

DARLINGTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Publication Draft Core Strategy

July 2010

(Inside Front Cover)

You can make representations on any part of this Publication Draft Core Strategy, and the associated Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Local Infrastructure Plan.

All representations must be made using the form provided. This can be found, together with all associated documents relating to the Core Strategy and a guidance note about how to fill in the form, on the Council's website, www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy, or at the Town Hall Reception, and at the Crown Street, Cockerton and mobile libraries.

Completed forms should be sent to the Council's Planning and Economic Strategy Manager.

By post: Planning and Economic Strategy Manager
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THE CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMMENTS IS XXX 2010.

An inclusive approach box

(Awaiting confirmation of new wording from PR – remind at end of June)

Foreword

I am delighted to endorse this Darlington Local Development Framework Publication Draft Core Strategy document, and invite representations on it.

This document takes account of the feedback that we received during consultations at earlier stages of Core Strategy preparation, and is also underpinned by the latest information that we have collected across several themes. It will help to deliver the 'One Darlington' and 'Perfectly Placed' priorities of the Darlington sustainable community strategy from 2011 to 2026.

Our thinking in key policy areas such as employment, housing and transport has moved on significantly since we began work on the Core Strategy, and we have had to reflect the changed economic circumstances. This document sets out broadly how much new development will be required over the next 15 years or so, where and when, and the sustainable transport and other infrastructure provision that will be required to support it. If you live or work in Darlington or want to develop or do business here, I recommend you look at the Publication Draft Core Strategy to see how these policies might affect you.

This document is what we intend to submit to Government for independent examination. By having your say now, you could influence the final content of the Core Strategy that will be submitted to Government in the autumn.

The closing date for receipt of representations, on the form available on-line, in libraries or at the Town Hall is **XXX** September 2010

Councillor John Williams
Leader of the Council and Economy Portfolio Holder

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is this document and why is it important ?

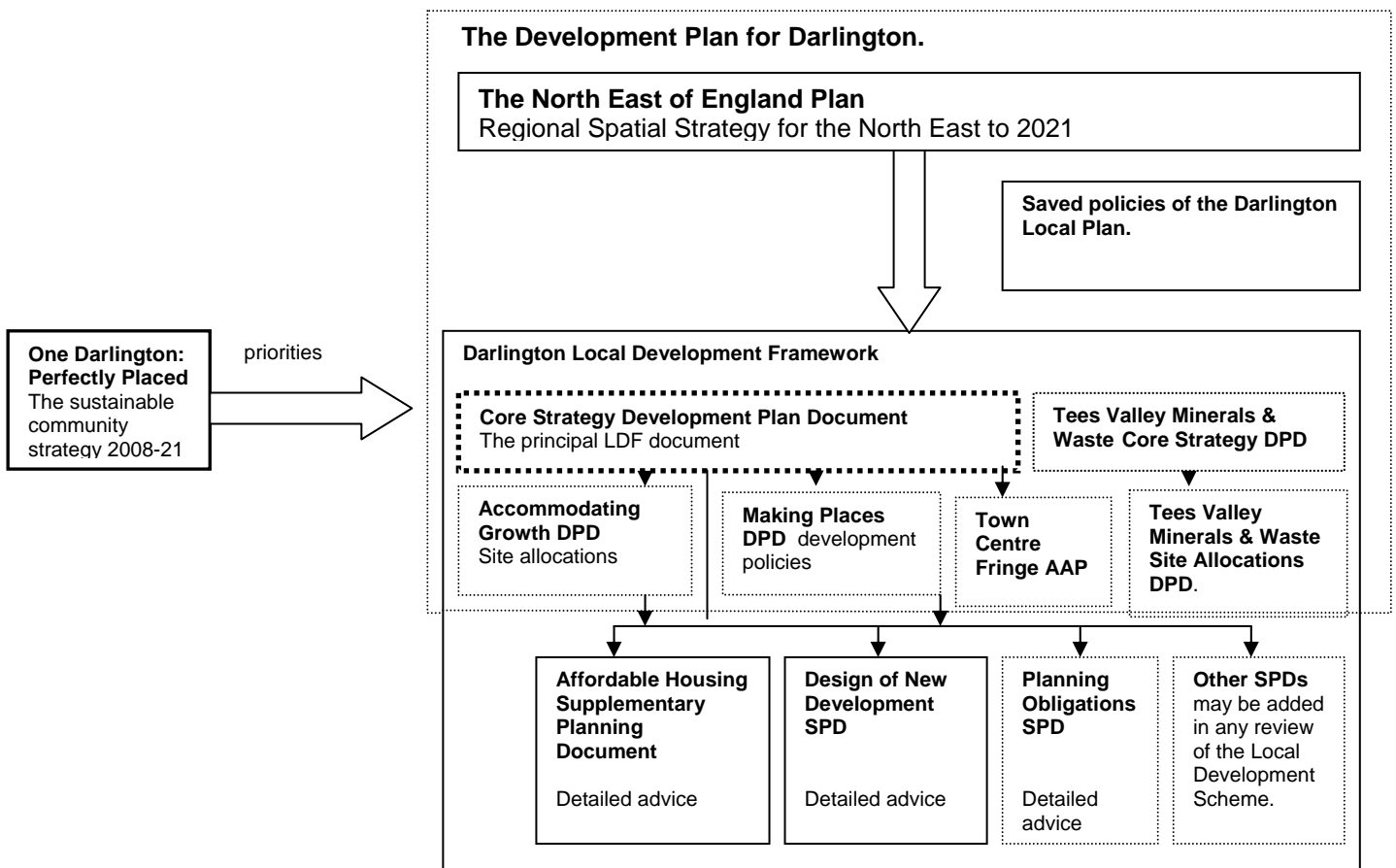
¹The Darlington Local Development Scheme 2009-12 sets out the LDF documents that the Council will produce over the next 3 years, and the timetable for producing them.

²One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, A Vision for Darlington 2008-2021, Darlington Partnership 2008

1.1.1 This document is the principal document of the Darlington Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is a set of documents¹ which will eventually replace the adopted Darlington Local Plan. It sets out how the Borough will develop over the next fifteen years (2011-2026), providing the spatial planning framework for the many plans and strategies prepared by the Council and its partners. In particular, it will help to deliver spatially the priorities of the sustainable community strategy 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'².

1.1.2 The Core Strategy and other development plan documents of the LDF will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the Borough along with the published regional spatial strategy 'The North East of England Plan' (see Figure 1.1). The development plan informs a range of implementation plans and decisions on planning applications.

Figure 1.1: Relationship of the Local Development Framework (LDF) to 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' and the Relationship of the Core Strategy to other LDF Documents



1.1.3 'Saved' policies of the Darlington Local Plan remain part of the development plan until superseded by an adopted development plan document. **Appendix 1** sets out the 'saved' Local Plan policies that Core Strategy policies will supersede.

1.1.4 Other LDF documents are being prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme 2009-12¹ or any successor.

1.2 Pre-submission Publication

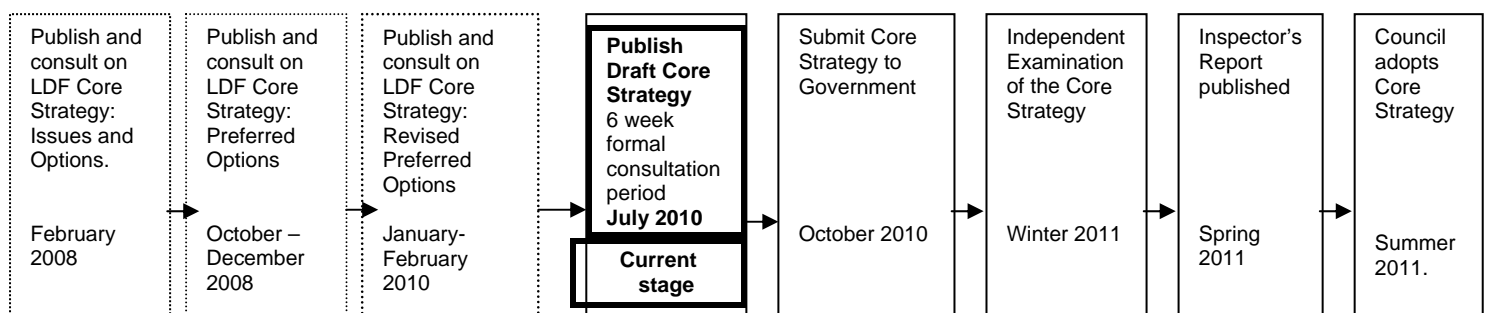
1.2.1 This document is the Council's LDF Publication Draft Core Strategy, and is being published to comply with Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2008. It sets out an overall vision of how Darlington Borough and places within it should develop, and the strategic objectives that will ensure key spatial issues are addressed. This is followed by planning policies, arranged around seven themes, and information about how, when and with whose resources the strategy will be delivered. The document also includes information about how progress in delivering the strategy will be managed and monitored, and a Key Diagram (see inside back cover) that illustrates the broad locations to which the policies refer.

1.2.2 This Core Strategy deals with all land use and development issues affecting Darlington, except for minerals and waste (see Figure 1.1); these are covered in the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, which is being prepared jointly by the five Tees Valley local authorities, and is due to be submitted to the Government for Independent Examination shortly³. A Local Infrastructure Plan has been published alongside this Core Strategy.

1.2.3 Preparation of this Core Strategy is in accordance with the required procedures set down in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008, and in accordance with the timetable in the Council's Local Development Scheme 2009-2012.

1.2.4 Publication of this draft strategy follows three earlier consultations (see Figure 1.2). The comments received in response to consultations, together with updated national and regional planning policy, recently completed studies⁴ and the findings of a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment (Appropriate Assessment), have informed the preparation of this document. **Appendix 2** lists the studies that have also underpinned policy development, while **Appendix 3** lists the plans and programmes that have been taken into account in preparing this document.

Figure 1.2: Key Stages in the Process and Timetable Leading to Adoption of the Darlington Local Development Framework Core Strategy



Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment

1.2.5 A Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating strategic environmental assessment, has been carried out at key stages in the preparation of this LDF Core Strategy. Full details can be found in the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal report⁵. The Appraisal has taken place alongside policy

³The five Tees Valley local authorities are Darlington, Stockton on Tees, Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Councils. More details about the Minerals and Waste documents can be found at www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

⁴See www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy for all documentation and consultation responses relating to all stages of the preparation of the LDF Core Strategy.

⁵Darlington LDF Draft Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report, June 2010.

development, so that feedback from the appraisal process could shape the policies included in this document.

⁶Natura 2000 is a European network of protected sites which represent areas of the highest value for natural habitats and species of plants and animals which are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the European Community.

1.2.6 Screening has also been carried out to establish the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment. The screening report concluded that there would be no significant detrimental effects of the Publication Draft Core Strategy, nor is it likely to give rise to any significant detrimental effects, on Natura 2000 sites⁶. The potential for cumulative effects will be monitored through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

1.3 Having your say and next steps

1.3.1 You can make representations on any part of this Publication Draft Core Strategy, and the associated Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Local Infrastructure Plan (see inside front cover for more details).

1.3.2 THE CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMMENTS IS SEPTEMBER 2010.

1.3.3 Following the closing date for receipt of representations, the Council will prepare a summary of the main issues raised by the representations⁴. The Council will consider whether any further changes to the Strategy are required, and if so, will consult on and undertake sustainability appraisal on these.

1.3.4 This summary, together with any further changes and consultation responses to them, will accompany the submission of the Core Strategy to the Government for independent examination (see Figure 1.2).

1.4 Contact Details

1.4.1 To contact a member of the Planning and Environmental Policy Team, please telephone 01325 388644 or send an e-mail to planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk.

2. DEVELOPING A SPATIAL VISION FOR DARLINGTON

2.1 In developing a spatial vision and strategic objectives to guide the preparation of this Core Strategy, consideration was given to how Darlington currently is and to the local plans and strategies that are currently shaping the future of the Borough. Also considered were the issues the Borough faces over the next 15 years or so, and the wider national, regional and sub regional policy context. Having clear links to other plans, policies and programmes will help the Borough to make the strongest possible case for the funding required to implement the spatial policies and proposals contained in this document.

Overview of Darlington Borough

2.2 Darlington Borough is a unitary local authority area that lies at the western end of the Tees Valley, a sub-regional grouping also including the unitary authorities of Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees. The Borough is regarded as the 'gateway' to the Tees Valley and the wider North East region of England, lying adjacent to the Yorkshire and Humber region, with which it shares a boundary, formed by the River Tees.

Figure 2.1: Darlington's neighbouring local authority areas. (to insert)

2.3 Darlington is a historic market town, surrounded by open countryside with many attractive agricultural villages. The town's development has been closely associated with the railway age and associated manufacturing. On the one hand, this past industrial activity has left a legacy of unused and underused land, but on the other, it has bestowed a wealth of buildings of architectural and historic interest dating from the railway age and the subsequent Victorian period, to complement buildings and urban layouts reflecting the town's Quaker community.

2.5 The Borough's range of cultural facilities, such as the Dolphin Centre, Civic Theatre and the Head of Steam Railway Museum, contribute to a good quality of life, and help attract visitors. An abundance of street trees and open space within the urban area contribute to the town's distinctiveness and biodiversity, particularly the green corridors along the River Skerne, Cocker Beck and Baydale Beck. Outside the urban area, a magnesian limestone escarpment forms higher land and a rare ecosystem at the northern fringe of the Borough. An attractive, biodiverse and often wooded landscape has evolved along the River Tees corridor, complemented by more recent community woodland planting, especially at the urban fringe. The Borough hosts a variety of habitats and species, including some, like the black poplar and the great crested newt, that are rare and/or declining regionally or nationally.

2.6 The Borough has excellent national and international transport links, by rail (East Coast Main Line), road (A1/M) and air (Durham Tees Valley Airport). The town centre provides employment, shops and services for large parts of North Yorkshire and south and west Durham and the western part of the Tees Valley.

2.7 The Borough's current population is about 100,100¹, made up of 46,000 households². It has an ageing population, caused by declining birth rate over recent decades and by out-migration of young well educated adults seeking better employment opportunities elsewhere; more than 20% of the population is

¹ONS 2008 based sub-national population projections.

²CLG statistics. Mar 2009

³ONS mid 2007 population estimates.

⁴2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

⁵Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009.

⁶Darlington Gateway Strategy, December 2006 by BDP/King Sturge/Regeneris/CI:P

⁷e.g. Cummins Engines, Whesoe, AMEC, and Cleveland Bridge.

⁸60.4% of working age in 2008, increasing to 62.2% by 2021 (ONS 2006 based projections).

⁹2008 figures for NVQ levels 2+, 3+ and 4+.

¹⁰Most of these can be found at www.communities.gov.uk

¹¹The RSS sets out the long term spatial development strategy for the region. It is the regional element of the statutory development plan which, together with the Darlington LDF, shapes future development within the Borough.

¹²A strategic public transport hub is a key regional or sub-regional transport interchange, with high levels of public transport accessibility.

of retirement age or older³. There are also marked contrasts in the life chances and quality of life of people in the Borough, according to where they live. 31% of the Borough live in seven wards that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country⁴, whilst about 7% live in two wards that are amongst the least deprived nationally. There is a 13 year difference in life expectancy between the best and worst wards, and unemployment varies from 12.2% for the inner Central ward (Mar 2010), to 1.7% in the suburban Hummersknott ward.

2.8 The Borough has a relatively high proportion of older terraced housing as well as a variety of more modern detached, semi detached houses, townhouses and flats. These meet most local needs, as well as some of the needs arising from the continued expansion of Catterick Garrison, and those of higher income people with employment in the Tees Valley⁵. However, some housing is no longer suitable for modern needs and aspirations, and overall, there is not enough to meet all the needs identified⁵.

2.9 The Borough's economy has performed strongly over recent years shifting from its past reliance on manufacturing to one with a wider, more resilient base⁶. Specialist engineering⁷, the now dominant service sector (business and professional services) and public sector employment (public administration, healthcare and education) are the most significant employers, whilst a relatively high proportion of the local workforce (28.2%) are in professional, senior or managerial roles, or skilled jobs. The Borough has a projected increasing potential workforce⁸, with relatively high skills and higher education achievements⁹, and has economic activity and overall employment rates consistently above sub-regional and regional levels.

National and Regional Planning Policy Context

2.10 This Core Strategy has been drawn up in accordance with the most up to date national planning policy and advice. National planning policy is set out in planning policy guidance notes, planning policy statements, ministerial statements and circulars issued by the Government¹⁰.

2.11 This Core Strategy has also been drawn up to be in general conformity with the regional spatial strategy (RSS)¹¹, 'The North East of England Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021', published by the Government in July 2008. The RSS sees Darlington as having a key role in contributing to regional economic growth, and a gateway to the Tees Valley and North East. It recognises that the Borough's unique, accessible location and market town character make it perfectly placed to attract high quality employment in the financial, business services, logistics and advanced engineering and public sectors, which may otherwise not locate in the region.

2.12 The RSS identifies brownfield opportunities in Central Darlington as priorities for development, together with land in the Faverdale and Heighington Lane areas as key employment locations. It also identifies additional university capacity in the Central Park area, and the role that Darlington should continue to have in providing high quality housing for the wider sub-regional top-end housing market.

2.13 The Borough could also be pivotal to achieving better connectivity within and beyond the north-east, as two strategic transport corridors - the A1/East Coast Main Line corridor and the A66/Tees Valley rail line corridor - pass through the Borough, and the main rail station and town centre together are recognised as a Strategic Public Transport Hub¹². In addition, Durham Tees Valley Airport, on the eastern boundary of the borough, is identified as a

key international gateway into the region, with the potential for freight and passenger traffic growth.

2.14 Turning to the environment, the RSS supports maintaining the separation between Darlington and its surrounding towns and villages through the identification and maintenance of 'strategic gaps', and encourages more community woodland to the north and east of Darlington. The Borough is also identified as having a role in tackling climate change, and contributing to the sub-regional objectives for things like renewable energy generation, identifying land for new housing (particularly previously developed land) and improving existing housing.

Sub-regional Policy Context

2.15 The five Tees Valley local authorities, and their private and public sector partners, work together to tackle the key economic challenges in the Tees Valley, through Tees Valley Unlimited¹³(TVU). The Economic and Regeneration Statement of Ambition¹⁴ provides the framework for this, recognising that the economy is the key challenge. Its two ambitions are to drive the transition to the high value, low carbon economy, and to create a more diversified and inclusive economy. The priorities flowing from this include bringing land forward for development and upgrading utilities, supporting manufacturing and supporting growth in the service and retail sectors, including government department relocations. The statement also recognises that to achieve these ambitions, the transport network must be fit for purpose, the housing offer must be attractive to people wanting to invest and locate in the Tees Valley, and the environment, particularly green infrastructure and major regeneration areas, needs to be improved. The emerging Tees Valley Investment Plan will detail how the ambitions will be delivered over the next 5-10 years, will inform and reflect on the 'single conversation' with government agencies, One North East and the Homes and Communities Agency, and will identify priorities for intervention.

¹³Tees Valley Unlimited coordinates strategic economic development and other programmes sub-regionally, to improve overall economic performance.

¹⁴Tees Valley Unlimited, July 2010.

¹⁵The Tees Valley was awarded Housing Growth Point status in 2008.

¹⁶Creating Thriving Communities in the Tees Valley, Tees Valley Living, July 2010.

