwell Lane wall should be retained |
| BL044 | Concerns over additional loss of parkland. The parkland is an asset of the town. High density housing and apartments will destroy this heritage | The parkland should be conserved |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - consider the area to the West of the hotel to be the least sensitive and note that the statement of significance highlights the scope for the walled garden and former orchard to be brought back into use, including for residential use. Consider that allocating HE2 would bring heritage benefits by facilitating improvements to the listed buildings and removing unsympathetic developments in the walled garden. | |

| HE2 - Heritage | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL009 | Most concerned that any permitted development on HE2 the former Orchards of Blackwell Grange is carried out with the greatest sensitivity and retains the key historical features. | |
| BL083; BL084 | Statement of Significance stated He2 and He3 is of historic and environmental interest, this has been disregarded. | |
| BL162 | Any permitted development in the site, the former orchards of Blackwell Grange is carried out with the greatest sensitivity and retains the key historical features and the beautiful trees which border here. | |
| BL162 | Suggest that rather than pursuing housing development in this area, the Council should follow the recommendations set out in the 2012 Statement of Significance and pursue a positive and protective course of action which seeks designation of the park as a historic landscape, requests funding from the HLF to perform the necessary conservation and restoration work and extends the centre of Darlington Conservation area to include this valuable historic resource. | |

Officer comments

The former parkland, has since 1971 until relatively recently been in use as golf course. The parkland does not meet Historic England's criteria to be registered as an Historic Park and Garden as a result of the changes that have taken place on the site over the years. There are plans to enhance the former parkland and create a local nature reserve, funded by development on the site.

The site is part of the setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, however this does not mean that no change or even no harmful change can take place. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for less than substantial harm, providing there are public benefits. We have received advice from Historic England that the allocation of the site for relatively low density, top-end executive housing would constitute less than substantial harm. Impact upon the listed building has been assessed and has been guided by advice from Historic England. Their advice gave us a steer that the site has some more development potential than the Archaeo-Environment Report of 2012 advises. The Statement of Significance (produced by Archaeo- Environment for the Council) has not been disregarded, but Historic England has provided us with different advice about the development potential of the site. It is not uncommon for professionals to have different opinions on subjective matters, based on interpretation of legislation and policy. Historic England will also advise on any future planning applications for development on the site. Historic England has been consulted and their response can be viewed online (Ref No. BL79).

The boundary wall is curtilage Listed so alterations or any loss require prior Listed Building Consent. The proposed development has no impact on the boundary walls. The preferred access uses the existing rear access to the Hotel.

A satisfactory solution to the displaced Hotel parking will be an important consideration for any proposal to develop within the walled garden.

| HE2 - Trees | | |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL043; BL009 | Concern over loss of trees | Blackwell Lane trees should be retained |
| BL109 | Tree perimeter of HE2 should be retained to screen new buildings from Blackwell Lane and the Hotel. | As comments |
| BL163 | A substantial number of trees will need to be removed, including those with TPOs, affecting the strong tree canopy, character of the area and wildlife habitats. | |

Officer comments

It is recognised that the existing trees are a very important element of the area. The vast majority will be retained. The number felled will be kept to an absolute minimum and they will be protected from damage during construction. Any planning application for residential development will be assessed on this basis, together with all other planning considerations.

| HE2 - Wildlife | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL044 | Concerns over additional loss of habitat | The area should be left clear |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - note that the site compares favourably to others in terms of impact on ecology, specifically great crested newts | |

Officer comments

Natural England has set out specific requirements within its response and will maintain a watchful eye over the proposals for residential development. It can also exercise

control at the planning application stage, not only as a consultee but also through the issuing or non-issuing of licences. With appropriately designed development and protection of wildlife during the construction phase, the impact on wildlife can be minimised. The proposals to create new wildlife habitats and increase public access will provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural environment and bring benefits for the local community through access to and contact with nature.

| HE2- Access | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL015; BL031; BL042 | Object to number of flats that might be accessed from Blackwell Lane. Concerned there will be too much traffic using the entrance at Blackwell Lane | BL031 - Access should be via existing hotel access only. BL042- Flats should not be concentrated in one area where high volume of vehicles will turn into one entrance (Blackwell Lane). The number of flats should be spread out with access from Carmel Road also |
| BL014 | Blackwell Lane Access very poor. Narrow and poor visibility with parked cars. | |
| BL052 | Concerns with access 4 which is opposite their property regarding existing levels of Traffic on Blackwell Lane. | Move access 4 or at least provide no access through to Grange Road. |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - Consider that access point 4 identified by the Council would adequately serve the development of HE2. | |
| BL109 | Access to the parkland along woodland path to the rear of the hotel should be maintained for tree/wildlife value and public access. | As comments |
| BL156 | Access road would need to be modified - potential that cars will use route to go from Blackwell to Grange Road | |

Officer comments

The existing access point to the rear of the hotel is the preferred option.

Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and have been positioned accordingly.

It is likely that there will be some bollards, or similar, to prevent vehicular access between Blackwell Lane and Grange Road.