2.16 Through a major mixed use scheme at Central Park and the redevelopment of surplus school sites, the Borough is also contributing to meeting Tees Valley Housing Growth Point¹⁵ targets. Looking further ahead, the Statement of Ambition and associated investment plan will help to deliver the sub-regional strategy for housing regeneration 2010-2020¹⁶, particularly by providing more housing for graduates, families and knowledge economy workers. Priority is given to development in and around the town centres, avoiding areas of flood risk and achieving higher standards of design and sustainability in new housing, including zero carbon living. It will also mean providing more accessible and affordable homes, and improving the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock.

2.17 The Tees Valley Local Authorities are also preparing joint Minerals and Waste development plan documents, and worked together to prepare the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008). Technical studies such as a strategic flood risk assessment, a Gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessment and a strategic housing market assessment were also commissioned jointly.

2.18 There are some planning issues affecting Darlington that extend beyond the Borough boundary, mostly into the rest of the Tees Valley, but also into other adjacent local authorities in North Yorkshire, and into County Durham. Those for which there has been specific consideration are set out in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Cross boundary issues considered in this Core Strategy

Issue	Where it is dealt with in this Document
In and out-commuting from neighbouring populations centres, and to other locations in the A1(M) and East Coast Railway corridor to the north and south. Connectivity between the Borough and the rest of the Tees Valley sub region.	Policies CS1(Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy) and CS19 (Transport).
Recognising the role of Durham Tees Valley Airport as an economic driver.	Vision Objectives 3 and 8 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS5 (Local Economy), CS19 (Transport)
Low but sustained pressure for new housing in the Borough, arising from ongoing expansion and dispersal of service personnel from Catterick Garrison in Richmondshire District into nearby civilian communities.	Policy CS11 (Meeting Housing Needs)
Darlington is part of an upper income housing market that extends from the south-west of Darlington and its rural areas across the south of the Tees Valley as a whole and into North Yorkshire.	Policy CS11 (Meeting Housing Needs)
The town centre is a major sub-regional hub for almost a quarter of a million people, including the western part of the Tees Valley and wide areas of south and west Durham and north-west Yorkshire.	Vision Policies CS1(Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), Policy CS7 (Town Centre), CS8(Additional Retail Provision).
Co-ordinating growth and development at Durham Tees Valley Airport, which straddles the administrative boundary between Stockton and Darlington Boroughs.	Policies CS1(Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy) , CS5 (Economy), CS6(Culture and Tourism) and CS19 (Transport).
The cumulative impact of renewable energy generation proposals, particularly wind power, across a wider landscape area encompassing parts of Stockton Borough and Durham County	Policy CS3 (Promoting Renewable Energy)
Maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure of sub-regional significance, such as the River Tees corridor, and increasing community woodland.	Policy CS17 (Green Infrastructure)

Local Policy Context and Key Issues

2.19 One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, which is the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington and was prepared in 2008, is the overarching strategy for the people and place of Darlington. This Core Strategy and the LDF as a whole is the spatial expression of that strategy. The SCS sets out the most significant issues and problems that must be addressed in Darlington and a vision for Darlington for the period 2008-2021. The extent to which the issues can be addressed in this Core Strategy varies, but the main ones that can be are highlighted in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Significant Issues from the SCS to be addressed through the Local Development Framework

One Darlington: Perfectly Placed Issue	Where it is dealt with in this Document
Tackling deprivation, reducing inequality, (focussing on health and well being and reducing obesity)	Vision Objectives 2 and 6 Policies CS11 (Meeting Housing Needs), CS13 (Accommodating Travelling Groups), CS17(Green Infrastructure), CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities) and CS19 (Transport).

Nurturing a strong, vibrant and cohesive community	Vision Objectives 2, 6 and 7 Policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS6 (Culture and Tourism), CS 7 (Town Centre), CS9 (Local Shops and Services), CS14 (Local Distinctiveness), CS17 (Green infrastructure) and CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities)
Ensuring equality of opportunity and access to services	Vision Objectives 2, 3, 5 and 8 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS2 (Design of New Development), CS5 (Local Economy), CS7 (The Town Centre) CS9 (Local Shops and Services), CS10 (New Housing Development), CS17 (Green Infrastructure), CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities) and CS19 (Transport).
Regarding happiness, fulfilment and well-being of individuals as a legitimate concern	Vision Objectives 2, 6 and 7 Policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS6 (Cultural and Tourism Offer), CS 7 (Town Centre), CS9 (Local Shops and Services), CS14 (Local Distinctiveness), CS17 (Green infrastructure) and CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities)
Further enhancing town centre uses in the town centre, whilst safeguarding its friendly market town character	Vision Objective 5 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS7 (The Town Centre) and CS8 (Additional Retail Provision).
Helping businesses to grow and attract new ones.	Vision Objectives 3 and 8 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS5 (Supporting the Local Economy) and CS19 (Transport).
Maintaining and enhancing the cultural life of the Borough	Vision Objective 2 and Objective 6 Policy CS6 (Culture and Tourism)
Providing good accessibility, travel safety and choice of transport modes for everyone, whilst tackling congestion	Vision Objectives 2, 3, 5 and 8 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS5 (Local Economy), CS7 (The Town Centre) CS9 (Local Shops and Services), CS10 (New Housing), CS17 (Green Infrastructure), CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities) and CS19 (Transport).
Increasing the supply and range of affordable housing.	Vision Objective 4 Policy CS11 (Meeting Housing Needs),
Developing sustainable neighbourhoods.	Vision Objectives 2, 6 and 7 Policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS9 (Local Shops and Services), CS12 (Existing Housing), CS14 (Local Distinctiveness), CS17 (Green infrastructure) and CS18 (Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities)
Value and reinforce green infrastructure	Vision Objectives 1 and 7 Policy CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS2 (Design of New Development), CS17 (Green Infrastructure)
Minimise carbon emissions and playing a part in reducing climate change.	Vision Objective 1 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS2 (Design of New Development), CS3 (Promoting Renewable Energy), CS7 (The Town Centre) CS9 (District and Local Centres and Local Shops and Services), CS10 (New Housing Development), CS12 (Existing Housing Stock), CS16 (Environmental Resources), CS17 (Green Infrastructure), CS18 (Sport and Recreation Facilities) and CS19 (Transport).

2.21 Engrained in, and forming the foundation of, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed is Darlington's successful economic strategy for the last 10 years. This began with the Darlington Gateway Development Framework 2003, and was updated by the Darlington Gateway Strategy 2006. The strategy focuses on the Borough's unique quality of life and accessibility strengths, and a strong, cohesive and regenerated town in its vision for economic growth. It plans to

¹⁷This is the core of the 'Town Centre Fringe' strategic location identified in draft policies CS1, CS5, CS7, and CS10.

widen the supply of employment land, particularly focusing on regenerating the area between the town centre and the railway station¹⁷ and at Central Park.

Other Issues

2.22 Through consideration of evidence collected and consultation responses received during the preparation of this Core Strategy, and having regard to national Government priorities, a range of other social, economic and environmental issues with local effects have been identified that the Core Strategy needs to tackle. These are summarised in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Other Issues for Darlington to be addressed through the Local Development Framework

Issue	Where it is dealt with in this Document
Population and economy	
An ageing population	Vision Objectives 2, 4 and 8 Policies CS11 (Meeting Housing Needs) and CS19 (Transport).
Wage levels of Darlington residents below the regional and national averages.	Vision Objectives 2 and 3 Policies CS5 (Local Economy), CS7 (Town Centre)
Development	
Ensuring that significant regeneration and development is delivered, particularly in the well located prominent locations of the Town Centre, Central Park and Town Centre Fringe.	Vision Objectives 3 and 4 Policies CS1 (Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy), CS5 (Local Economy), CS7(Town Centre), CS10(New Housing)
Providing sufficient, suitable and available employment land throughout the plan period to deliver the range and type of jobs that the Borough needs to fulfil its economic aspirations.	Vision Objective 3 Policy CS5 (Local Economy)
Matching the Borough's housing stock to better meet needs and modern day aspirations of local people and those moving into the Borough.	Vision Objective 4 Policy CS10 (New Housing), CS11 (Housing Needs), CS12 (Existing Housing)
Local Environment and Quality of Life	
Maintaining quality of life	Vision Objectives 1,2, 5,6, 7 and 8 Policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS6(Culture and Tourism), CS7(Town Centre), CS11(Meeting Housing Needs), CS13 (Accommodating Travelling Groups), CS14(Local Distinctiveness), CS15 (Protecting Human Health and Safety), CS17(Green Infrastructure), CS18 (Sport and Recreation), CS19(Transport).
Emphasising the Borough's positive qualities	Vision Objective 7 Draft revised policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS14 (Local Character and Distinctiveness), CS7 (The Town Centre).
Supporting infrastructure provision that is accessible and better meets the needs of all local people.	Vision Objectives 2, 6 and 8 Policies CS2 (Design of New Development), CS4 (Developer Contributions), CS19 (Transport)

2.23 One of the increasing threats to the Borough's environment is climate change. The Climate Change Act 2008 set UK targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and tackling climate change is a Government priority for the planning system¹⁸. Regionally, tackling the impacts of and adapting to climate change is a key challenge, and is the subject of a separate policy¹⁹. Locally,

¹⁸Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (supplement to PPS1), DCI G. 2007

¹⁹Policy 3 of the RSS

reducing carbon emissions, managing the risks associated with climate change and making the most of new opportunities arising out of a changing climate²⁰ are identified as key outcomes in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.

²⁰Greener Theme long term outcomes, See the SCS at www.darlington.gov.uk

2.24 This Core Strategy embeds climate change considerations in the future planning of the Borough in several ways including:

- (a) locating new development so as to minimise the need to travel by car and to minimise the use of greenfield land;
- (b) making the most of existing transport infrastructure and creating a more sustainable transport network to reduce transport emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases;
- (c) promoting sustainable design and construction;
- (d) identifying opportunities for renewable energy generation;
- (e) setting targets for the percentage of energy use in new developments that can be supplied from on site decentralised renewable and low carbon sources;
- (f) improving the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock and making prudent use of the existing built fabric;
- (g) ensuring new development is not located in areas of flood risk; and
- (h) strengthening the green infrastructure network.

²¹Darlington Local Infrastructure Plan, DBC, June 2011, published alongside and complementary to this Core Strategy.

2.25 Underpinning delivery of this Core Strategy will be the provision of appropriate physical, social and green infrastructure in all parts of the Borough, to provide connected living and working environments that are capable of meeting modern needs and aspirations. The main infrastructure requirements are set out in Chapter 10, with more detail given in the accompanying Local Infrastructure Plan²¹.

Reflecting Current Economic Conditions and Future Prospects for Growth

2.26 Like the rest of the country, Darlington's economy has suffered from the recent economic downturn, and a return to normal, let alone, strong conditions in the UK economy remains some way off. It is hard to predict how soon and to what extent investors will return to Darlington and help grow the local economy. Investment in new facilities may also be slowed, as existing surplus capacity absorbs some of the growth anticipated as the country comes out of recession.

2.27 In this Core Strategy, therefore, ambitions have therefore been tempered by the likely reality of investment by the private sector and anticipated lower levels of public sector investment, particularly over the early parts of the plan period. Overall, this means that the schemes planned to help deliver the vision of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed are more likely to be delivered over the 15 years lifetime of this Core Strategy, rather than the 10 year period of the sustainable community strategy. The Core Strategy will provide the framework to ensure that the Borough can respond immediately to an economic upturn, and continue the momentum of economic development generated prior to the recession.

2.28 Progress in achieving the strategy's objectives will be reported on annually in the Council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report, and several policies, such as Policy CS10 (New Housing Development) include alternative strategies if the priorities outlined prove not be deliverable.

A spatial vision for Darlington

2.29 The vision sets out the kind of place we want Darlington to be in 2026, indicating the main features of the development pattern, the types and forms of development and land use change that will be required to get there.

'By 2026 Darlington will be a more sustainable community, where a real step change has been achieved in enhancing the quality of life and local environment, and expanding local opportunities for work and for sustainable travel. Those who live in, work in or visit the Borough will enjoy the opportunities and vibrant life of an ambitious city, but within the fabric of a friendly, historic market town with a distinctive atmosphere, surrounded by attractive countryside and villages'

What Darlington will be like in the Year 2026

2.30 Over the next 20 years or so, Darlington will continue to develop as the physical and economic gateway to the Tees Valley City Region and North East England. It will be a key location for doing business and enjoying a high quality of life, and will draw in companies that may not otherwise locate in the region. A wide range of high quality and accessible previously-developed and greenfield sites, within and on the edge of the compact urban area, will attract employers and local enterprises that are keen to tap into a highly skilled workforce. A rolling programme to bring forward strategic mixed-use sites, like Central Park, with public sector support will form the cornerstone of the employment land supply. The principal growth sectors are expected to be financial and business services, health, civil engineering and construction-related businesses, logistics, retail, leisure and tourism. The result will be sustainable economic growth, more employment and higher paid jobs.

2.31 Darlington will also continue to be an important and distinctive location in the retail, tourism and cultural landscapes of the North East and Tees Valley. Appropriate development within the town centre and its fringes will ensure that Darlington continues to thrive as an established historic and friendly market town. The special character of the town will remain evident through its abundant open spaces and environmental resources, and its cherished cultural and historic assets, complemented by the locally distinctive, safe and sustainable design of new developments. The location and design of new land uses and developments will have enhanced local neighbourhoods and helped to reduce previous disparities in environmental quality and economic, social and recreational opportunities. It will also have underpinned efforts to reduce the Borough's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, to mitigate the effects of climate change, to provide opportunities for the natural environment to adapt to the consequences of climate change and to improve accessibility around the Borough for all.

2.32 A growing population will have been accommodated in new housing constructed making use, as far as possible, of underused land and buildings within the existing urban area. There will be a good supply and mix of market and affordable housing, suitable for all stages of life, meeting the needs and aspirations of local people and those choosing to locate to Darlington. This housing will be at the heart of high quality, healthy, safe, environmentally friendly and green neighbourhoods, providing attractive alternatives to the Borough's southern and western rural hinterlands as places to live. Residents will benefit from easy access to good quality sport, leisure and healthcare facilities, and modern education facilities for children and adults alike. Darlington's university town status will provide opportunities for learning and skills development for everyone, whatever their aspirations.

2.33 It will be possible to make comfortable, safe, convenient and affordable trips throughout the Borough by sustainable transport modes. Fewer people will make unnecessary journeys by private car and higher levels of cycling and walking will be reflected in a better and healthier quality of life for many.

2.34 The rural character of the countryside will be protected and the open aspect to the south of the town will be maintained, providing views to the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors. Elsewhere, a more mature and expanded Tees Forest and an improved rights of way network will provide a softer environment and accessible recreation opportunities at the urban fringe. Small-scale developments will have helped to sustain the vibrancy and individual character and appearance of the Borough's villages and hamlets. The Borough's biodiversity and geodiversity resources will contribute to a multi-functional green infrastructure network, which will have an ongoing regime of protection, management and enhancement.

2.35 People will recommend Darlington as a place to live and work in because of its high quality, comfortable, healthy, safe and sustainable living and working environments, and because of its educational provision and opportunities for stimulating and rewarding work. The Borough's accessibility and exceptional retail, cultural and leisure facilities will also be cited as reasons to visit, and residents will be able to boast about the Borough's record in achieving sustainable development.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives provide the link between the overall vision and the draft policies. All the policies will help to deliver one or more of the spatial objectives, which themselves give expression to particular elements of the vision.

Cross Cutting

Objective 1: Minimise the impact of, and adapt to the effects of climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the use of resources and the risk of flooding and pollution, and by maximising the re-use and recycling of land, buildings, waste and water through more sustainable designs, patterns of development and means of movement, and by providing opportunities for adaptation within the natural environment.

Objective 2: Provide equality of opportunity for everyone now and in the future, by ensuring that the design, location and mix of development and infrastructure across the Borough maintains and creates safe, attractive, accessible, healthy and inclusive sustainable communities, eliminating any disadvantage people experience.

Theme Specific

Objective 3: Facilitate sustainable economic growth by protecting and promoting a range and continuous supply of employment development opportunities in sustainable locations that meet the needs of local businesses and continue to attract high quality, well paid jobs to the Borough.

Objective 4: Provide a continuous supply of land for new housing developments and help improve and reuse the existing stock so that it can better match the aspirations of those that wish to live and work in the Borough,

whilst doing more to meet the housing needs of an ageing population and those unable to afford suitable accommodation on the open market.

Objective 5: Safeguard the function of Darlington town centre and capitalise on its shopping, culture, leisure, tourism and employment opportunities so that it continues to develop as a vibrant, attractive, safe, friendly and comfortable historic market town centre.

Objective 6: Contribute to the happiness, fulfilment, health and well-being of people who live and work in the Borough, including children and young people, by safeguarding and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and by providing and upgrading a wide range of educational, social, sporting, health, recreational and cultural facilities within it.

Objective 7: Preserve the scale of, and strengthen the unique character, function, intrinsic quality and sense of place of Darlington's neighbourhoods, villages, landscapes, green infrastructure, heritage, habitats and countryside to contribute positively to its distinctiveness.

Objective 8: Support initiatives to maintain, expand and enhance facilities and networks for public transport, walking and cycling, so that the connections are in place to enable everyone to get around the Borough easily and affordably, whilst making the most of Darlington's existing transport infrastructure, tackling congestion and improving links to the rest of Tees Valley and further afield.

3. ACHIEVING A MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

3.1 Darlington's Sub-regional Role and Locational Strategy

3.1.1 Darlington has excellent national and international transport links, by rail (East Coast Main Line), road (A1/M) and air (Durham Tees Valley Airport). Its 'gateway' location, accessibility and attractive environment make it perfectly placed within North East England and the Tees Valley to attract investment and economic activity that might not otherwise come to the region or sub-region¹. It is a key centre² within the Tees Valley City Region, with potential to contribute significantly to regional economic growth across a range of sectors.

¹'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'

²identified by One North East, the regional development agency.

³The North East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021, July 2008

3.1.2 Darlington is a main settlement in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)³, and identified as an important location for employment development, a sub-regional centre for retail and leisure uses, and a strategic public transport hub. The town centre provides employment, shops and services for large parts of North Yorkshire and south and west Durham and the western part of the Tees Valley, and is the fifth largest shopping centre in North East England. The Borough provides housing to meet the needs of local people and many of those who work in the town, and also helps to meet some of the housing needs of a wider area, particularly those arising from continued expansion at Catterick Garrison, and for higher income people working across the Tees Valley⁴.

⁴Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009.

⁵GVA: gross value added, a measure of the wealth of an area (see Tees Valley Multi Area Agreement, 2008)

3.1.3 Given its established roles and acknowledged potential for growth, this Core Strategy plans for continuing economic growth of at least 2.5% per annum, the working assumption on which the RSS is based, and aims to contribute to increasing the Tees Valley GVA⁵ from 80% to 86% of UK average by 2018. Associated with this growth, and to meet the needs of the existing population, the Core Strategy plans for household growth, and for new housing development to diversify the existing dwelling stock. Whilst acknowledging current economic circumstances, these are not expected to prevail beyond the initial years of the plan, helped by market interventions such as through Housing Growth Point⁶.

⁶The Tees Valley Housing Growth Point has associated public funding to help unlock stalled housing sties.

3.1.4 New land will be required for the employment, services, infrastructure and new housing associated with population and economic growth. Priority will be given to the use of previously developed land and buildings (PDL) in accessible and sustainable locations, where these can accommodate the specific needs of the developments proposed, and then to other land within urban areas where this does not prejudice heritage or nature conservation, or impinge on land protected for recreational purposes.

3.1.5 The town centre will continue to be the primary retail centre in the Borough. It will be enhanced and safeguarded as such, and will be expected to accommodate additional retailing for much of the plan period, through key schemes such as the Oval (a proposed retail/leisure development in the Commercial Street area). The town centre will also continue to be a key location and first priority for office development and other town centre uses, including the redevelopment of an office-led scheme on previously developed land in the Beaumont Street/Feethams area⁷.

⁷Feethams Planning & Development Brief 2008
www.darlington.gov.uk

3.1.6 Outside of the town centre to its north and east, the largely previously developed Town Centre Fringe and Central Park locations have been identified as having the potential to contribute much more to the economy and quality of life of Darlington than they currently do. They were both identified in

⁸Darlington Gateway Strategy, December 2006 by BDP/King Sturge/Regeneris/CI:P

the Darlington Gateway Strategy 2006-2020⁸ as having the potential to provide attractive office accommodation. Second only to the town centre, Central Park is a high priority location for regeneration, and a major mixed use regeneration project is underway there. Planning permission exists for housing, offices, a new park and a hotel, which will complement the new Darlington College and the proposed Teesside University campus at the location's northern end.

3.1.7 New development and regeneration in the Town Centre Fringe will be key to delivering the vision for Darlington over the medium to longer term. The area is critical to improving links between the Town Centre, Central Park and the main railway station, which are all close by. It provides opportunities for new employment, leisure/cultural, recreation and housing in a highly accessible location, and for local pockets of deprivation, poor housing and environmental quality to be tackled comprehensively. Efforts to realise the area's potential will be co-ordinated through an Area Action Plan⁹ and other appropriate planning frameworks, taking account of constraints (such as flood risk) which will shape the eventual pattern and form of development and redevelopment there.

⁹Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan – see Local Development Scheme at www.darlington.gov.uk for more details.

¹⁰Draft Tees Valley Investment Plan, 2010

¹¹Darlington Renewable and Low Carbon Study, Entec, 2010

3.1.8 The Town Centre, Town Centre Fringe and Central Park are being prioritised for public sector regeneration investment¹⁰. The Town Centre and Town Centre Fringe are also expected to be the focus of provision for commercial scale renewable energy schemes, particularly biomass/combined heat and power installations and district heating and cooling networks¹¹.

3.1.9 A range of largely previously developed sites within the rest of the urban area (referred to as Darlington Urban Area) are expected to come forward for development and redevelopment throughout the plan period, as the space and locational requirements of different types of activity and development evolve. Where potentially suitable, available and deliverable sites have been identified, e.g. through the SHLAA¹², these will form the basis of identifying land allocations in the Accommodating Growth DPD¹³. Taken with existing planning permissions, such as for significant new housing and employment at Lingfield Point, and remaining land within established employment areas, such as Yarm Road Industrial Estate, these will be able to accommodate most but not all new housing, new infrastructure and some additional employment development.

¹²Darlington Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, March 2009, and update December 2009.

¹³see Local Development Scheme 2009-2012 for timetable of preparation.

3.1.10 Two locations at the urban fringe, together with the Durham Tees Valley Airport area, are identified for new development that either cannot be accommodated within Darlington Urban Area or for operational reasons, specifically requires land close to the strategic highway network. Land at the North West Urban Fringe includes the Faverdale area, which has potential as a strategically important logistics, distribution and large, modern, general employment area. Land adjacent to the A66 and the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor within the Eastern Urban Fringe has been identified as a major employment location for modern offices and logistics¹⁴. Deliverable land for significant new housing has also been identified in both these urban fringe locations¹¹. The North West Urban fringe is the most sustainable urban fringe location for new housing, and the Eastern Urban Fringe the next most sustainable, provided appropriate community infrastructure and sustainable transport provision is made and potential adverse impacts of development there are mitigated¹⁵.

¹⁴RSS para. 2.183

¹⁵Strategic housing locations options appraisal, DBC, 2009.

¹⁶RSS Policy 21

3.1.11 The Borough also contains part of Durham Tees Valley Airport, whose continued key role in the economic growth of the region and as a regional gateway is acknowledged¹⁶. The Airport's owners have prepared plans for

future growth up to the year 2030, and planning permissions are in place for airport related employment development there.

3.1.12 The Borough's villages and countryside are an integral part of what makes Darlington an attractive place to live. Their vitality and viability need to be safeguarded and strengthened, whether it be by retaining services or supporting new development, such as affordable housing, that help to maintain sustainable communities. None of the villages have significant development opportunities on previously developed land and buildings, and so have not been identified as strategic locations for new development. However, the larger villages of Hurworth/Hurworth Place, Middleton St. George and Heighington should be the focus for the provision of services, employment and facilities to sustain the rural community.

3.1.13 Maintaining the gap between the Darlington Urban Area, the Borough's villages and other settlements, like Newton Aycliffe, that lie just beyond the Borough boundary is important to help maintain each settlement's distinctive identity. The identification of strategic gaps, coupled with limits to development drawn around each settlement to identify the area within which any new development will be expected to be accommodated (to be identified in the Making Places DPD¹⁷) will prevent settlement coalescence and urban sprawl.

¹⁷See the Council's Local Development Scheme for the timetable for preparing the Making Places DPD.

Policy CS1: Darlington's Sub-regional Role and Locational Strategy

Growth, development and enhanced infrastructure provision will be encouraged in Darlington Borough where it helps to fulfil:

- (a) its historic role as a market town and host to a thriving and modern town centre, whilst providing an attractive residential environment serving the Borough and its hinterland; and
- (b) its role as a sub-regional centre and key location in the Tees Valley City Region, or
- (c) its role as a gateway to the region and sub region, serving the eastern part of the Tees Valley, and large parts of North Yorkshire and south and west Durham.

New development and regeneration activity in the Borough will be concentrated on sustainable locations within and adjoining the main urban area, where there is actual or potential good accessibility for everybody. Priority will be given to delivery in the following strategic locations, in priority order as follows:

- (i) the Town Centre, for retailing and other town centre uses and including biomass/combined heat and power installations and a district heating and cooling network;
- (ii) Central Park, for mixed use development, principally housing and employment; and
- (iii) Town Centre Fringe, for mixed use development, principally housing, employment, but including biomass/combined heat and power installations and a district heating and cooling network and greenspace, taking account of the strategic flood risk in the River Skerne environs.

New housing and employment development in Darlington Urban Area, the North West Urban Fringe and the Eastern Urban Fringe will be in accordance with the priorities and phasing identified in Policies CS5 and CS10. Development in the Durham Tees Valley Airport area, for airport related employment uses, will be throughout the plan period.

Development in the strategic locations above will be expected to meet most of the overall development needs of Darlington Borough.

Land between Darlington Urban Area and each of the surrounding towns and villages is identified as strategic gaps. Within the limits to development of the Borough's villages, development that supports the vitality and viability of the village, its services or the rural economy will be supported, particularly in the larger villages of Hurworth/Hurworth Place, Middleton St. George and Heighington. Outside the limits to development of the main urban area and the villages, development will be limited to that required to meet identified rural needs.

Measuring Progress

3.1.14 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS1, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
New	Amount of new development that has planning permission and has been completed in the strategic locations identified.
New	Amount of all new employment and housing development that has been completed in the strategic locations identified, as a percentage of all new housing and employment development completed in the Borough.

3.2 Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design

¹'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed', the sustainable community strategy for Darlington, 2008.

3.2.1 The distinctive character of the Borough's buildings, settings and environments is highly valued by local people and is regarded¹ as a cornerstone to attracting high quality jobs and visitors to the Borough, and underpins local quality of life, now and in the future. High quality design in new development that strengthens the valued character of Darlington's built and natural townscapes and landscapes will help to reinforce Darlington's distinctiveness. High quality design will also help to connect old and new, create spaces for wildlife and people, and create and maintain safe, attractive, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places.

²Distinctly Darlington: Darlington Characterisation Studv. DBC. 2009

3.2.2 High quality design should appropriately reflect the positive elements identified in Distinctly Darlington² for each of seven different character zones and create a vibrant, distinctive 'sense of place'. Contemporary design should complement the past but be honest to its time.

³Darlington Climate Change Strategy, Darlington Partnership 2006

3.2.3 The important role that the design of new development can have in minimising carbon emissions is also recognised³. Sustainable design should consider the whole life of a development, from construction to operation or occupation, so that all opportunities are taken to dramatically cut energy and water use, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and flood risk, save resources and use sustainable drainage techniques. The appropriate national sustainable building standards⁴ or those of any equivalent approved scheme must be met, and major developments will be expected to secure at least 10% of their energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources, in accordance with the RSS target⁵ (see policy CS3).

⁴Code for Sustainable Homes, DCLG, 2008
www.breeam.org

⁵Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, CLG 2008

3.2.4 New developments should be created with easy and safe movement for everyone, with priority given to pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport, whilst ensuring that those who need to use a car to move around the Borough are able to do so (see policy CS19). Good connectivity will help integrate new development with existing urban areas, providing direct routes and connections through, to and from new development to bus stops, local shops and services, helping to reduce inequalities in education, health, and income that are amplified by poor access.

3.2.5 The priorities for high quality, sustainable and safe design in this policy are elaborated upon in the Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy CS2: Achieving High Quality, Sustainable Design

High quality, safe, sustainable and inclusive design will be promoted in all new developments. All development proposals should:

- a) make efficient use of land, existing buildings and resources;
- b) reflect and/or enhance Darlington's distinctive natural and built characteristics that positively contribute to the character of the local area and its sense of place;
- c) create a safe and secure environment that will incorporate the principles of Secured by Design;
- d) support inclusive communities, by providing links to existing networks to ensure safe, convenient and attractive access for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and for disabled people;
- e) easily connect to key social and community facilities and incorporate appropriate utilities provision, promoting sustainable neighbourhoods;
- f) incorporate measures to reduce carbon emissions, promote energy management and adapt to climate change through the use of sustainable design and construction techniques to meet the appropriate level of the national sustainable building standards:

Residential development 2010-2016

1. 2010: Code for Sustainable Homes rating 3
2. 2013: Code for Sustainable Homes rating 4
3. 2016: Code for Sustainable Homes rating 6

Non residential development

4. 2010-2016: BREEAM 2008 standards 'very good-outstanding'
- g) create safe, attractive, functional and integrated outdoor spaces that complement the built form, relate well to the Borough's green infrastructure network, promote biodiversity and geological interests and incorporate public art; and
- h) provide vehicular access and parking suitable for its use and location, reflecting appropriate maximum parking standards set out in the Tees Valley Highway Design Guide⁶.

⁶Tees Valley Highway Design Guide, 2009 or any successor.

Measuring Progress

3.2.6 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS2, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI107	Perceptions of anti social behaviour
NI175	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
NI186	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area
NI188	Adapting to climate change
Core H3	Completed new or converted dwellings on PDL
Core H6	Housing Quality: BFL assessments
Local 20	Number of applications that meet CSH/BREEAM standards
New	Amount of completed non residential development complying with parking standards

3.3 Promoting Renewable Energy

3.3.1 Darlington is committed to playing its part in tackling climate change by reducing demand for energy from fossil fuels, for transport, heat and electricity. This will help achieve the national target to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050¹. Increasingly, renewable energy generation in Darlington will be developed, to contribute towards the Regional Spatial Strategy minimum target of 138MW installed capacity in the Tees Valley², and helping to achieve 15% of the UK's energy from renewable sources by 2020³.

¹UK Low Carbon Transition Plan, 2009

³UK Renewable Energy Strategy, 2009

²RSS Policy 39, CLG, 2008

⁴Renewable sources: includes wind, biomass, combined heat and power, district heating, solar, ground source and air source heat pumps.

⁵Micro-generation: includes but is not limited to solar photovoltaics, solar thermal, ground source heat pumps and individual biomass boilers.

⁶Darlington Renewable and Low Carbon Study, Entec, 2010

⁷see the Council's LDS for timetable of AAP preparation.

⁸PPS1 Supplement, DCLG, 2007, PPS22, ODPM, 2004, PPS22 Practice Guide, ODPM 2004

⁹Sensitive receptors include built heritage, natural environment, roads, railways, public rights of way, power lines, biodiversity, air traffic

¹⁰including East Durham Limestone and Tees Plain Wind Farm Development and Landscape Capacity Study, ARUP, 2008 & Addendum 2009

¹¹Civil Aviation Authority, the Ministry of Defence, the Health and Safety Executive as well as Durham Tees

¹²For LDS programme see Council's website

3.3.2 It is envisaged that a range of renewable energy technologies⁴ will be needed to help meet the anticipated 10% increase in electricity and 13% increase in heat demand arising from the Borough's growth strategy (see CS1), taking account of complementary measures to reduce Darlington's overall fossil fuel consumption. The strategy is to permit appropriate, commercial scale schemes, together with renewable energy generation at or near new development, including the use of micro-generation⁵, alongside promoting sustainable transport (see CS19) and building to recognised sustainability standards (see CS2), to secure sustainable supplies of electricity, heat and transport, and to achieve more affordable energy for the community.

3.3.3 Wind energy has the greatest potential to contribute to the Borough's renewable electricity supply. Assessments of wind speeds, technical and environmental constraints and the potential landscape and visual impact of wind development in the north eastern part of the Borough should be used to help identify sustainable locations appropriate for wind energy development. Areas for small scale wind energy have been identified on Darlington's urban fringe⁶, including at the strategic development locations identified in Policy CS1.

3.3.4 Other technologies such as biomass have the potential to make a bigger contribution to a reliable heat supply or to generate electricity, or both, if combined heat and power plants are developed. There is also significant potential over the long term, to develop district heating and cooling networks in locations of high energy use, such as in the Town Centre and at the Borough's strategic development locations (see Policy CS1). The planning framework to help realise this potential will be put in place through documents like the Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan⁷.

3.3.5 In accordance with national planning policy and guidance⁸, significant weight is given to the wider environmental, social and economic benefits of renewable and low carbon energy generation. The impact on neighbouring residents and other sensitive receptors⁹ is also a consideration, but will vary, depending on the size, scale, location and type of technology proposed. Specifically for wind energy, impact will depend on the size, scale and location of turbine(s). Any potential cumulative impact of schemes within the area, including within and outside the Borough, will also be considered. Measures of impact, such as the minimum appropriate distance between turbines and residential properties and other sensitive receptors will be assessed on a site-specific basis. Regard will also be had to relevant documents in the LDF evidence base or any successor documents¹¹.

3.3.6 Proposals located within defined consultation zones of regulatory bodies¹¹ that regulate air traffic, water and soil quality, should where appropriate, seek the advice of the relevant agency. Policies relating to appropriate detailed assessments and mitigation required to ensure there are no significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents and other sensitive receptors will be set out in the Making Places DPD¹².

3.3.7 A flexible approach to providing renewable energy generation in new development will be promoted. It could encompass a range of technologies appropriate to the type, scale and nature of the development and in accordance with the principles of the Design of New Development SPD July 2009, or any successor. New development will be expected to secure at least 10% of its energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources, to contribute to the RSS target². In the strategic development

locations identified in Policy CS1, new development is likely to significantly add to the Borough's overall energy demand. These locations will, therefore, be expected to integrate significant technological improvements to generate at least 20% of their energy needs from on site provision, so as to help achieve the carbon neutral standard or that of any successor, by 2016. Schemes which generate more energy than the proposed associated development requires offer the scope for surplus energy to be supplied locally via a private wire network or back into the National Grid.

3.3.8 Site constraints or abnormal development costs may mean that it is not always feasible or viable¹⁴ to achieve these targets on site. In these cases, appropriate connection to an existing or new renewable energy facility will be supported. Exceptionally, guided by the Planning Obligations SPD¹³, a contribution will be sought to a carbon management fund, to enable off site renewable energy or energy efficiency to Darlington's existing dwellings, thereby, helping to reduce the Borough's overall energy demand.

¹³Economic viability of housing land in Darlington Borough. Levvels. June 2010

Policy CS3: Promoting Renewable Energy

The development of renewable energy schemes, including micro-generation, together with any ancillary buildings and infrastructure, will be supported and considered in the context of sustainable development and climate change. Significant weight will be given to the wider environmental, economic and social benefits arising from renewable energy schemes whilst considering the anticipated effects, individually and cumulatively, upon:

- a) the surrounding natural, built and cultural landscape and townscape including buildings, features and habitats and species of national and local importance; and/or
- b) residential amenity including visual intrusion, air, dust, noise, odour, traffic generation, recreation and access; and/or
- c) the operation of air traffic and radar systems.

Appropriate mitigation and/or compensation measures and monitoring to address any effects identified and considered will be required prior to any development proceeding.

On site provision of decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources of energy, including micro-generation will be required to achieve the following standards, unless it can be shown that it is not feasible or viable:

- a) at least 20% of energy supply in the strategic locations identified in Policy CS1 (except Darlington Urban Area):
- b) at least 10% of energy supply in major developments (including conversions) of 10 or more dwellings or 1000m² non residential floorspace.

Where specific opportunities exist, development will be required to connect to existing biomass or combined heat and power installations or district heating schemes. Shared energy schemes within new or existing major or significant developments or schemes which could supply energy via a local private wire network or into the National Grid will be supported.

Where it can be demonstrated that the required percentage of renewable energy supply cannot be delivered on site, a contribution to a carbon management fund will be required to be invested in off site renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in the Borough.

Measuring Progress

3.3.9 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS3, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI186	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area
NI188	Adapting to climate change
Core E3	Renewable energy capacity by type
Local 21	Low carbon energy generation

3.4 Timely Infrastructure Provision

¹One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington Partnership, 2008, the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington

²Physical infrastructure: includes transport and utilities provision, social infrastructure: includes education, health and affordable housing provision, green infrastructure: includes open space, children's play and habitat provision

³Darlington Local Infrastructure Plan, DBC, 2010

⁴Planning obligations or Section 106 agreements are legally binding agreements between landowners and/or developers and the Council.

⁵Community Infrastructure Levy, CLG, 2010

⁶For details see the LDS timetable on the Council's website

⁷e.g. Economic viability of housing land, Levvels, 2010

3.4.1 The timely provision of infrastructure to support new development is, and will continue to be, essential to the delivery of Darlington's future growth, and in realising the vision of a Borough of growing, prosperous, safer, sustainable and inclusive communities, supported by excellent services where people can fulfil their potential, live longer and have healthier lifestyles¹. Promoting sustainable communities and a high quality environment depends on necessary physical, social and green infrastructure² being provided on and off site, to meet the needs arising from the development, and to mitigate any adverse impacts on Darlington's existing infrastructure.

3.4.2 Whilst most infrastructure will continue to be provided by local service providers and utilities companies through main funding programmes³, planning obligations⁴ can help ensure that a complementary, coordinated programme of physical, social and green infrastructure is delivered. Planning obligations required will directly reflect the scale and type of development and the needs in the locality⁵. They will be used to secure site related infrastructure, contributions to strategic infrastructure or to enhance infrastructure in the locality. They will include, but will not be limited to, those matters identified in this policy.

3.4.3 Facilities and infrastructure provision can become stressed, as individual developments have a cumulative adverse impact. Where several developments impact upon or make a requirement for new strategic infrastructure, e.g. sport and recreation facilities or highways works, a contribution to a strategic infrastructure fund may be required from all contributing and/or benefiting developments, to ensure that the costs are borne by all.