| HE2 – Highways | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL008 | As a resident of over 15 years I use the local area roads in car and on bicycle, and pavements on foot and am very aware of the traffic flows at all times of day and night. Am well placed to provide DBC an insight into how the proposed development will affect the residents in the immediate vicinity. The updated proposal will place pressure on the existing highways infrastructure. | |
| BL008; BL049; BL71 | Bridge Road is a totally inadequate conduit between the A1 and A66 and any increase in traffic levels on this road is sheer stupidity. There are regular traffic incidents at the junction with Blackwell and as a cyclist; I will not use it for fear of my life. (2) Busy road that is a narrow entry point to the town. May mean that alteration to the nearby large roundabout would have to occur plus possible detrimental widening of Carmel Road South. | (2) Entry via Blackwell Lane onto Blackwell Grange site, Entry via the old Golf Club entrance on Blackwell Village site. |
| BL008; BL027; BL073 | Traffic build up around the Blands Corner roundabout is a common occurrence at all times of the day. Have seen a number of scary incidents in car and on bike here, often involving larger trucks. Development of any kind around this point and more traffic moving out from Blackwell Lane onto Carmel Road will add to traffic build up. | |
| BL008 | Darlington's long suffering football team are about to make a return to the area which will put extra pressure on the roads round about. Whenever an event occurs at the rugby club that its car park cannot cope with its user's park all along Grange Road down to Blands Corner roundabout. There are often near hits with people getting in and out of car and cars pulling into and out of parking spaces. If you add extra development you are asking for trouble along Blackwell Meadows if traffic handling measures are not introduced. | |
| BL008 | As a cyclist, the quality of the road surface on Grange Road, especially on the way into town, is atrocious and extra traffic will only make it worse. | |
| BL008 | Dangerous pinch point at junction of Blackwell Lane and Grange Road, traffic builds up and turning left or right at this point is always a risk - regular incidents here. Police figures are not accurate as some incidents go unreported. Increase in road users will increase risk and it is only a matter of time before something serious happens. A lot of road users on Grange Road do not adhere to speed limits | |
| BL012; BL027 | What is the parking solution to serve hotel and new development?; Some concern about relocated car parking from the wall garden to allow development in HE2, how can this be achieved in the parkland | |
| BL015; BL034; BL044 | Concerns relating to traffic congestion | The area should be left clear |
| BL015 | Speed bumps needed on Blackwell Lane | |

| HE2 – Highways | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL052 | If connected through it could be used as a cut through to Grange Road. | Move access 4 or at least provide no access through to Grange Road. |
| BL071 | Flats are aimed at couples who will have a car each, meaning cars into three figures just for them. | |
| BL071 | We will need extensive traffic lights, pelican crossings and traffic calming measures to secure residents and child safety. | |
| BL071 | The flats should be moved closer to the entrance on Grange Road where you have good safe access to high density living such as flats. | |
| BL149 | Blackwell Lane already a rat-run known to the police. Additional development will make this worse. | |
| BL160 | Major concerns remain (safety and noise) in terms of revised 'preferred access points' in development. Proposed access points four and five are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in the peak times / school run) is of great concern (and seemingly poor planning). I missed any mention of any proposed traffic calming measures though a greater number of dwellings on all sites will mean greater traffic onto Blackwell Lane. If this goes ahead, an access point with a roundabout at the junction of Hartford Road and Blackwell Lane seems more appropriate. | Removal of proposed access points four and five as they are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in peak times / school run) is of great concern. Addition of access point onto Grange Road - the largest access point to the hotel. Inclusion of traffic calming measures. |
| BL160 | There is poor public transport and social infrastructure on all proposed sites. Blackwell Lane is not a bus route, there are no doctor surgeries, pharmacies, and cafes - the types of services older and typically less mobile people will want to use. I also fail to see how the targeted demographic for these apartments will walk across the parkland, past the hotel, etc. to get to a bus stop. It is not feasible to assume that this demographic will either own or be able to drive a car. The site is just as unfeasible as the Council believed Stressholme to be for development. | |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - site is close to local services and local public transport | |

Officer comments

A Transport Assessment is currently being produced in consultation with Highways England that will demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the local and strategic highway and this will help to inform the density of building on site. As part of the assessment accident statistics are reviewed and taken into consideration. This will also include a Travel plan that will assess the needs of non-motorised users. Bridge Road and the A66 is owned and maintained by Highways England. There are proposals to improve Bland Corner roundabout which Highways England are reviewing. Off site highway improvements to mitigate the development traffic would be highlighted as required within the Transport Assessment. This Transport Assessment will include consideration of the impact on the local highway network based on assumptions of movements associated with the proposed move of Darlington Football Club to Blackwell Meadows.

HE2 – Amenity and Open Space

| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) |
|----------------------|---|---|
| BL042; BL071 | Our bungalow on Draycote Crescent has benefit of being very quiet - concerned volume of traffic associated with the new flats will change this. | |
| BL043 | Concern over height of flats. | Height of proposed flats behind Blackwell Lane should be 2 storey maximum |
| BL013; BL149 | Flats will look directly into our property and we would lose our view. | Withdraw the application or come up with more sympathetic proposals. |
| BL034 | Concern regarding loss of green outlook and loss of natural space | |
| BL052 | Green space in and around residential areas should be retained for the wellbeing of the people living in the area. | Lowest density housing possible should be provided. |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - development of HE2 on amenity would be limited due to screening, use of existing accesses and the 'extra care' proposal being a low traffic generator. | |
| BL071 | Flats between HE1 and HE2 should be moved further away from the lane and ideally be replaced with bungalows as there is a shortage of them in the area. | |

Officer comments

Although the proposal would involve loss of some open space, the majority is retained, and would result in improvements to the remainder of the open space.

Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter, though impact on an individual's amenity and the amenity of an area is. The residential amenity of existing and future residents will be considered as part of any detailed design and layout, at the planning application stage. This will include details of heights and precise locations of dwellings.

Any impact of the proposed development in relation to potential additional noise will be considered at planning application stage. It is unlikely that there would be a significant change in traffic noise than that already experienced on surrounding roads.

| HE2 – Flooding and Drainage | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Summary of Comments | Change Proposed (if any) | Change Proposed (if any) |
| BL064 | Hotel operator - note that the site is at low risk of flooding | |
| BL149 | My house and that of my neighbour (on Upsall Drive) suffer from flooding whenever the ex-golf course land is saturated. Reducing land to absorb water will only increase risk and frequency of flooding. | Remove development from He1 and He2 |

Officer comments

Environment Agency information shows that there is no flood risk affecting any of the development sites. However, there is some land that experiences surface water drainage problems. This is not a constraint to development, as maintaining green field rates of surface water runoff would be conditioned through the planning process. There is also a strong probability that the residential development would actually resolve the drainage problems as this would affect the saleability of the new house.

The Drainage Study demonstrates that there are several drainage solutions, including the opportunity to incorporate a sustainable drainage scheme (SuDS) within the remaining parkland; the latter would have the added benefit of providing additional habitat for the great crested newts and other species. Therefore, drainage is not an insurmountable problem and could actually be improved for existing residents through the new development.

HE3 Comments – Referring to HE3 Specifically

| HE3 – General | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL009 | Disgusted at the Council's plans for housing on the historic Blackwell Grange Parkland. | |
| BL073 | Reason for purchasing family home was to live in a quiet, semi-rural location, with an extremely attractive outlook in an area of natural beauty adjacent to golf club and countryside. This was reflected in the purchase price of our house. | |
| BL073 | Reduce the value of my property. | |
| BL074 | One positive note, perhaps the wheelie bin depot on the land will be moved. | |
| BL074 | What provision has been made for potential new residents re Doctors surgery and schools for children? | |
| BL109iv | Openness and trees make this the most attractive park in Darlington, which has recently become public. Selling off the land for financial gain is wicked and will benefit developers rather than the Council. | |
| BL109iv | Concern that alternative options for maintaining and restoring the park land have not been fully explored, such as lottery funding, land trusts and volunteers. Concern that calculations on how much maintenance will cost and how that would be raised through a levy have not been done. | Investigate innovative schemes which preserve open space and character as alternatives to housing and for attracting businesses to the town |
| BL160 | Dismayed to see the plans increase the dwelling numbers. Has there been any market analysis undertaken to justify the increase? While there is a growing and ageing population it is not feasible to assume that there is a realistic demand for older people wanting to move from their homes. Typically older people only move in response to a crisis (health decline, etc.) there are no pre-emptive decision makers in terms of housing future and there is no mention that these dwellings would be assisted living / warden controlled. | |

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| BL160 | It is reasonable to conclude that the more you build, the less 'executive' or desirable the location becomes and thus the price of the new housing and those around it. | |
| BL160 | Despite consultation and objections raised, it appears a done deal in balancing the Council's books. Can the Council Clarify the expected build rate of dwellings? It is unfair to expect residents to endure building site noise, dirt and disruption over a number of years as was intimated in the first round of council's responses. | |
| BL160 | Will play little part in attracting business to the area. | |
| BL160 | Should be reduction in dwellings (but optimal situation would be no dwellings). | |
| BL162 | Proposed sites inappropriate as the majority of them in areas of historic significance where no development should be pursued, and have been hugely enlarged in the second consultation to include apartment blocks and roads through the parkland as well as possible large breaches in the listed perimeter wall. | |
| BL162 | Scoring system used to select the parklands for development is flawed. | |
| BL050 | Concern about misleading use of the term 'slightly' when describing changes to density for HE3. The site has exactly doubled in density and has been enlarged at both ends; this is significant not 'slightly'. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The Core Strategy also sets out how the borough will help meet a small sub-regional need for small numbers of top-end executive housing, to support economic growth in the borough and wider Tees Valley area, which could reduce in-commuting.</p> <p>The various studies that have been undertaken were to provide as much information as possible on the site, and the surrounding area, and to inform the development of the masterplan.</p> <p>Detailed comments and suggestions regarding the development will be taken into account in the detailed design of any development, and residents will have the opportunity to engage in this through the planning application process.</p> | | |

Loss of value of property is not a planning matter. Research undertaken by London School of Economics found that prices of existing houses sometimes fell while construction was going on, but once the developments were completed, the local areas generally moved with the market. Researchers could find no evidence of longer term negative impacts.

Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter, though impact on an individual's amenity and the amenity of an area is. The residential amenity of existing and future residents would be considered as part of any development design and layout at the planning application stage.

Contributions to support additional school places would be required as part of a legal agreement between the developer and the Council as part of the planning application process.

Alternative sources of funding such as Heritage Lottery Fund have been investigated. However, either the parkland fails to meet the criteria for funding and/or the funding organisation requires a 5% contribution for schemes below £1 million or 10% for schemes above £1 million. In addition, revenue funding is time limited after which the scheme is required to be self-financing. Therefore, at present, the proposed residential development plus the levy from new residents is the only mechanism to guarantee funding for the restoration and enhancement of the remaining parkland, the creation of new wildlife habitats and increased public access. This is the best way, at the moment, of ensuring that the remaining parkland is enjoyed by future generations. However, if new opportunities emerge, alternative ways of funding the restoration and enhancement of the parkland should be considered, particularly to support ongoing maintenance and management that may otherwise fall short of target revenues if development does not progress as quickly or in the amounts being planned for.

Darlington has an aging population and the Council's Supported Housing Strategy Appendix 2 calculates that by 2025 there will be a requirement for an additional 163 Extra Care for sale units and an additional 981 Sheltered for sale units for people aged over 75. These figures do not include the needs of people below the age of 75. The clear message is there is a shortage of choice for people who want to purchase specialist elderly accommodation. This is also identified in the adopted Core Strategy.

There is a balance between the amount of development and the continued attractiveness of the parkland setting. However, the proposed development will be high quality, high specification, in a very attractive parkland setting, in a desirable residential suburb. It is reasonable to assume that the prices of the new dwellings will be higher than those of existing dwellings – although, that is not a planning matter.

There are no roads proposed through the parkland, only footpaths, and no large breaches proposed in the listed perimeter wall.

The build rate will be determined by the market.

The scoring system used was revisited and, although there is disagreement over some of the results, there was one factual error which has since been rectified. However, this has not altered the overall conclusions that Blackwell is the most sustainable and appropriate location for top-end executive housing.

The proposals have been informed by the comments received from statutory consultees, who accept the development of housing in this area in principle.

The suggested increase in density is still significantly below the average density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare for the Borough as a whole in the Core Strategy.