3.4.4 The ability to mix funding sources at a local level will ensure infrastructure delivery is flexible, efficient, co-ordinated and meets the community's needs, as well as that of specific developments. Guided by the Planning Obligations SPD⁶, planning obligations will be sought through direct provision of infrastructure, payment of a standard charge or tariff, standard formulae and/or through the payment of financial contributions. Where the appropriate level of infrastructure, works or facilities is partly provided on the development site, the level of any payment or standard formulae will be modified to reflect the level of on site provision. The impact of this provision on the viability and feasibility of a scheme, and hence delivery of the Strategy overall, will also be considered.

3.4.5 Guided by the recommendations of the economic viability of land studies⁷, the needs in the locality and the priorities and standards in national, regional and local policy documents, particularly 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'¹, the Planning Obligations SPD will establish priorities for planning obligations across the Borough in a consistent, fair and transparent way. Planning obligations will also be used to reduce any gaps in funding identified in the Darlington Local Infrastructure Plan³ to deliver infrastructure that supports the Borough's growth strategy.

3.4.6 The Council, will work with local, regional and national commercial and public sector infrastructure providers, like the Highways Agency, utility companies, healthcare providers and private sector partners, to ensure spending of funds secured through planning obligations is directly linked to the phasing of development across the Borough, particularly in the strategic locations (see Policy CS1), to ensure delivery of the spatial strategy.

3.4.7 The Government has introduced an alternative to planning obligations, the Community Infrastructure Levy⁵, for collecting financial contributions from developers and the matters for which they could be sought. It is not mandatory for the Council to use the Levy; if the Levy or any successor scheme is introduced by the Council, any changes will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy CS4 Developer Contributions

Planning obligations will be negotiated to secure the necessary physical, social and environmental infrastructure required as a consequence of development. Planning obligations must be consistent with national planning guidance and appropriate to the type and scale of development and should mitigate any additional impacts the development will have on the locality.

The appropriate range and level of planning obligations sought will be assessed in a comprehensive manner, taking into account the viability of the development and any additional unforeseen costs associated with the development.

Infrastructure provision will be sought, where appropriate, through the use of standard charges, tariffs and formula.

The provision of infrastructure will be linked directly to the phasing of development on land throughout the Borough to ensure that appropriate enabling infrastructure is delivered in line with future growth. Site related infrastructure will be prioritised to reflect the identified needs in that locality to include, but will not be limited to:

1. affordable housing provision;
2. early years, primary, secondary and tertiary education and extended services provision to serve new and existing communities;
3. provision and enhancement of multifunctional green infrastructure;
4. providing for and improving accessibility within the Borough by a variety of modes of sustainable transport;
5. provision, enhancement and management of protected and priority species and habitat networks;
6. employment skills and training opportunities as part of the construction of major new development;
7. road and highways improvements; and
8. utilities infrastructure.

Planning obligations may be sought, where appropriate, from major developments to contribute to the delivery of strategic infrastructure to enable the cumulative impacts of developments to be managed in a sustainable and effective manner. These will include, but will not be limited to:

9. a carbon management fund to provide off site renewable energy and improve energy efficiency of existing dwellings;
10. sport and recreation provision and enhancement;
11. Improvements to the public realm and provision of public art; and
12. Strategic road and highway improvements.

Infrastructure will, where necessary, be coordinated and delivered in partnership with other authorities and agencies.

Measuring Progress

3.4.8 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS4, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI0005	Percentage of residents satisfied with their area as a place to live
NI155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
NI175	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
NI186	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area
NI188	Adapting to climate change
NI197	Improved biodiversity – active management of local sites
Core E3	Renewable energy capacity by type
Local 13	Open space provision in the urban area
Local 21	Low carbon energy generation

4. PROSPEROUS DARLINGTON

4.1 Supporting the Local Economy

4.1.1 A strong local economy is vital to improving living standards and quality of life for local people. In recent decades, the Borough's economy has undergone a transformation with employment in traditional industries (manufacturing) declining. However, specialised engineering remains a key strength, providing high value jobs with good growth prospects. Particular growth has also been seen in the service sector (business and professional services), which now dominates.

¹One Darlington: Perfectly Placed is the sustainable community strategy for Darlington, 2008

²The North East of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (July 2008).

³Darlington Gateway Strategy (King Sturge, BDP and Regeneris), 2006

⁴See Darlington Employment Land Review, DBC 2009.

4.1.2 The Borough needs to widen its economic base if it is to continue to increase the number and quality of jobs available for its residents across all sectors and increase wage levels. This ambition is contained in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed¹, and translated into strategic objectives 3 and 5 of this Core Strategy (see page XX).

4.1.3 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)² plans for economic growth of some 2.5% per year over the plan period, and Darlington is a key location where some of that growth is expected to take place. The good prospects for growth reported in 2006³, which suggested that the Borough's recent economic growth could be sustained over the longer term, have been revised in more recent work⁴, which suggests that growth will be slower. Key employment growth sectors were considered to be health, logistics, business and financial services, and engineering and civil engineering, with other growth sectors including creative industries and digital media, renewable energy (and recycling), chemicals, retail, and tourism and leisure, including food.

4.1.4 Based on employment growth forecasting⁴ there is an additional land requirement of just over 101ha over the plan period. However, to ensure that the Borough can accommodate, and be attractive to, a range of new businesses and expansions, as well as traditional established employment uses, a portfolio of employment land is needed that exceeds this requirement, so that there is a choice of sites, whatever the requirements.

⁵Specifically allocated for employment uses and provides for the changing employment needs of the Borough. Generally restricted to use classed B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended)

⁶See the Councils Local Development Scheme for the timetable of preparation.

4.1.5 Established employment areas make a significant contribution to the overall land supply, accommodating existing businesses and providing opportunities for new growing businesses. However, newer sites in the outer urban area, such as Faverdale East Business Park and Morton Palms, provide a different type of business environment and better access to major roads. Sites capable of supporting identified specific sectoral needs⁵ will be allocated in sustainable locations through the Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document⁶ to meet the identified figure in the RSS⁷ for up to 235ha of general employment land⁷ of which some land is part of mixed use employment sites to support long term sustainable employment growth. This includes airport related employment land at Durham Tees Valley Airport, and is in addition to the 125ha which will be allocated at the Key Employment Locations⁸ of Faverdale and Heighington Lane, giving a total provision of up to 360ha in Darlington.

⁷Policy 18, RSS, CLG 2008

⁸Locations the RSS identifies as critical to delivering accelerated employment growth in the regional economy.

4.1.6 To achieve the most sustainable pattern of development and support RSS objectives, the focus will be on developing land for major new employment uses in sustainable locations, making use of previously developed land and buildings wherever possible, and making the most efficient use of employment land. This will include continued public sector support for office development in Darlington Town Centre, mixed-use development at Central

Park and new employment opportunities in the Town Centre Fringe. This will be complemented by further edge-of-town employment to meet specific sectoral business needs, building on recent developments, in locations like Faverdale (larger industrial uses and logistics), Yarm Road and Lingfield Point (business, industrial and warehousing and some business park / prestige development), and Durham Tees Valley Airport (airport related uses). It is evident from existing employment sites, that each one has its own special attributes that will continue to be attractive to different and changing business needs over time, such as the offices at the outskirts of town at Morton Park, the diverse range of sites in the industrial areas at Faverdale and Yarm Road and the units in the inner urban sites such as Albert Hill. The gradual renewal of existing business areas over the plan period will also be an integral part of the overall strategy of maintaining choice for all types of business, and improving the overall quality of the employment land and premises offer.

Policy CS5: Supporting the Local Economy

A continuous and diverse supply of employment land to meet the needs of existing and future economic development will be provided in appropriate locations, according to the locational strategy set out in Policy CS1.

Provision will be made for up to 235ha of additional land for general and mixed use employment across the Borough to 2021, with up to a further 69ha to 2026. The focus and priority of provision will be:

First priority, 2011-2021

- a) Darlington Town Centre (office use) and Town Centre Fringe (mixed use) (about 17ha);
- b) Central Park (Mixed Use) (about 10ha);

Second priority, throughout the plan period

- c) Faverdale (Business, Industrial and Logistics) (about 50ha);
- d) Lingfield Area (Mixed Use) (about 15ha);
- e) Morton Palms Business Park Area (Prestige Office Development) (about 11ha); and
- f) Durham Tees Valley Airport (airport related) (about 20ha) and general employment (about 5ha)

A further 125ha of employment land will be made available at the key employment locations of Faverdale and Heighington Lane, for development complementary to that identified above, at any point during the plan period.

The focus of other sites contributing to the employment land supply will be on suitable previously developed sites in sustainable locations within the urban area.

Existing viable employment sites and other sites with special attributes will be protected by safeguarding them for employment uses only or for mixed uses, where appropriate, unless it can be demonstrated that they are not required for the purposes of providing a balanced portfolio of land for employment purposes.

Measuring Progress

4.1.7 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS5, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
BD1	Total amount of additional (net and gross) employment floor space by type
BD2	Total amount of employment floor space on PDL by type
BD3	Employment land available by type
Local 11	Losses of employment land by type
Local 19	Amount of airport related development (ha)

4.2 Vibrant Tourism and Cultural Offer

¹ Modelling the North East Economy: The impact of Tourism on Economic Activity in the North East of England, Durham University for One North East, 2007

4.2.1 A study carried out in 2007¹ found that tourism accounts for 4.6% of the region's GVA and 5.6% of employment. Latest results (2008) show that:

- 8.3m overnight tourists visited the north-east;
- Tourism contributed £3.8 billion to the regional economy and;
- Tourism supported approximately 64,000 jobs.

In the Tees Valley:

- 2.2m overnight tourists visited;
- Tourism contributed £541 million to the sub-regional economy and;
- Tourism supported approximately 8,000 jobs

4.2.2 Darlington is ideally placed to enhance its quality tourism offer. It has potential for attracting visitors from a wide area for business and leisure, because of its good connections by road, rail and air, and because of its location on the border of North Yorkshire and County Durham, acting as a gateway to the rest of the Tees Valley and the whole of the north-east region.

4.2.3 The Borough's existing successful tourism and cultural attractions, such as the Civic Theatre and the football stadium will continue to underpin the local tourism and cultural offer. The 'Head of Steam' Museum and Brick Train Sculpture are key attractions, based on Darlington's widely appreciated industrial and railway heritage. However, increasingly the Borough's historic, cultural and natural landscapes are attracting visitors, exploring places like Piercebridge Roman Fort and the Ulnaby Medieval village. Rural diversification schemes, such as Archers Jersey Ice Cream Parlour and the farm shops at Piercebridge and Burtree House, are extending the range of countryside attractions, whilst a range of high quality urban and countryside hotels are helping to attract business and special occasion visitors.

4.2.4 Cultural and arts attractions like the Arts Centre and The Forum also attract visitors, whilst newer public art like the Art in the Yards, the Life Pulse, and the Market Cascade fountain act as a focus for visitors to the town centre. Urban-based attractions are important and Darlington's countryside is a natural asset, which attracts visitors and residents alike.

4.2.5 It is important to safeguard the existing tourism offer and complementary provision will need to be encouraged if Darlington is to be recognised as a cultural destination. Enhancing the Borough's tourism and cultural offer can support regeneration, provide employment opportunities and support rural diversification. An enhanced offer can also help create cohesive communities, engender civic pride, improve local quality of life, and support community learning and personal development. New facilities should be easily accessible by a choice of means of sustainable transport and in sequentially preferable locations.

² Policy 16, Regional Spatial Strategy, CLG, 2008

4.2.6 The RSS² encourages the creation of concentrations of cultural related development within sustainable locations to contribute to wider regeneration objectives. There are also aspirations within One Darlington: Perfectly Placed to expand the arts and cultural services offer, particularly in Central Park and the Town Centre Fringe. The area around the Civic Theatre and The Forum music centre, at the core of the Town Centre Fringe, provides an opportunity to form a multi-disciplinary cultural quarter. This area would have a pivotal role in creating a creative arts cluster improving the economic prospects of the area, reducing social inequalities whilst enhancing the local environment. With its own sense of identity and with stronger pedestrian connections formed across

the inner ring road, it would link well with the town centre, and would help to connect new development at Central Park with the town centre. It could include a wider range of cultural attractions and services, and the enhancement of the emerging creative industries sector, with facilities for a wide range of artistic, educational, creative, technical, publishing and production services. By providing creative outlets for a diversity of local people, such facilities and services would also generate local employment, provide a unique local educational resource, improve well-being and promote social inclusion. More detailed proposals will be developed through the Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan³.

³See the Council's Local Development Scheme for the programme of preparation.

4.2.7 Visitor accommodation is vital to the growth of the tourism and cultural economy, and to capitalise on the attractions of the Borough. Darlington has significant existing hotel provision for a town of its size⁴. The newly opened Rockliffe Hall has added to the top end of that provision and a further 300 rooms have planning permission, at a range of locations across the Borough⁴. A mix and sufficient quality of hotels is required to cater for a range of budgets and provide a choice of tourist accommodation so that visitors, including the corporate and contractor market, will stay longer, spend more and travel less by private car. According to the Hotel Study, there is market potential for the following⁴:

- a new budget hotel and extension of the current budget hotel at Morton Park;
- an additional small boutique hotel in the town centre;
- an upgrade and possible expansion of the existing 3 star hotels like Hall Garth and,
- an hotel at Central Park.

⁴ Tees Valley Hotel Futures, Hotel Solutions, July 2009

4.2.8 Future office and business park development proposed in the Borough (see Policy CS5) could generate demand for 3 star hotels in the Town Centre Fringe, Morton Park and Morton Palms, to cater for the business market. There is also market potential for serviced or self-catering apartments to meet the needs of corporate, construction worker and leisure markets.

4.2.9 Expansion in passenger numbers and freight travel at Durham Tees Valley Airport may generate increased demand from aircrews and travellers in the long term, giving rise to capacity for another hotel close to the airport, to complement the existing provision.

Policy CS6: Vibrant Cultural and Tourism Offer

A sustainable, vibrant tourism and cultural sector will be promoted and enhanced for the benefit of the local economy, community and visitors by:

- (a) Safeguarding and enhancing existing tourist attractions in Darlington, such as the Head of Steam Museum;
- (b) Promoting new tourist attractions, particularly in the Town Centre and Town Centre Fringe, which raise awareness of and interest in the Borough's railway, industrial and cultural heritage;
- (c) Promoting appropriate nature and countryside-based tourism attractions which support visits to and enjoyment of the countryside and / or where they promote access to or use of heritage assets;
- (d) Safeguarding and promoting the enhancement of existing cultural attractions including Darlington Civic Theatre; and
- (e) Encouraging provision of a diverse range of cultural attractions and creative arts industries, particularly in the Town Centre Fringe, to create the Darlington Cultural Quarter.

To support the sustainable growth of tourism in Darlington, a range of visitor accommodation, including provision to meet the needs of disabled people, will be encouraged in appropriate locations, easily accessible by a choice of means of sustainable transport. These locations will include the Town Centre, Town Centre Fringe, Central Park, Morton Palms, Morton Park and at Durham Tees Valley Airport.

Measuring Progress

4.2.10 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS6, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
New	Amount of tourism or cultural developments completed
New	Number of new visitor bedrooms available

5. A VIBRANT TOWN CENTRE AND ACCESSIBLE SHOPS AND SERVICES

5.0.1 Darlington Borough is generally well provided with shopping facilities, both in terms of quantity (relative to the population) and quality (in terms of accessibility and range of retailers and retail formats). Surveys report fairly high levels of satisfaction with current provision amongst Borough residents and relatively little of their retail spending 'leaks out' elsewhere, whereas people living outside the Borough spend significant amounts of money within it¹.

¹ Darlington Retail Study 2008, DBC. Its findings, forecasts and recommendations, and those of its 2010 Update, underpin this chapter.

²Fourth largest on some indicators.

5.0.2 The main retail concentration is in Darlington Town Centre, the fifth² largest shopping destination in North East England. This is a major sub-regional hub for almost a quarter of a million people, not just residents of the Borough and the western part of the Tees Valley, but also of wide areas of south and west Durham and north-west Yorkshire. The Town Centre also attracts custom for leisure, entertainment, recreation, personal and professional business and diverse other services, in part due to its distinctive and special character, born of being a blend of modern centre and historic market town. The Centre's good accessibility to most of its catchment population by a wide range of transport, including more sustainable means, is one of its keenest attributes.

5.0.3 In economic terms, the Town Centre is one of the Borough's key assets, generating considerable turnover and wealth and employing thousands of people. Notwithstanding the diversity of uses and functions, it is retailing, most particularly the retailing of non-food, 'comparison' goods such as clothing, which underpins its economy and is at the heart of its vitality and viability.

5.0.4 Smaller centres within the Borough play important supporting roles, providing residents with everyday shopping, leisure and other services, both commercial (such as banks, takeaways, pubs and clubs) and public (such as health services, libraries or advice centres), conveniently close to their homes. 'Convenience' shopping (food and other everyday essential items) is at the heart of these district and, smaller, local centres³. Elsewhere, local 'corner' and village shops, sometimes clustered with other local services in small groups or parades, are particularly important to areas relatively remote from the centres and to residents not using a car.

³The definitions for centres are set out in PPS4, Planning Policy Statement 4, Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, 2009. Under the Borough of Darlington Local Plan, 1997, Cockerton and North Road are presently defined as district centres and Mowden, Neasham Road, Whinfield and Yarm Road as local centres.

5.0.5 Recent decades have seen the growth of substantial shopping facilities, such as retail warehouses and large supermarkets, in out-of-centre locations, particularly on the eastern side of the town at Darlington Retail Park and Morton Park. Around a quarter of the shop floorspace of the Borough is now found in these. They are popular but because of their locations and layouts lack the wider accessibility of the centres and are overwhelmingly car-oriented, stimulating increased vehicle (and carbon) use and traffic congestion.

5.0.6 Notwithstanding the continuing net inflow of retail spending into the Borough, and the relatively good health of the Town Centre, both have declined in recent years as competition for shopping expenditure has increased. This competition has come from competing town centres and retail warehouses, and more recently, from supermarkets expanding their ranges of comparison goods and from the internet. The Town Centre also appears to have suffered more from the recent economic downturn than have

supermarkets and internet retailers. Meanwhile, some non-retail functions of the Town Centre have also been lost in recent years, particularly office employment which has tended to focus instead on modern business parks on the periphery of the town.

⁴ In particular PPS4.

⁵RSS: The North East of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021, CLG 2008. In particular policies 10 and 25

⁶One Darlington Perfectly Placed, A Vision for Darlington 2008-2021, Darlington Partnership, 2008.

5.0.7 National⁴ and regional⁵ policies today place an emphatic preference on town centres as the location for retailing and other 'main town centre uses', such as offices, leisure and culture. The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies Darlington and Middlesbrough Town Centres as sub-regional centres within which the majority of new retail and leisure development in the Tees Valley should be located; in other centres, additional development for such uses should be consistent with their scale and function to enhance their vitality and viability. Improving the town centre economy and its amenities, attractiveness and market town character are also key strands running throughout Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy⁶.

5.1 The Town Centre and Future Retail Provision

5.1.1 It is important that the Town Centre stems, and so far as possible reverses, recent losses of comparison goods market share. Losses to the internet are unlikely to be retrieved and indeed, are forecast to increase, but there is potential to stem and reverse losses to competing 'physical' destinations, including retail warehouses and supermarkets within the Borough.

⁷Darlington Retail Study 2008, as revised by the 2010 Update.

⁸Adding to Quality, A Development Strategy for Darlington Town Centre, DBC and One NorthEast, 2001. Carried forward for this area through Commercial Street Development: Planning and Highway Requirements, DBC, 2001 revised 2004.