All comments received from residents will be considered as part of the decision-making process and residents would also have the opportunity to take part in the planning application process.

| HE3 - Master plan | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL056 | Against new proposals for additional dwellings. | Number of dwellings on He3 should be limited to 11 executive type houses. |
| BL061 | How can we be assured once a few houses have been built around The Grange/The Spinney, more won't follow? | All plans for building to be removed |
| BL061 | Can we be assured that social housing won't be built in the area and lower property values? | All plans for building to be removed |
| BL107iv | Concerned that the number of dwellings has increased and that the positioning of new houses will result in a loss of privacy. | Site should be limited in numbers and carefully planned to retain high standard of amenity for dwellings on the Spinney. Support dwellings, individually designed in own grounds. |

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| BL109v | Southern part of HE3 seems suitable for development provided not too close to A66/Grange Road. | Develop southern part of HE3 sensitively - low level properties at <12dw/ha. Green space within the area and access to Blackwell village's heart. A pond for residents and wildlife would be welcome. |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The masterplan approach allows the development of sites to be considered comprehensively, and as a result, it follows that there would be no intention of future incremental development on the remaining parkland.</p> <p>Issues such as impact on amenity and privacy and house types will be considered in detail as part of the planning application process, along with other development management considerations, such as impact on trees, etc.</p> | | |

| HE3 – Heritage | | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |

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| BL090; BL162 | Concern regarding the likely adverse impact on the Grade II* Heritage asset, particularly DBC's response to Archaeo Environment's 2012 report and DBC's subsequent discussions with Historic England regarding the significance of the site, including the application made by a local resident for the site to be protected as a national heritage asset and the potential for an access to go through the site's historic boundary walls | Further consideration should be given to the impact of building on the Historic Parkland. Council should remove HE3 and undertake works to improve the area (drainage and tree planting). Pedestrian access to Mill Lane should be restored. No vehicular access between Grangeside and the Spinney. Land should be transferred to a Community Land Trust with an endowed fund to create an income for maintenance. Existing building (green keeper's compound) could become low density mews development. |
| BL0096; BL0097; | The site is a sensitive site and should be retained as historic parkland. If any development takes place we will have lost the opportunity to save this parkland for future generations. | |
| BL109v; BL162 | Northern part of HE3 was within original landscaped estate of Blackwell Grange. Object to its development due to the loss of heritage asset for the town. | Do not build houses in the northern part of HE3 |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>The former parkland, has since 1971 until relatively recently been in use as a golf course. The parkland does not meet Historic England's criteria to be registered as a Historic Park and Garden as a result of the changes that have taken place on the site over the years. There are plans to enhance the former parkland and create a local nature reserve, funded by development on the site.</p> <p>The site is part of the setting of the Grade II* Listed Building, however this does not mean that no change or even no harmful change can take place. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework allows for less than substantial harm, providing there are public benefits. We have received advice from Historic England that the allocation of the site for relatively low density, top-end executive housing would constitute less than substantial harm. Impact upon the listed building has been assessed and has been guided by advice from Historic England. Their advice gave us a steer that the site has some more development potential than the Archaeo-Environment Report of 2012 advises. Historic England will also advise on any future planning applications for development on the site. Historic England (formerly English Heritage) have been consulted and their response can be viewed online (Ref No. BL79).</p> | | |

It is acknowledged that the Blackwell area of Darlington has some historic and traditional buildings and is made up of high quality suburbs. Any new development on the Blackwell Grange site should to be guided by Darlington’s high quality suburbs, including Blackwell and the West End.

A Parkland Restoration Plan would form part of any planning application.

| HE3 - Trees | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL047 | Can you confirm the existing trees on Blackwell Lane and Carmel Road South would be preserved to screen new homes? We assume that trees marked orange on the enclosed map would be preserved in any construction (please see consultation response for attached plan) | |
| BL107v | The treed area to the rear of the Spinney should be maintained as trees to provide a buffer between dwellings. | Amend plans accordingly |
| BL074 | Concern about loss of mature trees the access road will result in | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>It is recognised that the existing trees are a very important element of the area and the vast majority will be retained. Any planning application for residential development will be assessed on that basis, together with all other planning considerations. The majority of the protected trees are located on the borders of the parkland and these will remain. However Tree Preservation Orders are not intended to prevent felling forever. There are circumstances where felling a protected tree is acceptable, e.g. dead or dying trees in danger or falling down. However any planning permission given would override any existing TPO’s if their retention was incompatible with the permission granted. The TPO legislation does not limit planning, but is considered in detail when looking any planning applications – and if removal of a tree is considered acceptable in the balance of the situation, authorisation can be given. However, there are a great many trees within the site that will not be subject to TPO’s but are still high value trees. When assessing the trees generally on site, extra consideration is not given to TPO’d trees per se, but every tree is assessed with regards its retention value both presently and in the future within a potentially different surrounding. Every tree from 6cm stem diameter and up is considered as a material consideration and all trees retained must be offered the same minimum protection as recommended by the British Standards. The number of trees to be felled would be kept to a minimum and remaining trees, including their root systems, will be protected during construction. It is illegal to cut down, top, lop, uproot, cut roots, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a protected tree without the Local Planning Authority’s written consent.</p> | | |

| HE3 - Access | | |
|--|---|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL036 | Two exits onto Carmel Road will cause chaos - already queues at peak times | |
| BL014; BL047 | Blackwell Lane Access very poor. Narrow and poor visibility with parked cars; Concern over the possible entrance opposite 128 Blackwell Lane too near to the existing access to Grangeside, were advised this access point would only be used as a last resort. | |
| BL032; BL074 | Access/egress onto Carmel Road South will be dangerous. | |
| BL054 | Strip of land with mature trees and bushes between Grangeside and The Spinney is a pleasant area of greenery. As this is fenced off from Golf Course land it cannot be considered part of the 'former golf course'. Making this an entry point is a lazy option for a developer/planner to suggest. Passes too close to two properties. | An alternative feasibility access should be used. |
| BL056; BL074; BL107iii; BL156; BL163 | Against proposed access to He3 via the Spinney or directly from Carmel Road South. This road is already dangerous and very busy. Exiting The Spinney is difficult due to poor visibility caused by existing trees to the right. | Access to He3 should come from the existing access to the rear of the Hotel, off Blackwell Lane rather than off Carmel Road South. BL107iii - access closer to Blands Corner would be more accessible |
| BL109v; BL156 | Would prefer not to have access between The Spinney and Grange Road, although this could be a pedestrian/cycle link. A road access would require the removal of some very old trees. | |
| BL117; BL156 | A through route from Blackwell Lane to Carmel Rd South will create a through route at peak times which will detract from the executive nature of development | Access from Carmel Rd South via The Spinney should be abandoned to prevent through traffic and improve the environment and traffic noise for the new homes. Access from Mill Lane/Blackwell Lane should also be abandoned. |

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| BL160 | Can the Council confirm yet whether the woodland walk pathway that runs between the proposed development and Blackwell Lane will remain for public use and with all the current trees and brick wall maintained? The trees there will not only continue to provide a wildlife habitat but an important screening function. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Following the consultation, the preferred access is directly off Carmel Road South through an existing access and across a Council owned depot (currently used for the storage of wheelie bins). The access point is currently within the 60mph speed limit. Therefore, any future access to a housing development would require the 30mph speed limit being extended to cover the new access point for highway safety reasons. Visibility to the south from this access is suitable for a 30mph limit. However, to the north, visibility is restricted by vegetation and would require the removal of some mature trees.</p> <p>There will be no through route created from Blackwell Lane to Carmel Road South.</p> <p>The specific details of any development would be addressed as part of the planning application process.</p> | | |

| HE3 - Highways | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL069; BL073 | Traffic impact on Blackwell - The new housing developments He4 (Option 1 and Option 2) and He3 will result in increased traffic congestion not only along Carmel Road North but also along Blackwell as cars seek to avoid delay by using this route to access the A66/Carmel Road. This is already a problem with cars using the road as a rat-run, not just at peak times but increasingly in the early morning and at night. This road is a residential area and has a cycle route – it is not an extension of the A66, or a short-cut to Carmel Road. | Traffic calming measures such as a chicane, and/or other methods should be introduced. Rigorous enforcement of the 30mph speed limit and size restrictions which are currently flouted should be introduced as a priority. |
| BL0096; BL0097 | Would increase traffic flow and that in turn would result in parking issues, additional noise and cause added stress to residents. | |

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| BL160 | Major concerns remain (safety and noise) in terms of revised 'preferred access points' in development. Proposed access points four and five are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in the peak times / school run) is of great concern (and seemingly poor planning). I missed any mention of any proposed traffic calming measures though a greater number of dwellings on all sites will mean greater traffic onto Blackwell Lane. If this goes ahead, an access point with a roundabout at the junction of Hartford Road and Blackwell Lane seems more appropriate. | Removal of proposed access points four and five as they are located on or just before / after bends on Blackwell Lane which, when taking into account the current speed and level of traffic on the road (as a cut through from Grange Road especially in peak times / school run) is of great concern. Addition of access point onto Grange Road - the largest access point to the hotel. Inclusion of traffic calming measures. |
| BL160 | There is poor public transport and social infrastructure on all proposed sites. Blackwell Lane is not a bus route, there are no doctor surgeries, pharmacies, and cafes - the types of services older and typically less mobile people will want to use. I also fail to see how the targeted demographic for these apartments will walk across the parkland, past the hotel, etc. to get to a bus stop. It is not feasible to assume that this demographic will either own or be able to drive a car. The site is just as unfeasible as the Council believed Stressholme to be for development. | |
| BL163 | Traffic to the A1 is already an issue - Darlington does not have the highway infrastructure to support the additional volume of traffic. | |
| BL163 | Carmel Road South is busy and popular with cyclists - there are issues with the narrowness of the road, volume of traffic and visibility issues caused by trees. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>A Transport Assessment is currently being produced in consultation with Highways England that will demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the local and strategic highway and this will help to inform the density of building on site. As part of the assessment accident statistics are reviewed and taken into consideration. This will also include a Travel plan that will assess the needs of non-motorised users. Bridge Road and the A66 is owned and maintained by Highways England. There are proposals to improve Blands Corner roundabout which Highways England are reviewing. Off-site highway improvements to mitigate the development traffic would be highlighted as required within the Transport Assessment.</p> <p>Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and</p> | | |

have been positioned accordingly.

Proposed junctions on Carmel Road South would incorporate localised widening of the carriageway in order to create a ghost island T junction to help prevent the blocking of mainline traffic by right turning traffic into the sites. Junction assessments will be carried out to ensure the new junctions have sufficient capacity to meet the development need. Mini roundabouts would be an unsuitable form of junction on Carmel Road to access this development.

Traffic regulation orders in the form of double yellow lines are proposed along significant lengths of Grange Road, Carmel Road South, Croft Road and Snipe Lane as part of the DFC planning permission to help regulate parking associated with match days.

A construction management plan would be a condition of any granted permission and would control construction routes to site.

The highways are routinely inspected for defects and remedial action taken where necessary.