⁹PPS4, Annex B, defines 'primary shopping area' as generally comprising the primary and those secondary shopping frontages which are contiguous and closely related to the primary shopping frontage. Darlington town centre's precise PSA will be newly identified in the Making Places DPD. In the interim it comprises the primary and secondary shopping frontages of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan, interpreted in the light of PPS4.

¹⁰Adding to Quality, 2001. Carried forward for this area in part through Feethams Planning and Development Brief, DBC, 2008.

5.1.2 An immediate quantitative need for additional comparison floorspace has been identified for the Borough⁷ and the Council has been working with others to meet it at Commercial Street, the area of the Town Centre identified as having the greatest potential for retail expansion⁸. A planning permission is in place for a retail-led mixed-use scheme known as The Oval, which would provide around 20,000 sqm gross of new class A1 shop floorspace (an increase of 19,000 sqm over existing A1 space on the site) as well as leisure uses, car parking and some residential flats. The shop units, including a department store, would be mainly comparison goods retailers, attractive to national retailers not presently in Darlington, particularly the fashion and lifestyle outlets. Whilst the proposed scheme has been held up by the economic downturn, a major retail-led development in this location, closely integrated with the existing primary shopping area⁹, remains the best opportunity to reinvigorate the Town Centre and boost its competitive position. As such it is a priority of Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy and an important strategic commitment of this Core Strategy.

5.1.3 Encouraging the return and growth of office employment within the Town Centre would further help boost pedestrian flows and retail trade, as well as adding diversity and providing employees with more accessible workplaces than might otherwise be the case. Diversifying the role of the Centre in other ways, such as by the encouragement of more non-alcohol related leisure attractions, would also stimulate vitality and viability, helping to widen the appeal of the Town Centre to more sections of the community outside shopping hours.

5.1.4 Although constrained on most sides by the inner ring road, the Centre has the physical capacity on undeveloped and under-developed sites, within the first part of plan period at least, to accommodate significant non-retail development of the kind that does not need to be within the shopping frontages. Other than as part of a scheme at Commercial Street, the area of

greatest opportunity is the southern part of the centre, around Feethams and Beaumont Street where sites are, or can be made, available¹⁰.

¹¹ 'Edge-of-centre' is defined in PPS4, Annex B.

5.1.5 Depending on the pace of economic recovery and the success of promoting and enhancing the Town Centre, it is likely that part-way through the plan period, there will be a need to expand the Centre for non-retail purposes, beyond the confines of the inner ring road into the present 'edge-of-centre'¹¹. The greatest potential lies to the east, in order to benefit from factors including the excellent rail connections at Bank Top station, the proximity of the Central Park regeneration area, the cultural and entertainment facilities already within the area, its underlying historic character, and the opportunities presented by undeveloped and under-developed sites. Other edge-of-centre areas to the north and south-east of the ring road present similar smaller scale opportunities.

5.1.6 An arc around the centre, known as the Town Centre Fringe, is accordingly proposed as the preferred location for major, non-retail, town centre type development, for the time when these cannot be accommodated within the present centre. Regeneration of the Town Centre Fringe, with an emphasis on culture and leisure, is already a strand of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Town Centre would be extended in stages, rather than across the whole of the Town Centre Fringe at once, to better focus development activity and make the most of investment in infrastructure. To function truly as a town centre extension, development will need to be preceded by significant improvements in connections across the ring road, particularly for non-car users.

Policy CS7: The Town Centre

The vitality and viability of Darlington Town Centre will be safeguarded and enhanced by protecting and promoting its role as the sub-regional centre for the western part of the Tees Valley City Region and neighbouring parts of North Yorkshire and south and west Durham, including its role as a market town.

It will be the locational focus for the development of retail, office, leisure, entertainment, intensive sport and recreation, arts, culture, tourism and other main town centre uses needed within the Borough, and such uses will be encouraged and directed there as a first preference. A diversity of such uses, including for the evening and night-time economy, will be encouraged within the Centre, in locations appropriate to their particular characteristics.

The first priority for retail development in the Borough is the completion of a major, multi-unit, retail-led scheme in the Commercial Street area, physically and functionally integrated with the primary shopping area, for occupation mainly by retailers of comparison goods. Incorporation of this within a mixed-use development would be encouraged.

Other than as part of a mixed-use scheme at Commercial Street, the first priority location for the development of major non-retail town centre uses in the Borough will be other parts of the present Town Centre, including the Feethams/Beaumont Street area.

When the present Town Centre can physically accommodate no further major non-retail development, it will be extended into the Town Centre Fringe and such development will be encouraged there. Extension will be in phases, with the initial priority direction being eastwards from the present centre towards the East Coast Main Line railway. Extension will be conditional on improvements in connections across the ring road, particularly for pedestrians and other non-car users, being in place.

5.1.7 A retail development at Commercial Street of the size presently permitted would meet most of the need for additional comparison retail floorspace forecast for the Borough by 2016, leaving a surplus need for approximately 8,000 sqm (gross) more at that date. Should the scale of the proposals for Commercial Street be amended before implementation, then this surplus need will rise or fall accordingly. It is forecast that the comparison floorspace need of the Borough will rise by a further 11,000 sqm between 2016 and 2021 (at average town centre sales density). These increases should be accommodated through the organic growth of the existing primary shopping area of the Town Centre, such as extensions to existing shops and/or the primary shopping area itself.

5.1.8 Longer-range forecasts are less reliable, but a further 10,000 sqm of comparison floorspace provision could be needed between 2021 and 2026. It is important to the Town Centre's ongoing vitality, viability and competitiveness that it remains the focal point for comparison shopping development throughout the plan period.

5.1.9 In respect of convenience retailing, the present amount of provision in the Borough, around 55,000 sqm gross, is sufficient to meet needs up to and beyond 2016: only around 300 sqm gross of additional floorspace is expected to be needed by 2021, and between 2021 and 2026, the need could rise by around 2,000 sqm. These increases should be taken up by small-scale proposals (such as shop extensions) spread across the various centres and small local shops.

Policy CS8: Additional Retail Provision

The need for additional comparison retail floorspace in the Borough by 2016 should be met mainly or wholly by a retail-led scheme at Commercial Street. A further 8,000 sqm gross could be needed, provided that its development would not undermine that at Commercial Street, and should be accommodated within the primary shopping area of the town centre or in physically and functionally integrated extensions to it.

An additional 11,000 sqm gross of comparison floorspace is expected to be needed in the five-year period to 2021 and should be located within the town centre primary shopping area or integrated extensions to it. A further 10,000 sqm of comparison space could be required in the five years to 2026 and the town centre should remain the principal focus for its provision.

There is no quantitative need for additional convenience retail floorspace in the Borough before 2016. There is expected to be a quantitative need for an additional 300 sqm gross floorspace in the five-year period to 2021 and a likely need for a further 2,000 sqm in the five years to 2026. Such provision should be located within existing centres and where it will remedy qualitative local deficiencies in the geographical distribution of food shopping, including areas of new residential development.

5.2 Locally Accessible Shops and Services

5.2.1 The lower-order centres in the Borough, and many local shops, services and leisure uses such as pubs and social clubs, remain important in providing for residents' everyday needs close to their homes. Their easy accessibility by non-car means of transport can also have wider benefits, including fostering healthier lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling, supporting local businesses, and helping reduce congestion and the use of fossil fuels. They are, however, vulnerable to undermining by proposals such as for competing development at less accessible locations or for more

financially-rewarding alternative uses on their site, even when there is no inherent lack of viability and the use fulfils a local need.

5.2.2 The following policy sets out the hierarchy of centres in the Borough and seeks to protect and promote facilities within them and elsewhere, where they serve a continuing local need. The policy goes further than the Government's PPS4¹², which confines its protection and promotion to facilities in centres and villages, as facilities away from centres can be important to urban communities too.

¹²PPS4: Planning Policy Statement 4, Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, 2009

Policy CS9: District and Local Centres and Local Shops and Services

The hierarchy of centres in the Borough will be taken into account in considering the appropriateness of proposals for development. The hierarchy is as follows:

- a) Darlington Town Centre (sub-regional centre);
- b) Cockerton and North Road centres (district centres);
- c) Mowden, Neasham Road, Whinfield, Yarm Road, West Park and Middleton St. George centres (local centres).

The role of the district and local centres in providing food shopping and a range of other shops, leisure uses (including public houses and social clubs) and services to meet people's day-to-day needs in accessible locations will be safeguarded and enhanced.

Development should be consistent with a centre's scale, function and physical capacity to integrate extensions. Any proposed new shops within these centres will be limited to maximum individual sizes of approximately 400 sqm gross floorspace for convenience shops and 100 sqm gross for comparison shops. Extensions which would take existing shops in these centres up to these sizes to improve their viability will be permitted.

Individual local shops, leisure uses and services and small neighbourhood clusters of them which meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents without the need to use a car will be protected and promoted. Proposed new shops in such circumstances will be limited to a maximum 100 sqm gross floorspace unless a qualitative need to remedy a geographical deficiency in the distribution of food shopping can be demonstrated, in which case convenience shops up to 400 sqm gross floorspace will be permitted. Extensions which would take existing local shops up to these sizes to improve their viability will be permitted, subject to the same demonstration of geographical deficiency for proposals over 100 sqm.

5.3 Measuring Progress

5.3.1 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of policies CS7, 8 and 9, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
Core BD4	Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses.
Local 15	Amount of retail floorspace and vacancy rates in the town centre and district and local centres.
Local 25	Amount of floorspace completed for town centre uses by type, by centre and for the Borough as a whole.

6. QUALITY HOUSING FOR ALL

6.1 New Housing

6.1.1 In recent years, Darlington has generally had a strong housing market and high levels of housebuilding compared to many other areas in the Tees Valley sub-region. However, additional new housing is needed in Darlington to respond to the following four issues:

- (i) an increase in new households forming within the existing population;
- (ii) retaining and attracting more young and working age people, particularly graduates and knowledge economy workers, to drive local economic growth;
- (iii) better matching the housing stock to local needs and aspirations, including the need for both more affordable housing and top-end executive housing; and
- (iv) replacing obsolete housing stock.

6.1.2 These issues have informed the amount of new housing that should be provided in the Borough, which is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy¹ (RSS). The RSS indicates that over the period from 2004 to 2026, 8675 net additional dwellings² need to be provided in Darlington Borough. Table 6.1 below sets out how the RSS apportions these from 2004 and across the Core Strategy period. For the period 2021 to 2026, the average annual rate of provision in the years 2004-2021 has been applied.

6.1.3 An estimated³ 2862 net additional dwellings will be provided in the period 2004 to 2011, taking account of actual and forecast completions on schemes with planning permission and demolitions. This leaves 3838 net additional dwellings to be provided from 2011 to 2021, to make up the shortfall against the RSS target and to meet the average annual requirements. A further 1975 net additional dwellings are needed from 2021-2026, giving a total of 5813 net additional dwellings to be provided from April 2011 to 2026.

Table 6.1: Amount and phasing of net additional dwellings required

	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2021-26	Total
RSS average annual net additional dwellings required	525	340	265	395	-
Total net additional dwellings required in each period	3675	1700	1325	1975	8675
Net additional dwellings completed.	2862	0	0	0	2862
Total net additional dwellings required*	(-813)	1963	1875	1975	5813
Total dwellings already committed**		2006	947	400	3353
Demolitions		25	25	25	75
Outstanding net additional dwellings required.		-18	953	1600	2535

* 813 shortfall apportioned 53 dwellings/year 2011-2016, and 110 dwellings/year 2016-2021.

** in planning permissions granted

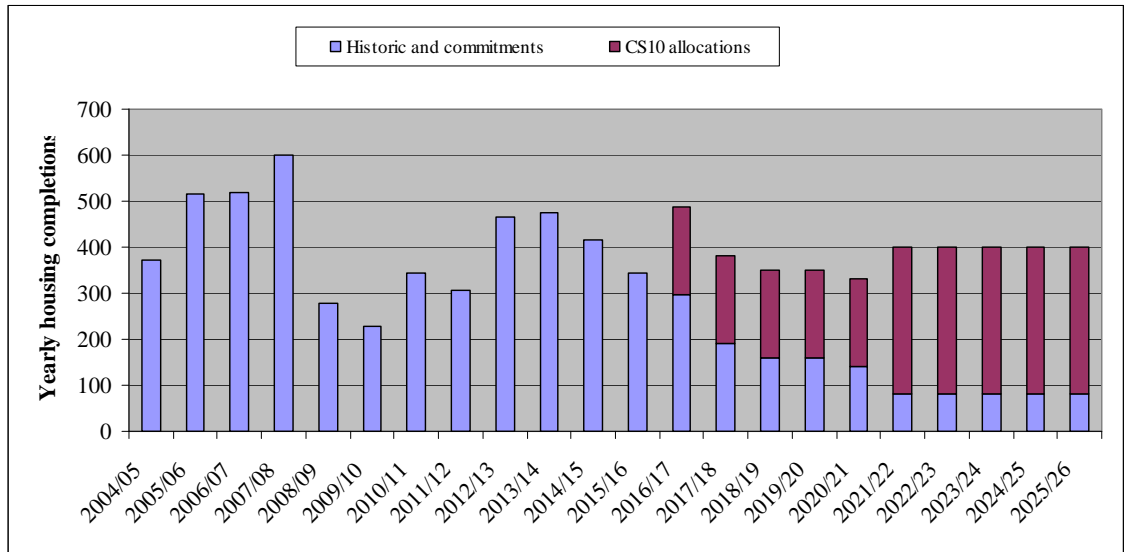
6.1.4 Table 6.1 shows that this LDF needs to identify land for 2535 new dwellings, in addition to the 3353 that are expected to come forward in the plan period from schemes that already have planning permission. Figure 6.1 indicates how housing has been delivered since 2004 and how it is expected to be delivered over the plan period, 2011-2026.

¹Policy 28, Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, CLG, 2008.

²net additional dwellings = total dwellings completed minus demolitions

³based on actual housing completions data to 31st March 2010 and forecasts thereafter, as set out in the accompanying 'Housing Numbers' technical note.

Figure 6.1: Actual and forecast housing completions and completions forecast from new housing in strategic locations, 2004-2026.



6.1.5 The broad locations selected to accommodate new housing development, the amount of new housing to be located there and the order in which the locations will come forward reflect the RSS⁴ sequential approach, together with factors such as flood risk and deliverability that are set out in Government planning policy⁵, and locally important sustainability factors, such as infrastructure capacity, ability to deliver wider regeneration objectives, safeguarding local distinctiveness, and the Borough's commitment to encouraging and supporting sustainable travel choices and minimising the need to travel⁶.

6.1.6 Darlington Urban Area, particularly Central park, the Town Centre Fringe and other previously developed land (PDL⁷), is identified as the first priority location for new housing. The Darlington Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 1 (December 2009) identified sites within Darlington Urban Area that are capable of delivering an additional 627 dwellings from 2011 to 2016⁸. Taken together with existing commitments, this indicates an adequate supply of new housing for the first five years of the plan period, as required by national planning policy⁴. The SHLAA will be the starting point for identifying in the Accommodating Growth DPD⁹ the land that needs to be allocated for new housing from 2016.

6.1.7 Much of the capacity for additional housing in the Darlington Urban Area is on surplus education sites and obsolete employment land; the former, together with Central Park, have been targeted for investment through the Housing Growth Point¹¹ programme. An estimated 650 new dwellings could be delivered in the Town Centre Fringe area, as part of the overall mixed use regeneration of the area, guided by an Area Action Plan¹² and other appropriate planning frameworks. New housing is proposed towards the middle and latter half of the plan period in this area, to reflect the constraints and further planning work required, and the need to ensure it does not undermine the regeneration of the higher priority neighbouring Central Park area.

6.1.8 Land at the urban fringe (North Western and Eastern) has been phased to come forward after the substantial completion of more sustainably located existing commitments in these general areas (West Park and Lingfield respectively). The 700 additional new homes proposed in this Core Strategy at the North Western Urban Fringe is most, but not all, the new housing that this location could accommodate, whilst the 150 proposed at the Eastern Urban

⁴RSS Policy 4

⁵PPS3: Housing

⁶see LDF Core Strategy Strategic Housing Locations Option Appraisal background paper.

⁷PDL is defined in PPS3 and includes land and buildings.

⁸excludes urban extensions

⁹The timetable for preparing the Accommodating Growth DPD is set out in the Council's LDS 2009-12.

¹¹Housing Growth Point status committed and provided funding to the Tees Valley authorities, initially to accelerate housebuilding, but now to unlock stalled housing sites.

¹²Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan – see the Local Development Scheme 2009-2012 for more details.

Fringe would represent the first phase of a new neighbourhood in that general location.

6.1.9 Greenfield land at the North Western Urban Fringe and the Eastern Urban Fringe will be needed to maintain housing supply from 2016 onwards, whilst the larger villages¹³ and open countryside are the lowest priority locations for strategic new housing development. The Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document (DPD)⁹ will establish if any small scale sites on the edge of these villages should be identified to meet local needs or to sustain local shops and services.

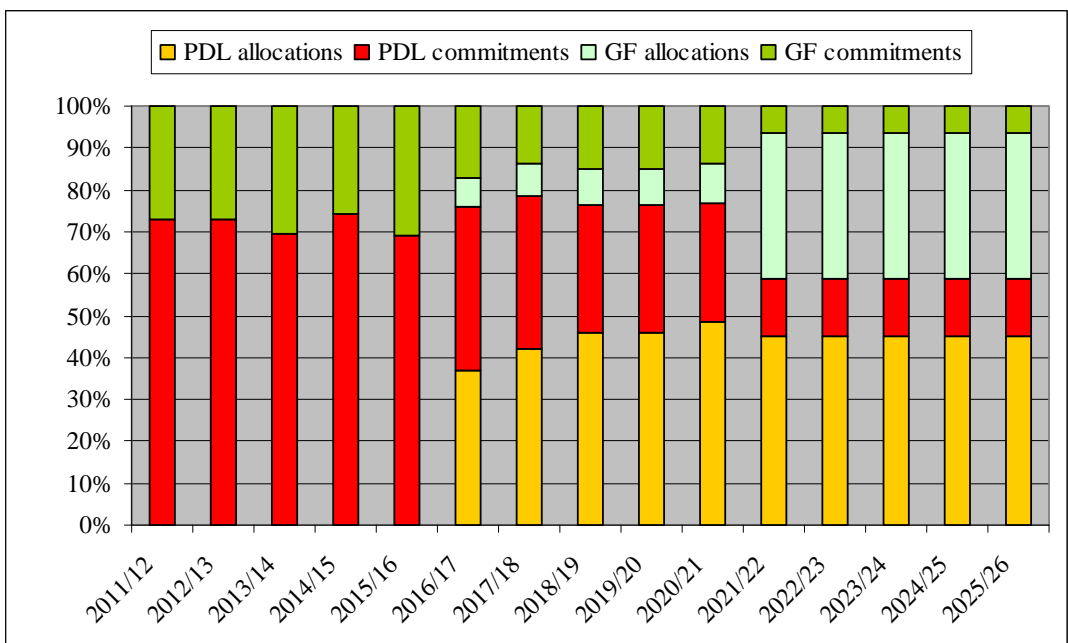
¹³Hurworth/Hurworth Place, Middleton St. George and Heighington

6.1.10 Figure 6.2 shows how delivery of new homes on PDL, particularly during the first and middle parts of the plan period, will contribute towards meeting the regional target of 75% by 2016¹⁴. A Housing Implementation Strategy¹⁵ sets out in more detail what the Council will be doing to ensure enough new homes are built on previously developed land (PDL) to achieve the RSS target.