Car parking to serve the development need would be in line with the Residential Design Guide and Specification for the Tees Valley and would be appropriate to the dwelling size and type proposed.

| HE3 – Amenity and Open Space | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL074; BL145 | Object to high density plan of new housing to the rear of the Spinney. This development will overlook our house on two sides. The proposed five properties bordering onto our property will result in us being boxed in, our living areas will be constantly overlooked. Unlike neighbours these rooms face south resulting in significant loss of privacy. | |
| BL047 | Would suggest that some proceeds from sale are earmarked to improve wooded areas on Blackwell Lane and Carmel Road South. | |

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| BL090; BL145 | Concern regarding the effect on the character of the neighbourhood, visual impact, overlooking and loss of privacy - particularly with reference to the setting of the listed building (references correspondence with Historic England). Concerns regarding design and layout of new dwellings, specifically the greater density and proximity to existing properties. Considers the enjoyment of a view part of residential amenity. | Further consideration should be given to the impact of building on the Historic Parkland and Blackwell Grange. Council should remove HE1 and undertake works to improve the area (drainage and tree planting). Land should be transferred to a Community Land Trust with an endowed fund to create an income for maintenance. Existing building (green keeper's compound) could become low density mews development. |
| BL082; BL083; BL084 | He3 parkland is an asset which should be kept for the enjoyment of future generations. | |
| BL0096; BL0097; BL127iv; | Existing residents would lose their privacy by being overlooked by any development; Loss of light. | |
| BL096; BL0097 | Development would result in more street lighting that would increase more light pollution in the area. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>All of the statutory consultees who responded accepted the principle of residential development providing the impact of the development is minimised and mitigated.</p> <p>Although the proposal would involve loss of some open space, it retains the majority of it, and would result in improvements to the remainder of the open space.</p> <p>Detailed comments and suggestions regarding the development will be taken into account in the detailed design of any development, and residents will have the opportunity to engage in this through the planning application process.</p> | | |

| HE3 – Drainage and Flooding | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL080; BL083; BL109v; BL101xiv; BL151 | Most people were concerned about the pooling of water into their back gardens, especially on Grangeside, and seemed sceptical that the new development would solve the problem. BL080 - Photos previously sent in. Removal of trees would make situation worse. Layer of clay under the topsoil. BL109v - detail regarding serpentine lake and existing drainage channels under the former golf course. | BL080 - Replanting of trees to the rear of Grangeside. Lake planned in the nineteenth century should be constructed and linked to the Victorian culvert to the rear of 17 Grangeside. Either way an open area should be left behind Grangeside. |
| BL080 | I will hold the Council legally responsible if the flooding increases as a result of any development and is a problem to our property. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Environment Agency information shows that there is no flood risk affecting any of the development sites. However there is some land that experiences surface water drainage problems. This is not a constraint to development, as maintaining green field rates of surface water run-off would be dealt with through the planning application process by way of detailed planning conditions. There is also a strong probability that residential development would actually resolve the drainage problems as this would have an impact on the saleability of the new housing.</p> <p>The Drainage Study demonstrates that there are several drainage solutions, including the opportunity to incorporate a sustainable drainage scheme within the remaining parkland; the latter would have the added benefit of providing the additional habitat for the great crested news and other species. Therefore drainage is not an insurmountable problem and could actually be improved for existing residents through the new development.</p> | | |

HE4 Comments – Referring to HE4 Specifically

| HE4 - General | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL007; BL016; BL024; BL063; BL0072; BL118; BL119; BL171; BL172; BL070; BL068; BL146 | Support Councils original proposal for top-end executive housing at low density of around 6 dwellings per hectare. | |
| BL066; BL122 | Although I would like to see land stay as permanent grassland, if houses have to be built then it would be good to see top-end executive housing in keeping with the area around. | If houses have to be built then it would be good to see top-end executive housing very much in keeping with the area around. |
| BL059; BL0100; BL122; BL130 | If development is inevitable, prefer top-end executive housing which is sustainable in terms of local infrastructure and will allow the area to maintain its inherent, quiet, pleasant, desirable nature. | No high density developments, apartment blocks or flats. |
| BL119; BL138; BL139; BL152 | Would prefer the land to be left as open space, but if that not possible, would want low density, executive dwellings in style of local area. Appears to be a demand for larger homes. Max height of two storeys. Trees should be retained and buildings of architectural style to keep the character of existing houses in the surrounding area and preservation of more trees, not just the historic ones. | Support proposal for 30 executive homes, but not 60. |
| BL076; BL085; BL0098; BL138; BL139; BL148; BL152; BL161; BL023 | Lower number of units in illustration 2 preferable; preserves more green spaces between the buildings; open green area at the core; preservation of wildlife and historic trees; around a single looped accessed from Carmel Road South. | |
| Petition – not individually logged | In response to letters and a petition circulated amongst Blackwell residents, numerous households responded rejecting the Neighbourhood Forum's proposals for development on He4. | Proposed housing should be low density executive in keeping with the Council's proposals. |

| HE4 - General | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL033 | Categorically reject the 'high density' housing option while more information is needed on the 'executive' option to discuss further. | |
| BL007 BL016 BL018; BL072; BL119; BL147; BL148; BL152; BL161; BL009; BL024; BL122; BL146; BL066; BL70; BL068; BL146 | Disagree with the Neighbourhood Plan for high density residential housing and will strongly resist this proposal. Out of character with the area. | |
| BL019; BL147; BL152; BL161 | The Blackwell Neighbourhood Forum does not speak for all Blackwell residents. | |
| BL072 | There is a lack of communication on work / ideas so far on the Neighbourhood Plan. | |
| BL030 | I want the Neighbourhood Forum to win, and it will win. | |
| BL069 | Comments on Option 1: The He4 site is much smaller than He3 yet many more houses are proposed. Fifty-five houses on this site is simply too intense for such a small area. | Option 1 proposals for the He4 site are unacceptable. (If needed), the number of houses should be reduced on this site and increased on the He3 site. |
| BL069; BL0100 | Comments on Option 2: The proposed houses are more in keeping with the majority of the houses in Blackwell, which are mostly three bedrooms and above. | The He4 site could reasonably accommodate up to 30 appropriate low density houses, but no more. A proportion of these houses could be bungalows for the over 55s, thus potentially providing scope for those wishing to downsize and free up the larger properties in |