¹⁴RSS Policy 29

¹⁵The Housing Implementation Strategy is published separately. See www.darlington.gov.uk.

Figure 6.2: Previously Developed Land Trajectory, 2011-2026



¹⁶monitored through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report, published in December each year.

6.1.11 If planning permissions are not implemented as anticipated¹⁶, then to maintain housing delivery, additional housing land will be brought forward for development earlier, in accordance with a sequential approach; housing in the next most sustainable and deliverable strategic locations will be identified first, and housing in other locations will only be permitted if it would be more sustainable than the next sequential location.

6.1.12 To make the best use of housing land, maximise accessibility and minimise carbon emissions, the highest density development will be expected in the most accessible locations. These are the Town Centre and the Town Centre Fringe, together with the areas around North Road Station, around the district and local centres identified in Policy CS9 and along the key public transport corridors identified in Policy CS19. Lower densities may be acceptable in parts of the strategic locations around the urban fringe and on some small infill sites in suburban or rural locations, particularly where proposed developments would meet the sub-regional need¹⁷ for executive housing or provide the larger dwellings that are needed to better balance the

¹⁷Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2009.

overall housing stock. Sites and locations where lower densities will be permitted will be identified in the Accommodating Growth and Making Places DPDs respectively.

¹⁸Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document, DBC, July 2009.

¹⁹RSS Policy 29.

6.1.13 Housing densities should be in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Design of New Development SPD, or any successor¹⁸, so that an average density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare is achieved across the Borough, in accordance with the RSS¹⁹.

6.1.14 The key infrastructure required to support new housing development at the strategic locations identified is set out in the accompanying Local Infrastructure Plan, and more detail will be given alongside the allocation of housing land in these locations in the Accommodating Growth DPD. This is essential to ensure the delivery of sustainable communities and to mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts, such as traffic congestion.

²⁰years are 1st April to 31st March

Revised Draft Policy CS10: New Housing Development

Provision will be made for average annual net additions to the dwelling stock, for the years²⁰ 2011-2026, as follows:

2011 - 2016:	about 350
2016 - 2021:	about 350
2021 - 2026:	about 400

Land for new housing will be allocated in the following strategic locations, in accordance with the locational strategy set out in Policy CS1, with priority for delivery being the order and timing of delivery indicated below:

	Number of new dwellings		
	2011-16	2016-21	2021-26
(a) Darlington Urban Area	0	600	450
(b) Town Centre Fringe	0	200	450
(c) North Western Urban Fringe	0	150	550
(d) Eastern Urban Fringe	0	0	150

This new land is in addition to housing development in the following locations that is expected to be met through existing commitments:

	Number of new dwellings		
	2011-16	2016-21	2021-26
(i) Darlington Urban Area	900	120	0
(ii) Central Park	205	340	0
(iii) Lingfield Point	320	400	400
(iv) West Park	350	50	0
(v) Others	230	35	0

Where housing delivery does not come forward as envisaged, housing delivery will be maintained by bringing forward development in the next priority location, as outlined in (a) to (d) above, where suitable, available and deliverable sites have been identified, where it does not undermine the Council's key regeneration objectives, and so as to contribute, as far as possible, to meeting the regional target for 75% of new housing to be on previously developed land by 2016, and sustaining delivery at that level.

Where the strategy outlined above is delivering 80% or less of the average annual net additions to existing stock required, new housing at the urban fringe, and then within or adjacent to the larger villages, may be permitted.

Average housing density on new developments will be expected to achieve 30-50 dwellings per hectare across the Borough overall. Higher densities will be encouraged within and on the fringe of Darlington Town Centre, around North Road railway station, around district and local centres identified in Policy CS9, and along the key public transport corridors, identified in Policy CS19.

Measuring Progress

6.1.5 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS10, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI154	Net additional homes provided (monitored quarterly)
LI0001	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land
Local	Current commitments on greenfield and previously developed land
Local	Density of new dwellings on completed and committed sites of 5 dwellings or more
New	Location of completed sites with higher or lower than average density

6.2 Meeting Housing Needs

6.2.1 New housing is required to meet the needs and demand arising from the local people at all stages of their life, and to accommodate and retain the people who will underpin the Borough's economic growth. Suitable housing to meet the projected growth in single person households¹ and significant growth in the retired population of Darlington² over the next 15 years or so is particularly needed. Taking into account the size and type of housing that makes up the existing housing stock, and modern day aspirations, this means that more detached houses, bungalows and 4+ bedroomed houses are needed (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 : Composition of Existing Housing Stock and Household Aspirations

Size/type of dwelling	Proportion of the existing housing stock (%)	Type of housing people living in the Borough aspire to (%)
Detached	16.2	18.6
Semi-detached	34.9	22.2
Terraced	29.7	27.4
Bungalow	8.9	18.4
Flat	10.3	13.4
1 bed	8.4	6.9
2 bed	33.1	35.2
3 bed	41.3	36.0
4 or more bed	17.2	21.9

Source: Tables 6.3 and 7.1 TVSHMA, 2009

6.2.2 More housing suitable for older people and people with disabilities is also needed. It was identified as a significant issue in 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'. In Darlington, the strategy³ is to support people who want to remain in their home, recognising that they may need greater support and/or adaptations to their home to do so. This is largely within existing housing, and includes extra care housing, sheltered accommodation and retirement village/apartment provision. Providing lifetime homes, or modern purpose built or easily adapted dwellings as part of the mix of new housing is an important way to increase the amount of suitable housing for older people. It will also ensure that funding available for home adaptations can be used as effectively as possible.

6.2.3 A separate document will set out the detail of an adaptable dwellings requirement. In addition, provision or developer contributions may be sought to meet identified needs for new housing suitable for disabled people or to adapt more of the existing housing stock to older persons' needs (see Policy CS4).

6.2.4 Providing enough affordable housing to meet local needs is also a significant issue⁴. Taking account of the 7500 local authority or Registered

¹ Source: Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2009.

² population 65 years or older projected to increase to 23% by 2026 (ONS 2008 based sub national projections)

³ Darlington Housing Strategy 2008-12

⁴ See 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed' and the Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (TVSHMA) 2009.

⁵TVSHMA. 2009

⁶definition of intermediate affordable housing is in Annex B of PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2006).

⁷The Economic Viability of Housing Land in Darlington Borough, Levvel, June 2009

Social Landlord properties, and even in a scenario of house prices 20% below the 2007 peak, there would be a shortfall of 513 affordable dwellings per annum, exceeding the Borough's Regional Spatial Strategy annual housing requirement⁵. Some of the Borough's 3144 private rented dwellings may contribute towards meeting some needs in the short term, but a significant need still remains, across a range of sizes and types of housing, prevalent in all parts of the Borough. As the housing market recovers, there is expected to be sustained higher demand for intermediate affordable housing⁶.

6.2.5 A study into the economic viability of housing land⁷ found wide variation across the Borough, but in four out of eight 'value areas' examined, up to 30% affordable housing could be potentially delivered over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. The variations in economic viability over the plan period and between locations (it is generally higher in the west and rural and western areas, and lowest in central and south-east areas) requires a flexible application of the target. The target is also flexible enough to ensure that the type and size of affordable housing can also be considered, as well as overall numbers, and that the level of provision is appropriate to the objective of widening tenure mix in all localities. In exceptional circumstances, it will be more appropriate to provide affordable housing off site, and this could be in the form of newbuild or a contribution towards the creation of more affordable housing within the existing stock in appropriate areas.

6.2.6 In the strategic locations identified for new housing (see Policy CS10), the scale of development will create a new neighbourhood. The affordable housing target for each will be set out in the Accommodating Growth DPD, so that the need for affordable housing can be balanced against all other considerations in creating new sustainable communities.

6.2.7 Based on the above, and taking into account affordable housing that will come forward through local authority newbuild, through Section 106 agreements and through registered social landlords' own schemes, a target of at least 35 additional affordable houses per annum has been set for the period 2011-2016 and a target of at least 50 dwellings per annum thereafter.

6.2.8 Because of its attractive urban and rural residential environments and town centre cultural and leisure facilities, the Borough will continue to help meet a sub-regional need for small numbers of top-end executive housing⁸. This will support economic growth in the Borough and wider Tees Valley area, and could reduce in-commuting.

6.2.9 To ensure that sufficient land is identified in appropriate locations, preparation of the Accommodating Growth DPD will consider identifying sites for specific types of housing, e.g. rural affordable housing, housing for people with disabilities and executive housing. If significant rural affordable housing needs are identified for particular settlements in the future, the Council will consider including a 'rural exceptions'⁹ policy for affordable housing in perpetuity in the Making Places DPD'

6.2.10 By giving a clear indication of the requirement for a mix of new housing and the priorities in determining that mix, this policy will help to widen the diversity of the Borough's housing stock so it better aligns to identified needs and aspirations, and reduces the inequalities experienced by people with currently little or no housing choice.

⁸Top-end executive housing is set in its own grounds at a density of no more than 6 dwellings per hectare. It has 4 or more bedrooms, above average levels of garaging, security and privacy and individual, high quality designs and finishings. It comprises both new and older period homes.

⁹A rural exceptions policy allows housing development outside village limits, where it is for local needs and will be affordable in perpetuity.

Policy CS11: Meeting Housing Needs

New housing and the conversion and adaptation of existing dwellings will be required to contribute to achieving an overall balanced housing stock that better meets local needs and aspirations, particularly the needs of an ageing population and increasing affordable housing provision.

A target of at least 35 additional affordable houses per annum has been set for the period 2011-2016 and a target of at least 50 per annum thereafter.

All developments of 15 dwellings (or 0.5ha) or more within Darlington Urban Area and 5 dwellings (or 0.2ha) or more outside of it will be required to provide, or contribute towards the provision of, an appropriate mix of housing to meet identified needs. The mix should include:

- Up to 30% affordable housing;
- Housing for people with disabilities;
- Housing for older people, including housing capable of being readily adapted to meet a range of needs;
- Detached family housing containing four or more bedrooms in all appropriate locations.

The exact mix of provision will be negotiated with developers on the basis of up-to-date evidence of housing needs and aspirations, the size, type and tenure of the existing and committed stock and development viability.

Exceptionally, where it is not appropriate to make provision on-site, developers will be expected to enter into a Section 106 agreement to enable the equivalent value of off-site provision to be secured.

At the strategic locations (b), (c) and (d) listed in CS10, the percentage of affordable housing required will be set out in the housing allocation policy of the Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document.

Measuring Progress

6.2.11 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS11, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI155/ Core H5	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
Local H2b	Dwellings completed and committed by size, type and tenure
New	Number of homes benefitting from adaptations funded by Disabilities Facilities Grant

6.3 Existing Housing

6.3.1 Existing housing and neighbourhoods are, and will continue to be, the cornerstone of Darlington's housing offer, satisfying the majority of housing needs and choices. To ensure that the best use continues to be made of existing housing, there is a need to identify locations that should be prioritised for regeneration and improvement, within both older privately owned housing and public housing areas, where the type and quality of housing and/or the residential environment does not meet modern day needs and aspirations. There is also a need more generally to ensure that housing vacancies are reduced from 3.4%¹ overall to meet and sustain vacancies at the 3% target set out in the RSS².

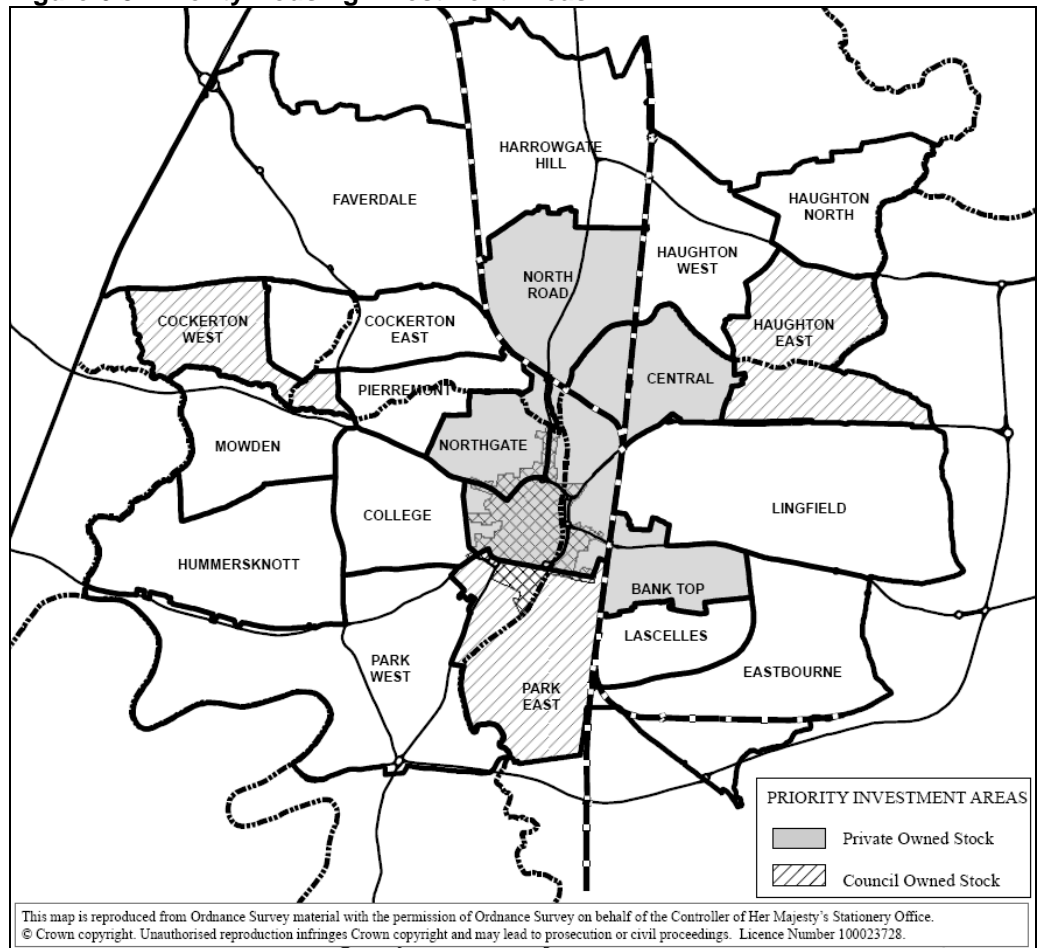
¹Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix 2009.

²Policy 29, Regional Spatial Strategy.

6.3.2 Improving the existing housing stock, particularly its energy efficiency and its suitability for modern day needs, through repair, adaptation or remodelling, will help to reduce the amount of new housing that needs to be built, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, save energy and resources, and minimise the loss of greenfield land to housing. It will also help to narrow the quality gap between the pockets of poor quality small, older terraced housing in inner Darlington (see Figure 6.3) and neighbourhoods of very high quality housing, predominantly in the West End of Darlington and the rural parts of the borough. Housing regeneration in the identified local authority housing areas (See Figure 6.3) will concentrate on improving housing choice and maintaining sustainable neighbourhoods, and upgrading properties to achieve the enhanced 'Darlington Standard'³ for decent homes. The Council may also seek opportunities to diversify existing housing tenure through selective demolition and redevelopment, to remove obsolete or low demand housing and replace it with housing to meet modern day needs. Demolition will only be considered as a last resort, and where an independent assessment of financial viability has demonstrated that repair, adaptation or remodelling is unviable or unsustainable.

³Darlington Standard is renewal and more frequent updating of bathrooms, kitchens, rewiring and central heating.

Figure 6.3: Priority Housing Investment Areas



⁴ref – from AG

6.3.3 As vacancies in local authority housing are currently only 1.6%⁴, efforts to reduce vacancy overall will be targeted at the private rented sector, where 4.4% of stock is vacant⁴. Persistent vacancy is likely to emerge in the poorest quality older terraced housing areas that fall short of 21st Century aspirations. Homes that are vacant long term are often neglected and of poor quality, and can adversely affect the appearance and image of an area.

6.3.4 The provision of additional affordable housing (see Policy CS11) and vacancies in the form of newly completed dwellings will both help to sustain vacancies at a level that enable people to move into and within the Borough. By giving a clear indication about the Borough's priorities for the existing housing stock, this policy will help to support efforts to attract public funding and other investment to the Borough over the whole plan period, and to guide the Council's own investment decisions.

Policy CS12: Existing Housing

The Council will continue to work towards achieving and maintaining a maximum of 3% of vacancies in the existing housing stock. It will do this by:

- (i) supporting the regeneration and improvement of existing housing areas, particularly within North Road, Northgate, Central, Bank Top, Park East, Cockerton West and Haughton East wards;
- (ii) giving priority to repairing, adapting or remodelling existing housing, particularly to improve energy efficiency and to ensure public housing meets the 'Darlington Standard', where this is financially viable. Estate layouts and the local environment will also be enhanced where appropriate.

Exceptionally, selective demolition and redevelopment may form part of a housing regeneration strategy, where:

- (a) there is evidence of sustained low demand and obsolescence; and
- (b) it would prevent further decline; and
- (c) repair, adaptation and remodelling have been considered and demonstrated to be economically unviable or unsustainable; and
- (d) it diversifies existing housing tenure in the neighbourhood; and
- (e) it accords with the overall planning framework for the area.

Measuring Progress

6.3.6 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS12, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
Local 8	Number of vacant dwellings by length of vacancy and ownership type
New	Number of Council owned houses where planned repairs have been completed
New	Overall housing vacancy rate

6.4 Accommodating Travelling Groups

6.4.1 Darlington has a long association with Gypsies and other travelling groups¹ with people from these groups accommodated on dedicated sites and within general housing. Existing provision is at two successful Council owned, but privately managed sites. Honeypot Lane (with 32 residential pitches and 24 transit pitches) and Neasham Road (with 20 residential pitches), and at other smaller privately owned sites with planning permission. There are also some unauthorised encampments each year throughout the Borough².

6.4.2 Government policy³ emphasises the importance of assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and taking a strategic approach to meeting needs that are identified. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) identifies that a total of 74 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers will be needed across the Tees Valley by 2020⁴. Sub regional work⁵, which provides additional information about the

¹The definitions of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are set out in Government Circulars 01/06 and 04/07.

²For example, there were two unauthorised encampments in 2009 and six in 2010.

³Circulars 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites; and 04/07: Planning for Travelling Showpeople.

⁴Policy 30, The North of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (July 2008).

⁵Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, Final Report, January 2009.

accommodation needs of Gypsies and other travelling groups across the Tees Valley, and in each specific borough, identifies a need for pitch provision; however it recommends that further work should be undertaken to quantify the requirement in each Borough.

6.4.3 This policy identifies the locational criteria for the provision of pitches for the Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople communities that will be used to guide the allocation of sites to meet identified needs in the Accommodating Growth Development Plan Document (DPD)⁶, and will be applied in considering planning applications for the development of new sites. The aim of the policy is to enhance the health and education standards of these families and ensure access to good quality accommodation, in line with strategic objectives 2 and 4 (see page XX), and helping to deliver the 'valuing diversity' strand of 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'⁷.

⁶See the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the timetable for preparation.

⁷the sustainable community strategy for Darlington, 2008.

Policy CS13: Accommodating Travelling Groups

Provision will be made for travelling groups at the existing sites of Honeypot Lane, Neasham Road, and other small sites within the Borough. Where required, additional sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling showpeople will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria, ensuring that sites;

- a) have appropriate access and are in a sustainable location for schools, shops, employment opportunities and other local facilities and services; and
- b) are located and designed so as not to have an unacceptable negative impact on existing residential amenity or existing landscape character; and
- c) are appropriate to provide a safe and healthy environment for residents; and
- d) are located in areas not at risk from flooding; and
- e) are located and designed so as not to have a significant negative impact on the natural, archaeological or historic environment.

Preference will be given firstly to locations within and then adjacent to existing settlements, and then to the re-use of brownfield land in other locations.

Measuring Progress

6.4.4 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS13, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
H4	Net additional Gypsy and Traveller Pitches
Local 7	Number of additional pitches included in development plans

7. A DISTINCTIVE, GREENER, CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

7.1 Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness

7.1.1 The Borough of Darlington has a wealth of distinctive and valued historic assets, built and natural environments, townscapes, landscapes and features. A traditional, friendly market town with a world famous railway, industrial and Quaker heritage at its core, surrounded by countryside and attractive villages. The Borough's distinctive identity and sense of place are a focus of civic pride¹, highly valued by local people and a positive consideration for those seeking to invest in the area. As such, they need to be preserved and strengthened (see objective 7)².

¹One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington Partnership, 2008

²PPS1, CLG, 2005

³National Character Areas defined by Natural England

⁴see Policy CS17

7.1.2 There are three distinct natural landscape character areas within the Borough. The largely agricultural, undulating Tees Lowland³ dominates, providing wide views to the North York Moors and the upland Dales, across the urban fringe, surrounding villages and countryside. The land falls in steep sided, wooded banks to the River Tees, a significant green corridor⁴ at the Borough's southern boundary. The gently undulating Durham Magnesian Limestone plateau and the Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe areas³ extend into the far north-west of the Borough. The former is characterised by mostly open, arable farmland sheltering some rare and distinctive species, whilst the latter includes some semi natural habitats and woodlands alongside rivers and becks.

Fig 14.1 Character Areas

⁵Existing or successor

7.1.3 In all these areas, development should reflect variations in the local landscape character by enhancing local distinctiveness, guided by the principles set out in the Design of New Development SPD⁵.

⁶identified in the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy, Tees Valley JSU, 2008

7.1.4 Areas of openness form clear boundaries between neighbourhoods within the urban area, and between the urban area and surrounding villages. Strategic gaps (see CS1), green wedges and green corridors⁶ (see policy CS17) are integral to the Borough's green infrastructure network and settlement pattern and are protected as such.

⁷Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, PPS5, CLG, 2010

7.1.5 The integrity and quality of over 500 nationally protected listed buildings and 20 scheduled monuments in the Borough, including the remains of a Roman fort at Piercebridge, will be protected and enhanced through national legislation and national planning guidance⁷. A local 'at risk' register⁸ identifies those buildings that are in poor condition which should be enhanced, if an appropriate development proposal comes forward.

⁸ listed buildings may be at risk due to a number of factors, such as lack of regular maintenance, vacancy and vandalism, theft of architectural features or arson.

7.1.6 Areas rich in distinctive historic, archaeological, architectural, spatial and natural features are locally designated as Conservation Areas, underpinned by Conservation Area Character Appraisals⁹. New areas may be designated, particularly where it will support regeneration and development or improve some of the Borough's more neglected historic townscapes and landscapes. In the long term, Management Plans will help identify key actions to improve the distinctive qualities of each Conservation Area.

⁹Published by DBC, these identify features that contribute most to the character of each of the Borough's 16 Conservation Areas. Character includes listed buildings, locally distinctive buildings and intrinsic characteristics, like historic road and path layouts, building and paving materials, public and private spaces, greens and trees.

7.1.7 Also, in the long term, a Local List¹⁰ will be established to protect locally distinctive buildings and features with high historic and architectural value, particularly those that reflect Darlington's influential industrial, railway, agricultural and Quaker heritage. New development that will have an impact on the Borough's heritage assets will be guided by policies in the Making Places DPD.

¹⁰Local List: recognises historic buildings and features that reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place

7.1.8 The following policy identifies the key elements of the existing built, historic and natural environment that will be prioritised for protection and enhancement, to help safeguard the distinctive character of Darlington. Together with more specific detailed documents such as the Conservation Area Appraisals and the local 'at risk' register, it will also help attract public sector funding and other investment to the Borough over the plan period, particularly to the historic town centre, the Conservation Areas and regeneration areas.

Policy CS14: Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness

The distinctive character of the Borough's built, historic, natural and environmental townscapes, landscapes and strong sense of place will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced by:

- A. Protecting and improving the distinctive character of Darlington town centre, the urban area and the countryside including:
 - 1. the character and appearance of the central area skyline such as the landmarks of the Market and Station clock towers, St Cuthbert's spire and St John's Tower;
 - 2. the tree canopy skyline, such as in the south west of the urban area;
 - 3. views along the approaches to the urban area, such as along Grange Road, Coniscliffe Road and Staindrop Road/Woodland Road;
- B. Protecting and enhancing the separation and the intrinsic qualities of the openness between settlements and between the urban area's different neighbourhoods including:
 - 4. The strategic corridors:
 - i) River Tees
 - ii) River Skerne
 - iii) River Skerne Corridor to West Park
 - iv) Darlington, Middleton St George, A66/A67 Corridor to Stockton
 - 5. The green wedges at Cocker Beck, Blackwell/Skerne Park and Haughton/Red Hall;
 - 6. The green corridors of Staindrop Road and the Denes, Firthmoor and McMullen Road, the Stockton and Darlington railway trackbed, the Faverdale Black path and Barnard Castle railway trackbed and Baydale Beck;
 - 7. The appearance and environmental value of Grade 1, 2, 3 agricultural land;
- C. Protecting and enhancing the distinct landscape character of:
 - 8. Tees Lowlands;
 - 9. Durham Magnesian limestone plateau;
 - 10. Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe;
- D. Protecting and enhancing the quality of the wide views of the North York Moors, upland Dales and the villages across the Tees Valley;
- E. Protecting, enhancing and promoting the quality and integrity of Darlington's distinctive designated national or nationally significant built heritage and archaeology as well as:
 - 11. buildings, their settings and features of historic and archaeological local importance in Conservation Areas;
 - 12. buildings, features and landmarks on the local list;
 - 13. buildings and features that reflect Darlington's railway, industrial and Quaker heritage; and
 - 14. buildings on the local 'at risk' register.

Measuring Progress

7.1.9 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS14, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI005	Overall satisfaction with local area
New	No. of new and updated Conservation Area Character appraisals completed annually
New	No. of new and updated Conservation Area management plans completed annually
New	No. of 'risk to' assets on Heritage Risk Register

7.2 Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

¹SSSIs are nationally important biodiversity and geological sites designated by Natural England under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

²Designated by the Council under national legislation.

³Identified and designated locally.

⁴Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, Policy 33 CLG, 2008

⁶Durham Biodiversity Action Plan, Durham Biodiversity Partnership, 2009, UK Biodiversity Action Plan, DEFRA, 2007

⁶PPS9, ODPM Circular 06/2005 (also known as DEFRA Circular 01/2005) Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act and the Habitats Regulations.

⁷One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington Partnership, 2008, the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington

⁸ For programme see LDS on Council's website

⁹ through Tree Preservation Orders.

7.2.1 The Borough's extensive network of sites with high biodiversity and geodiversity value include four nationally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest¹ and areas of ancient woodland, as well as seven Local Nature Reserves² and 25 Local Wildlife Sites³. These are home to a diverse range of wildlife habitats as well as many rare and declining species, including European and nationally protected species like bats and great crested newts.

7.2.2 However, the network has become fragmented and if this could be reversed, it would assist in returning 'key biodiversity resources to viable levels'⁴ at these sites, particularly for priority habitats and species⁵ like the dingy skipper butterfly.

7.2.3 To do so will require existing habitats and species to be protected and buffered; European and national legislation and national planning guidance⁶ will protect and enhance the integrity of nationally designated sites and protected species, and locally designated biodiversity and geodiversity of sites. Complementary continued promotion of habitat conservation, restoration, creation and enhancement, will also help to achieve the national and local targets for species and habitats identified in the UK and Durham Biodiversity Action Plans⁶, (for example, the black poplar tree and otters), the environmental ambitions of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed⁷, and the delivery of strategic objectives 1 and 7 of this Strategy.

7.2.4 In addition, existing wildlife corridors such as the River Tees and River Skerne will continue to be protected as the basis for the network. To help species to move through the urban area, urban fringe and countryside, opportunities to improve links between wildlife corridors, other wildlife sites and green spaces with wildlife value, such as at Lingfield Point, will be identified in the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (see Policy CS17).

7.2.5 There are also big opportunities to increase the stock of priority habitats across the Borough, through well-designed new developments (see Policy CS2 and the Design of New Development SPD⁸), especially in the strategic locations identified in Policy CS1. Features like green roofs, living walls and bat boxes can create new priority habitats, as can habitat friendly sustainable drainage systems associated with larger developments, such as established next to the Eastern Transport Corridor. New native woodland and street trees in new development will complement existing trees, and coupled with protection of many existing trees⁹, will help to meet the targets including those for broadleaf and wet woodland identified in the Durham Biodiversity Action Plan⁵.

7.2.6 Opportunities to enrich the biodiversity of pockets of degraded land with limited biodiversity value will also be promoted, particularly through the Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan⁸ and the Accommodating Growth DPD⁸, where areas that have the potential to be restored for wildlife will be identified.

7.2.7 In the long-term a richly biodiverse urban fringe where habitats and species can develop more naturally will be created, supported by the Green Infrastructure Strategy. This will involve recreating the network of habitats, such as hedgerows and field margins that have been reduced by intensive agricultural practices. The continued planting of community forestry near South Burdon, Skerningham and Merrybent will also be promoted, to complement the restoration and provision of natural and semi-natural habitats in new development and the use of agri-environmental schemes.

7.2.8 Many sites of biodiversity value also perform other valuable functions, having educational, health, recreation and quality of life benefits for the community. Many sites have an important role in water storage and flood management, helping the Borough adapt to climate change. Improving biodiversity will complement actions proposed in the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy and Climate Change Strategy.

Policy CS15: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The protection, restoration, extension and management of the Borough's biodiversity and geological network will be delivered to help achieve the target level of priority habitats and species set out in the UK and Durham Biodiversity Action Plans by:

1. conserving, restoring and enhancing the condition of sites and areas identified as having high biodiversity and geodiversity value including:
 - (a) Strategic wildlife corridors (for example, along the River Tees and River Skerne)
 - (b) Local Nature Reserves
 - (c) Local Wildlife Sites
2. ensuring that new development would not result in any net loss of existing biodiversity value by protecting and enhancing the priority habitats, biodiversity features and the geological network through the design of new development, including public and private spaces and landscaping;
3. restricting or managing access and use where appropriate, to conserve an area's existing biodiversity value whilst enhancing biodiversity along access corridors and linking habitat networks with high biodiversity and geodiversity value;
4. protecting and enhancing healthy ancient woodland, mature trees, street trees, hedgerows and community forestry; and
5. protecting and improving watercourses, buffer strips and wetland, incorporating integrated surface water management and flood water storage, where appropriate.

Measuring Progress

7.2.9 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS15, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI197	Proportion of Local Wildlife Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented
E2	Total area of land managed as DBAP priority habitats (ha)
New	Total no of Local Wildlife Sites
New	Total number of breeding ponds for Great Crested Newts

7.3 Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety

7.3.1 The Borough's natural environment is a fragile resource, comprising a complex network of complementary, natural systems. This can be unbalanced by human activity, threatening our health and safety, and damaging the natural environment irretrievably.

Improving and safeguarding the quality of the natural environment and reducing the hazard to people and property from flood risk, pollution, contamination and unstable land will continue to be important priorities¹ to provide a safe and healthy, cleaner living and working environment for

¹PPS23, ODPM, 2004

²One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington Partnership, 2008, the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington

³Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, NE Assembly, 2008 – policy 34

⁴Sequential test: definition and approach in Annex D, PPS25, CLG, 2006

⁵Darlington Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, JBA Consulting, 2010

⁶see the Council's LDS for timetable of AAP preparation

⁷Flood Zones 3b and 3a

⁸Exception test: definition and approach in Annex D, PPS25, DCLG, 2006

⁹Flood Risk Assessment: submitted with a planning application in locations set out in Annex E, PPS25, DCLG, 2006

¹⁰Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS): imitate natural drainage by reducing and slowing the quantity and rate of surface water run off, dealing with it as close to the source as possible

¹¹Air quality in the Tees Valley, Tees Valley Environmental Protection Group 2009

¹²Darlington Local Transport Plan. DBC 2008-2011

¹³Darlington Contaminated Land Strategy, DBC 2003

¹⁴Groundwater source protection zones: are wells, boreholes and springs that are used to supply the public's drinking water

Darlington's residents² (see strategic objective 1), and help mitigate the impacts of, and adaptation to, climate change.

Flood risk

7.3.2 A proactive approach³ to reducing flood risk from the Borough's watercourses, surface water, and sewer flooding will help to reduce potential risks to people and property. In Darlington land for new development will be identified according to a sequential approach⁴, having regard to potential flood risk; development will be located in ascending order from areas of lowest fluvial flood risk to areas of highest fluvial flood risk (from Flood Zones 1, 2, 3a to 3b) and within each development site to reduce the potential risk to people and property⁵, and ensure there is no increase to flood risk up and downstream. Specifically within the Town Centre Fringe, an Area Action Plan⁶ and a masterplan will strategically and sequentially guide development to appropriate locations, where flood risk can be avoided or adequately mitigated.

7.3.3 More vulnerable developments, such as housing, will be located outside higher flood risk areas⁷, unless exceptionally it is on previously developed land, is essential to meet the Borough's regeneration aspirations, and is compliant with the PPS25 Sequential⁴ and Exception Tests⁸. Where a Flood Risk Assessment⁹ is required, it should assess the current level of flood risk as well as the level of flood risk following development. Further advice is given in the SFRA⁵.

7.3.4 The effect of surface water from run off and sewers from new development also needs to be considered; any increased risk must be avoided by effective management, so as to reduce the level and speed of run off into the nearest watercourse. Sustainable drainage systems¹⁰ must be a key part of any management strategy, and be included in a Flood Risk Assessment⁹ and the design of new development, particularly where there is high susceptibility to surface water flooding in an extreme rainfall event⁵. The Town Centre Fringe is one such area, and through the Area Action Plan⁶, the potential for surface water flooding will be mitigated by incorporating integrated drainage solutions into the regeneration of the area.

Air quality

7.3.5 Pollution control and prevention will also continue to be a high priority, though even in the most congested parts of Darlington, air quality levels are consistent with government objectives¹¹. The locational strategy (see CS1) and complementary sustainable transport initiatives in the Council's Local Transport Plan¹² will help ensure that it is sustained at acceptable levels, by minimising the need to travel by car.

Contaminated land

7.3.6 1280 potentially contaminated, unstable and derelict sites have been identified across the Borough¹³, some of which are previously developed land identified for regeneration. Redevelopment with effective remediation controlled through the planning system and Part 2A Contaminated Land regime¹³ will ensure these sites are clean and safe for reuse.

Water quality

7.3.7 Groundwater and river quality are especially vulnerable to pollution, and once polluted, remain contaminated for a long time. New development along river corridors or within the Borough's groundwater source protection

zones¹⁴ will be required to include appropriate mitigation to minimise the risk of this occurring.

Hazards

7.3.8 Pollution and risk from installations and pipelines which handle notifiable substances must remain at acceptable levels for humans and the environment, particularly those close by. Proposals located within the defined consultation zones of regulatory bodies¹⁵, should, where appropriate, seek the advice of the relevant agency. Guidance relating to appropriate detailed assessments and mitigation required will be set out in the Making Places DPD⁶.

¹⁵Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive and Civil Aviation Authority

Policy CS16: Protecting Environmental Resources, Human Health and Safety

New development should protect and, where possible, improve environmental resources, whilst ensuring there is no detrimental impact on the environment, general amenity and the health and safety of the community. Development which may have an adverse impact on environmental resources should be avoided.

Exceptionally, development may be permitted to promote regeneration or provide essential infrastructure. In these cases, it should comply with national planning guidance and statutory environmental quality standards for:

- (a) areas at risk from river flooding along the main rivers of the River Tees, River Skerne and Cocker Beck, and the ordinary watercourses of Neasham Stell, Baydale Beck and West Beck;
- (b) areas at risk from surface water run off, groundwater, mine water and sewer flooding;

New development will be focussed on areas of low flood risk, that is Flood Zone 1, as identified by the Borough's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. In considering development on sites in higher flood risk areas, the Sequential and Exception Tests must be passed and the sequential approach applied on site.

To reduce the impact of fluvial and surface water flood risk in the Town Centre Fringe a strategic flood risk management scheme will be required setting out appropriate sustainable mitigation measures. Flood storage compensation, restoration of the natural floodplain, the creation of a green corridor next to the River Skerne, flood resilience and resistance measures will all be required:

- (c) Air, land, light or noise pollution;
- (d) Contaminated land and unstable land; and
- (e) Water quality of the River Tees, River Skerne and Cocker Beck and other water courses and the Magnesian Limestone Aquifer.

Development proposals must include an assessment appropriate to the type and extent of impact and any associated risks to the satisfaction of the relevant environmental body. Proposals will only be permitted where the impact and risks are, or can be mitigated appropriately to be suitable for the proposed use.

Measuring Progress

7.3.9 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS16, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI186	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area
NI188	Adapting to climate change
NI189	Flood and coastal erosion risk management

NI194	Level of air quality through LA estate
Core E1	No of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice

8. A HEALTHY AND SAFE DARLINGTON

8.1 Delivering a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Network

¹Green infrastructure: includes parks, open spaces, wildlife sites, allotments, green corridors, urban fringe, woodland, rights of way, countryside

²Identified in the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy, Tees Valley JSU, 2008

8.1.1 Darlington's extensive green infrastructure network¹ is an important asset, covering 900ha² within and on the edge of the urban area and within the larger villages. It comprises a series of multi-functional green spaces of different sizes, linked by green corridors within and between the main urban area, urban fringe, villages and the countryside. Its key elements are strategic green corridors² (for example, along the River Tees and the River Skerne) the green wedges (such as Cocker Beck) and the well-developed network of safe, green sustainable transport routes and Public Rights of Way that provide opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to move across the Borough.

8.1.2 The green infrastructure network provides opportunities for exercise, sport and active recreation, whilst the tranquillity and low levels of noise, air and light pollution green spaces offer can improve well-being. The network is an integral part of the high quality environment that helps attract inward investment and new people to the Borough; it also helps moderate the rising temperatures caused by climate change, and is a big part of what makes Darlington's townscapes and landscapes distinctive. It can also enrich the quality and value of the Borough's built heritage; formal parks and village greens provide a distinctive setting for many listed buildings and are an integral part of many Conservation Areas. At sites such as Walworth Castle and Piercebridge Roman Fort, green infrastructure can be the focus for visitor-based activity and provide connections to the wider green infrastructure network.

8.1.3 Greenspaces, particularly alongside watercourses provide flood storage and sustainable drainage benefits as well as providing biodiversity value and access to the watercourse. In the long term, the Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan⁶ will guide the identification of a new green corridor adjacent to the River Skerne enhancing the quality of the river environment and improving access for the community and wildlife; a key priority in One Darlington: Perfectly Placed³.