| HE4 - General | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| | | Blackwell for family occupation. Failing this, Top End Executive houses would be acceptable. |
| BL072 | I am mystified why the Council would sensibly agree to top end executive housing in one part of the vacated land, which is in keeping with the area, and yet still be considering high density housing next door, which is most certainly not in keeping with the surrounding area. Information being held back by BNF in relation to possible subsidence issues on Blackwell Lane. If there is no issue, why the properties under construction on Blackwell Lane have taken so long and cost so much to get to foundation stage that 2 plots are now up for auction? | |
| BL072; BL118; BL148 | Community centre would not attract local residents but would attract local youths from across the town that are often seen drinking and being rowdy down the local river. Area already hard enough to police. | |
| BL0098 | Is there any hope that a developer could be required to keep to the description of either proposal. Would it be possible to prevent developers from building up to three / four storeys? | |
| BL0100 | Concerned about the status of the open land to the south of the building shown (i.e. towards the new / existing pond marked B). Previously private land. I am now concerned about my security and the implications if this land is classed as public open space. The lakes could present a hazard, especially to young children. | |
| BL161 | The lower building density and type of housing would meet the wider regional needs for economic development of the Tees Valley Region in providing increased executive housing. | |

| HE4 - General | | |
|----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL161 | We think it vitally important that existing local residents whose properties back onto the new development are consulted about the crucial issues, at planning application stage, on the boundary between their property and the new development. Also that local residents' preferences are consulted and taken into account on the precise location and landscaping of the open spaces and paths in the development. | |
| BL161 | It is preferable that all houses are built as one development in a landscaped setting, rather than as single plots of bespoke architectural design at a rate of three per year over ten years, as originally envisaged in the 2013 MGPPPO consultation document, which this consultation replaces. This would avoid the building work and disruption to existing residents spreading over a long period of time. | |

Officer comments

The Council intends to continue to support the Blackwell Neighbourhood Forum in developing a Neighbourhood Plan which will allocate land for development in HE4 and can be supported by the majority of residents. The Neighbourhood Plan is at an early stage and a draft document has not yet been produced. As well as the ongoing community engagement involved in developing the plan, the Neighbourhood Forum will hold a formal six week consultation period, during which residents will be asked to comment on the content draft Neighbourhood Plan. There will be a further consultation when the Council considers whether the plan meets the basic conditions that all neighbourhood plans must meet, and local residents may have the opportunity to take part in the plan's Examination in Public at the Examiner's discretion. There will also be a simple majority referendum on whether the finalised Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan. Residents are encouraged to participate in the Neighbourhood Forum's work in order to influence the plan.

The support for the Council's proposals is noted, however these proposals are a 'back stop' position to be adopted if the Neighbourhood Plan does not progress as anticipated.

Although option 1 (55 dwellings) is higher than the 30 dwellings in option 2, the density would be less than 10 dwellings per hectare which is significantly

lower than the average density of new development across the borough of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare. Subject to the impact on Bland's Corner and on the local road network being acceptable, there are no planning reasons not to allocate the land for 55 dwellings.

The build rate will be determined by the market.

| HE4 - Masterplan | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL116 | Density at the North West of the site appears high. | |
| BL119 | If homes for the elderly required, would support development of bungalows with green spaces (Sir E D Walker). | |
| BL119 | Should not include a community centre as other facilities exist. Should consider impact on schools and GPs. | |
| BL138 | A mix of semi's, bungalows and detached would vary the scene to complement the Blackwell area. | |
| BL152 | Against flats/apartments and flats for older people as suggested by the BNF. Would prefer bungalow style housing | Remove apartment blocks from plans |
| BL155 | No objection to the proposed layout and number of dwellings proposed. | |
| BL174 | Option 1 is over intensive and option 2 is unattractive and reminds me of Wynyard which would be out of place. | Mix of housing backing onto Briar Walk with less density than suggested. |

Officer comments

Although option 1 (55 dwellings) is higher than the 30 dwellings in option 2, the density would be less than 10 dwellings per hectare which is significantly lower than the average density of new development across the borough of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare. Subject to the impact on Bland's Corner and on the local road network being acceptable, there are no planning reasons not to allocate the land for 55 dwellings.

Concerns about the aesthetics of development are noted. The detailed design of any housing will be considered at the planning application stage. This will include details of heights and precise locations of dwellings etc.

Contributions to support additional school places would be required as part of a legal agreement between the developer and the Council as part of the planning application process.

| HE4 - Heritage | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL069 | The Blackwell area of Darlington is distinct and has a rich historic past. It is known for its greenery, its proximity to the river Tees and surrounding countryside. | Any proposed housing development should ensure that this local character is retained. New houses should blend in with the neighbourhood and the trees and vegetation which currently surrounds the He4 site must be retained. |

Officer comments
The detailed design of any housing will be considered at the planning application stage. The vast majority of the existing trees will be retained.

| HE4 - Trees | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |

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| BL152 | All TPO trees should be protected | Retain trees |
| BL0098; BL0100; BL141 | Smaller number of top end buildings on the site would hopefully mean that those things which make this area so attractive could be retained. Fewer trees would have to be lost, maintaining in part the prolific bird life and a greater area of green space would be left. | |

Officer comments

It is recognised that the existing trees are a very important element of the area. The vast majority will be retained. The number felled will be kept to an absolute minimum and they will be protected from damage during construction. Any planning application for residential development will be assessed on this basis, together with all other planning considerations.

| HE4 - Wildlife | | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL152 | Ponds with Great Crested Newts should be protected | |
| BL161 | We like the fact that the area at the top and the bottom and in the centre of the site have retained ponds, trees and protected wildlife to keep something of the parkland setting. We would like to see as many of the existing trees as possible retained in the garden areas of the new houses, where feasible to enhance the parkland appearance of the whole estate and adjacent open spaces. | |

Officer comments

Natural England has set out specific requirements within its response and will maintain a watchful eye over the proposals for residential development. It can also exercise control at the planning application stage, not only as a consultee but also through the issuing or non-issuing of licences. With appropriately designed development and protection of wildlife during the construction phase, the impact on wildlife can be minimised. The proposals to create new wildlife habitats and increase public access will provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural environment and bring benefits for the local community through access to and contact with nature.

| HE4 - Access | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL007; BL138 | Agree that there should be no access points from Briar Walk / Close as this is not safe / viable; If outline plan was reversed, the cul-de-sac would lie close to Carmel Road South, leaving fewer houses and roads near to Briar Walk and Briar Close so less crowded. | |
| BL036 | Two exits onto Carmel Road will cause chaos - already queues at peak times. | 230 houses onto a busy road need rethinking. Widening of Carmel Road and 'holding lane' would create easy access to both HE3 and HE4 |
| BL037 | One access not sufficient for 230 dwellings, turning right will be very difficult and cause congestion on Blands Corner. | Reassess access |
| BL024 | Agree there should be no access from Briar Walk as this would not be safe. | |
| BL032; BL156 | Access/egress onto Carmel Road South will be dangerous. Road is narrow here and carries high level of traffic including heavy haulage and agricultural vehicles. | |

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| BL053 | Plans show no access to HE4 from the existing housing in Blackwell. Neighbourhood Forum Proposal does via Briar Walk/Close. BNF Consultation indicated a desire for this. | Should BNF proposal fail pedestrian access should be provided to new development via Briar Walk/Close. |
| BL068 | Having seen the councils revised plans I would like to offer my support for the following: A) preferred access to the HE4 site from Carmel Road South | |
| BL116 | Access points not shown so difficult to judge impact. | |
| BL118 | Access should be limited to A roads (Carmel Rd South, Grange Road) perhaps using mini roundabouts. | |

Officer comments
Any proposed access point into the site would comply with current design guidance including adequate visibility splays for the speed of the road and be positioned accordingly.
The preferred access point is currently within the 60mph speed limit, therefore would require the 30mph speed limit being extended to cover the new access point for highways safety reasons.

| HE4 - Highways | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
| BL044; BL085 | Concerns regarding congestion | Should be very low density only |

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| BL069; BL072; BL0098; BL0100 | Traffic impact on Blackwell - The new housing developments He4 (Option 1 and Option 2) and He3 will result in increased traffic congestion not only along Carmel Road North but also along Blackwell as cars seek to avoid delay by using this route to access the A66/Carmel Road. This is already a problem with cars using the road as a rat-run, not just at peak times but increasingly in the early morning and at night. This road is a residential area and has a cycle route – it is not an extension of the A66, or a short-cut to Carmel Road. Public transport would have to improve greatly to facilitate travel from the housing estate to almost anywhere in Darlington. | Traffic calming measures such as a chicane, and/or other methods should be introduced. Rigorous enforcement of the 30mph speed limit and size restrictions which are currently flouted should be introduced as a priority. |
| BL119; BL138; BL139 | High density development would cause serious safety and noise implications for residents. | |
| BL152 | Concern regarding increased traffic - Carmel Rd South already very busy. | |
| BL161 | Access from Briar Walk / Close for construction traffic, and eventual residential traffic would not be appropriate because of the narrowness of the track from Briar Walk to Briar Close. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>A Transport Assessment is currently being produced in consultation with Highways England that will demonstrate the impact of the proposals on the local and strategic highway and this will help to inform the density of building on site. As part of the assessment accident statistics are reviewed and taken into consideration. This will also include a Travel plan that will assess the needs of non-motorised users. Bridge Road and the A66 is owned and maintained by Highways England. There are proposals to improve Blands Corner roundabout which Highways England are reviewing. Off-site highway improvements to mitigate the development traffic would be highlighted as required within the Transport Assessment.</p> | | |

| HE4 – Amenity and Open Space | | |
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| Consultee Ref | Summary of Comments | Respondents suggested changes |
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| BL062 | Concern regarding blocking of light to bungalow. | Change to plans |
| BL130; BL139; BL152 | Concern about proximity of new dwellings and loss of outlook and privacy. BL152 – Potential loss of property value if amenity effected. | BL130 - Would like to increase garden size or have open space between garden and new dwellings. |
| BL076 | Ancillary access roads and turning circles not shown on plans map 2. If these are as per map 1 they would impact upon Amenity of residents of Blackwell Grove. | A single loop running in front of the new build would lessen impact |
| BL0098; BL0100 | People moving into the area currently have commented on the fact that it is very quiet and peaceful here, something which people still find desirable. This could be maintained if a smaller number of houses were to be built. | |
| BL0098; BL0100 | Would it be possible to have a greater space between the end of the properties on Briar Walk and presumably the end of the gardens of the new houses to form a 'buffer state'? I live at 18 Briar Walk; The distance between the build lines would appear the closest for any of the Briar Walk properties (to no's 16 and 18). | |
| BL0098 | For those of us living on the perimeter of the course we would be subjected to years of disruption, noise, dust and dirt from the erection of buildings and the constant grind of lorries, etc. The buildings on the corner of Blackwell next to the path to the Tees do nothing to allay fears of how long any building work could drag on. This could result in a dramatic reduction in the value of our houses, which we have to consider. | |
| BL076 | Map 2 shows shared boundaries between existing and proposed dwellings. This is not in the spirit of creating neighbourhoods. | Open Space or at least a pathway might allow the old community to welcome the new rather than resent them. |
| BL116 | Concern regarding loss of outlook onto trees and wildlife. Currently pleasing and quiet. | Roads and street lighting to be kept to the south of new houses to avoid noise and light pollution. |

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| BL152 | Against the provision of park/play area as this will attract anti-social behaviour. Other community facilities (South Park, Green Park, Broken Scar, Dolphin Centre, church halls). Agree with plan to leave a central green area where children can play, self-policed by surrounding homes. | |
| <p>Officer comments</p> <p>Impact on a person's view is not a planning matter, though impact on an individual's amenity and the amenity of an area is. The residential amenity of existing and future residents will be considered as part of any detailed design and layout, at the planning application stage. This will include details of heights and precise locations of dwellings.</p> <p>Loss in value of homes is not a planning matter. However, research undertaken by London School of Economics found that prices of existing houses sometimes fell while construction was going on but once the developments were completed, the local areas generally moved with the market. Researchers could find no evidence of longer-term negative impacts.</p> | | |