³One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington Partnership, 2008, the sustainable community strategy (SCS) for Darlington

8.1.4 To make the most of the network, there is a need to continue to invest in and manage it. Extensive, valuable green spaces need to be protected. Access to green space needs to be enhanced in areas like the inner urban area and urban fringe where it is currently poor. Across the Borough, the quality and the type of green space needs to be improved to meet the community's needs.

8.1.5 The following policy identifies the key elements of the green infrastructure network, and seeks to protect, enhance and extend it for its own sake, and for the function it performs in helping to reduce health inequalities across the Borough³.

8.1.6 Significant opportunities exist at the strategic locations to extend green corridors. These will connect areas of planned growth and the urban fringe,

assist regeneration and enhance biodiversity (see policy CS15). In the long term, opportunities for a strategic countryside site at Skerningham will be promoted to provide greater access to the urban fringe for informal recreation consistent with the priorities of the Darlington Rights of Way Improvement Plan⁴.

⁴Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Bowles Green Ltd, 2008

⁵Darlington Open Space Strategy DBC, 2007

⁶For timetable see LDS programme on Council's website

8.1.7 New or improved spaces, should add multifunctional, quality spaces to the network, particularly at the strategic locations to provide informal and formal recreation opportunities, wildlife habitats and amenity space to help meet the identified standards set out in the Council's Open Space Strategy⁵ or any successor. Planning obligations will also be used appropriately to provide or improve green infrastructure (see policy CS4) reflecting the requirements of the Planning Obligations SPD⁶.

8.1.8 The following policy will be supported by the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy, which will identify opportunities to improve connections for people and wildlife within and between the corridors and Darlington's locally important network of green spaces, to provide greater connectivity across the urban area, to the urban fringe and the countryside; realising an aspiration of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed³.

8.1.9 This policy clearly identifies the Borough's long term approach to the green infrastructure network, which will help to support efforts to attract public funding for improvements, help prioritise initiatives for planning obligations and to guide the Council's own investment decisions.

Policy CS17: Delivering a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Network

The green infrastructure network will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced and extended to provide a quality, accessible, safe network of well connected, multifunctional green spaces to meet the formal and informal recreation needs of the community, help reduce health inequalities and enhance the visual amenity, biodiversity, landscape and historic character of the Borough. This network will include:

- A) Strategic corridors that have been identified in the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy:
 - a) River Tees
 - b) River Skerne
 - c) River Skerne Corridor to West Park
 - d) Darlington, Middleton St George, A66/A67 Corridor to Stockton
- B) Green wedges at Cocker Beck, Blackwell/Skerne Park and Haughton/Red Hall
- C) Locally Important Open Spaces that have been identified in the Open Space Strategy;
- D) Ornamental parklands, such as Newbus Grange and Neasham Hall
- E) Community forestry at South Burdon, Skerningham and Merrybent
- F) Strategic Countryside site at Skerningham
- G) Allotments;
- H) Urban fringe;
- I) Grades 1, 2, 3 agricultural land;
- J) The Rights of Way network; and
- K) Open countryside.

The loss of any part of the green infrastructure network will only be considered in exceptional circumstances for the provision of essential infrastructure or where it has been demonstrated that the site no longer has any value to the community in terms of access and usage, is not required to perform an alternative green infrastructure function, is not required to meet a shortfall in the provision of that open space type or another open space type, and an alternative equivalent or better space in terms of quality, quantity, accessibility, biodiversity, flood storage, attractiveness and functionality is available.

Locally Important Open Spaces: parks, cemeteries, natural and semi natural greenspace, green corridors, informal open space, landscape amenity, children's play areas, civic spaces

Formal parks and gardens: historic or natural interest, with town wide amenity and recreation value created by man over time as ornamental or designed landscapes

Measuring Progress

8.1.10 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS17, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI197	Proportion of Local Wildlife Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented
E2	Total area of land managed as DBAP priority habitats (ha)
Local 13	Open space provision in the urban area – surveyed every three years
Local 14	Amount of open space managed to Green Flag Award Standard
Local 23	Allotment provision in the Borough
New	Amount of open space (ha) per 1000 population in each ward
New	Amount of open space achieving a quality rating of 3* and above
New	Total number of wildlife sites
New	Access to Natural Green Space standards
New	Total area of land managed for nature conservation

8.2 Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities

8.2.1 Participation in active sport and recreation is an important element of a healthy lifestyle. Only 23% of Darlington's adults participate in sport and recreation activities for at least 30 minutes, three or more times a week¹. Levels of participation are particularly low among residents of south and east Darlington. Improving the quality of and access to playing pitches and other sport and recreation facilities across the Borough will help encourage more people to participate, and help to reduce health inequalities across the Borough, a key objective of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.

¹Darlington Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy, PMP, 2009

8.2.2 Darlington's wide variety of indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities will continue to provide opportunities for pitch sports, court sports, swimming, health and fitness, bowling, athletics, golf, gymnastics and boxing. To ensure provision best meets local needs and future aspirations, and encourages greater participation from all sections of the community in a cost effective way, a hierarchy and standards of provision have been developed, supported by appropriate management and investment.. To make the most of the hierarchies of provision, this policy seeks to protect, enhance and extend provision.

Playing Pitches

8.2.4 Darlington's 104 playing pitches provide one playing pitch for every 1150 adults. This is 16% below the national average. Of the 48 pitches found at school sites, only nine have secure community access out of school hours. Pitch quality also varies. Pitches within parks tend to be lower quality, and higher quality pitches are often overused, reducing their overall quality in the long term. There are not enough good quality pitches for junior football at peak times. A shortfall of 18.5 pitches is likely to increase to 24.6 by 2021², unless access to existing pitches can be increased or new provision is made.

²Darlington Playing Pitch Strategy, PMP, 2009

8.2.5 Provision will focus on improving quality, community access (particularly to pitches at schools and colleges), and management arrangements. Eastbourne Sports Complex will be a strategic 'hub', with high quality adult and junior pitches, suitable for high level competition. An

additional strategic hub is to be created at Blackwell Meadows, to help address the current shortfall of pitches in the Borough. Complementary, smaller 'satellite' sites and single pitch sites will cater for lower level competition and for general recreational use respectively³. Standards of provision will be set out in the Making Places DPD.

³see table 6.1 in Playing Pitch Strategy for more detail.

8.2.6 Synthetic turf pitches and multi-use games areas will continue to provide a valuable resource for pitch sports. Sufficient demand exists² for an additional synthetic turf pitch and a five-a-side facility. Opportunities in appropriate accessible locations will be considered, to help reduce the pressure on existing grass pitches, including junior pitches.

Other sport and recreation facilities

8.2.7 Access to the Borough's sports facilities varies, as does its quality and spare capacity. Newer venues, such as Haughton Education Village, are operating at full capacity and have secure community access. Older facilities, such as Branksome School, have lower usage and limited access. Only three schools have secure community access to sport and recreation facilities out of hours.

8.2.8 Current sport and recreation provision will be maintained, focussing on improving quality and securing community access, particularly at education sites. Two strategic 'hub' sites will be developed, providing a range of indoor and outdoor sports. Over the long term, an additional strategic 'hub' site will be created at Longfield School, to improve access to quality sports facilities in the northern part of the urban area. Accessible facilities at publicly and privately owned venues, ranging from private gyms to village halls, will complement these 'hubs'⁴. Opportunities for new facilities that complement existing provision will be guided by policies in the Making Places DPD.

⁴see Appendix 4

8.2.9 By setting out a clear strategy for sport and recreation provision, the following policy will help support efforts to attract public sector funding and other investment to the Borough, help prioritise the spending of contributions secured through planning obligations and guide the Council's own investment decisions.

Policy CS18: Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities

Darlington's sport and recreation facilities will be protected and where appropriate, enhanced to provide a range of quality, accessible and safe facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Playing pitches, synthetic turf pitches and multi use games areas of appropriate quantity and quality to help achieve the target level of playing pitches set out in the Darlington Playing Pitch Strategy, will be provided and maintained according to the following hierarchy:

A: Strategic 'hub' sites:

- a) Eastbourne Sports Complex;
- b) Blackwell Meadows.

B Satellite sites:

- a) Schools and colleges;
- b) Parks;
- c) Sports Clubs;
- d) Parish Council and privately owned sites.

C: Single pitch sites in parks.

Five a side facilities will be encouraged to complement, (but not replace any part of) this provision.

Indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities will be provided to help achieve the targets set out in the Darlington Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy, according to the following hierarchy of provision:

D: Strategic hub sites:

- a) Eastbourne Sports Complex
- b) Dolphin Centre
- c) Longfield School

E: Publicly accessible sites:

- a) Schools and colleges
- b) Parish Council sites and village halls

F: Privately owned sites

The loss of sports and recreation facilities will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where either:

1. a needs assessment shows that there is an excess of provision in the Borough; or
2. the proposal is ancillary to the use of the site as a sports and recreation facility and does not affect its quantity or quality; or
3. the development only affects part of the site and/or facility, and does not adversely impact on its value to sport and recreation; or
4. it would be replaced by a facility of an equivalent or better quality and quantity in a sustainable location, with equivalent or better management arrangements, before development starts; or
5. In the case of playing pitches, an indoor or outdoor sports facility is proposed that would benefit sporting needs in Darlington which would outweigh the loss of the playing pitch.

Secured community use will be required, where appropriate, to new facilities.

Measuring Progress

8.2.10 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS18, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI008	Adult participation in sport
NI057	Children and young people's participation in high quality PE/sport
Local 23	No of accessible playing pitches
New	Provision of sports facilities sqm per 1000 population

9. EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT

9.1 Everyone who travels within the Borough requires a safe, efficient, sustainable and effective transport system, and residents' quality of life depends on good access to jobs, shops, schools and services. For businesses and the Borough's economy, Darlington's excellent road, rail and air links, in particular via the A1 and A66(T) strategic routes, the East Coast Main Line and branch lines between Bishop Auckland and Saltburn, and Durham Tees Valley Airport, are amongst its keenest economic attributes, important for future growth.

9.2 Improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region have been identified as important in helping to deliver a renaissance for the North East¹. Darlington's connections have helped make the Borough an attractive place to live and do business, and given it a role as a gateway to the region and the Tees Valley sub-region. The challenge facing Darlington is to continue to accommodate growth and regeneration in the Borough without adding to congestion and adversely impacting on economic interests, the

¹Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East, CLG, 2008

effectiveness of the transport system, the environment and residents' quality of life.

²RSS Policy 50. Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS), DfT, 2008. Low Carbon Transport, A Greener Future, DfT, 2009.

9.3 Both the RSS and national transport policy guidance² set out an approach to providing a transport system that is more sustainable, less carbon-dependent and uses more socially-inclusive forms of transport. The approach also focuses more on making the best use of existing resources and infrastructure before committing to costly investment that adds capacity.

Improving Connections Between Darlington and Elsewhere

³ RSS para. 2.191

⁴A66(T) Tees Valley Gateway Study, North East Assembly/ Highways Agency/DBC, 2004.

9.4 Strategically, road travel will remain the main form of transport throughout the plan period. Although congestion in and around Darlington is less than in many other parts of Britain, new development planned across the region will add significantly to trips on the strategic networks. Without action, the strategic road network will become more congested and unsafe as traffic levels increase, deterring or restraining development unless action is taken to improve capacity³. This particularly affects the A66(T) bypass, around the south and east of the town, which links the A1 (and, via the trans-Pennine A66, the M6) and the Tees Valley, including Teesport. The preferred option identified in 2004⁴ was improvements to junctions and the upgrading of the section north of the A67 Yarm Road (Morton Park) junction to dual carriageway, partly by providing a bypass to the east of the Great Burdon roundabout. All options including managing the growth in demand on this strategic highway from local traffic making short journeys, are currently being reviewed as part of the Tees Valley City Region: Connectivity and Accessibility Study, being undertaken as part of the region's response to the Department for Transport's Delivering a Sustainable Transport System strategy. Associated necessary actions include managing the growth in demand on this strategic highway from local traffic making short journeys, many of which could be made by other means.

⁵RSS Policies 10 and 51

⁶Proposals for the rail improvements are supported in the RSS (Policies 10 and 50), Tees Valley Unlimited's Business Plan, 2009-2012 and Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-21, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.

9.5 Darlington centre, comprising the Town Centre and Bank Top railway station, has been identified in the RSS as a strategic public transport hub, where quality interchange facilities and integration between all modes of transport should be prioritised⁵. Rail improvements, to facilitate more frequent and reliable services on the Darlington to Saltburn line has been highlighted as necessary to underpin economic growth in the Tees Valley⁶, and help shift travel between its main centres to non-car travel modes. The key first stage is to provide a new platform to the east side of Bank Top station. A later phase could involve a light rail link northwards from the new platform into Central Park and the Town Centre.

9.6 A travel plan is being developed for Bank Top station, setting out short term measures and longer term aspirations for access and environmental improvements.

9.7 The town's second railway station at North Road, on the Bishop Auckland branch line, also needs improving to enhance its accessibility and boost its role for sub-regional travel. Planned highway improvements just to the north, at the junction of North Road highway and Whessoe Road, could provide an opportunity for a car park and enhanced interchange with bus services. The line may also be assisted by an enhancement scheme promoted by Durham County Council and potential investment by the rail operator, including the possibility of a new platform on the north side of the line. The adoption of a station travel plan here will also be encouraged.

9.8 The highway works at North Road will be carried out as part of a major programme of bus priority improvements to improve connectivity across the sub-region, the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement (TVBNI).

9.9 Durham Tees Valley Airport is essential to the economic performance of the Tees Valley. The Council will continue to work with the Airport and regional partners to promote more services, including the reinstatement of flights to London Heathrow. Planning permission has been granted for facilities which would enable the Airport to handle many more passengers and create a cargo and maintenance 'village'. The first phase of the Tees Valley rail improvements also include a new rail stop serving the Airport.

9.10 Cycling is much less of a strategic form of transport but National Cycle Route 14 is being developed between Darlington and Stockton and beyond to North Yorkshire, and regional Route 52 runs inside the southern edge of the Borough. The Highways Agency has identified potential links and improved crossings of the A66(T) to help cyclists. The Council is considering how to improve the cycle network between Darlington and Newton Aycliffe, which could encourage more sustainable journeys to work between the two. All these routes will be safeguarded, promoted and developed as necessary.

Reducing Congestion and Maintaining Accessibility in the Borough

9.11 Within the Borough, there is relatively low but increasing car ownership, high but declining bus usage, and significantly increased levels of walking and (from a low base) cycling. Rail patronage is also rising but almost solely to destinations outside the Borough. The increases in walking and cycling, slowing in decline of bus use and a reduction in local car trips have been influenced by Darlington's recent status as both a Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town and a Cycling Demonstration Town. Research for the former has found considerable potential to achieve even more reductions in car use⁷.

9.12 Enhancing accessibility for all and tackling congestion on the Borough's roads underpin Darlington's future economic growth, good land-use planning and quality of life for all. Currently, traffic congestion occurs at peak hours at some junctions on main routes in the town, particularly radial roads like North Road and West Auckland Road and parts of the inner ring road. Funding for improvements to 'pinch point' junctions is being pursued as a priority, including through the TVBNI programme, as reduced delays and better journey time reliability will benefit all road users. Ongoing implementation of the Council's network management duty⁸ and the planned introduction of civil parking enforcement⁹ should help further.

9.13 Necessary improvements to accessibility for non-car users will include reducing the severance effect of busy transport corridors, including the inner ring road which currently tightly constrains the Town Centre.

9.14 The Council and its partners are therefore working to a strategy¹⁰ that:

- makes better use of the existing transport network through better traffic management, particularly at 'pinch points';
- encourages people to use more sustainable modes of travel in place of the private car; and,
- reduces the need to travel, by providing local services close to homes and places of work.

⁷ Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town programme funded by DfT, 2004-09; known in Darlington as 'Local Motion'. Cycling Demonstration Town, grant-aid from Cycling England, 2005-11. See www.dothelocalmotion.co.uk

⁸ A statutory duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to help ensure road traffic keeps moving.

⁹ Will allow the Council to take over parking duties from the Police, including enforcing against parking which causes congestion.

¹⁰ Darlington Transport Strategy 2006-30, DBC, 2006. The strategy is being reviewed as part of the development of the Third Local Transport Plan, intended to be adopted in March 2011.

Accommodating the Travel Needs of New Development

9.15 Additional transport infrastructure and measures will be required for areas of new development so that people living and working there can make sustainable and efficient travel choices. The kind of transport links and demand management measures that would be needed to ensure that growth takes place in a sustainable manner¹¹ have been taken into account in putting forward the proposed strategic locations in this Core Strategy (Policy CS1). Vehicle parking will be provided at levels appropriate to the use and location and which promote sustainable transport choices (Policy CS2).

¹¹Based on a study carried out for that purpose: Darlington Connections Study, Urban Initiatives for DBC, 2009

9.16 Physical infrastructure interventions, such as access roads, will be combined with travel information and marketing measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport wherever possible. Travel plans and planning obligations on developers (Policy CS4) will be key implementation tools in embedding sustainable travel choices and behaviours from the outset.

9.17 One element of infrastructure that is not required is the previously-safeguarded Darlington Cross Town Route, as there is no longer a clear strategic, deliverable need for this and its unbuilt central sections. The scheme is therefore not part of this Core Strategy.

Policy CS19: Improving Transport Infrastructure and Creating a Sustainable Transport Network

The Council and its partners will work together, where appropriate with the aid of developer contributions, to make the best use of and improve existing transport infrastructure within and connecting to the Borough, having considered first solutions to transport problems that are based on better management and the provision and promotion of sustainable forms of travel.

For the road network this will be by:

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

Specific priorities for the road network will be:

- (i) *carrying out improvements at problem points, such as the North Road / Whessoe Road junction;*
- (ii) *protecting and promoting the urban radial routes of North Road, Haughton Road, Woodland Road and Yarm Road as key public transport corridors, and Coniscliffe Road, the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor and Grange Road as secondary public transport corridors;*
- (iii) *in the medium-to-long term (2016-2026), upgrade the capacity of the A66(T) to the east and south of the town by junction improvements and part-dualling.*

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

- (d) in the short term (up to 2016), providing new stopping facilities for rail services to the east of Bank Top railway station and serving Durham Tees Valley Airport;
- (e) in the longer term (up to 2026), investigating the extension of light rail services through Central Park to Darlington town centre, and an additional halt at Morton Palms employment area; and,

- (f) in the short term (up to 2016), to integrate rail with all other transport modes, particularly in the corridor between Bank Top railway station, the town centre and Central Park, and at North Road railway station.

For cycling, walking and other public transport this will be by:

- (g) improving accessibility for all to employment, education, health, recreation, leisure and shopping facilities, particularly fresh food shops, including links between villages and between villages and the town;
- (h) improving local connections across busy transport corridors which act as barriers to local access, including reducing the barrier effect of the A66 for non-motorised users in conjunction with the Highways Agency;
- (j) facilitating the development and implementation of school, workplace, residential and railway station travel plans;
- (k) improving public rights of way and links to long distance footpaths; and,
- (l) improving cycle routes and ancillary infrastructure as part of the national, regional or local cycle network.

Specific priorities for cycling, walking and public transport will be:

- (iv) *in the short term (up to 2016), improving pedestrian and cycle links between the town and the villages, including crossing the A66 and A1;*
- (v) *in the short term (up to 2016), improving routes for all road users from the town to south-west Durham, other parts of the Tees Valley and North Yorkshire;*
- (vi) *in the short-to-medium term (up to 2021), improving local accessibility to schools, workplaces, centres and neighbourhood facilities and other destination points;*
- (vii) *in the short-to-medium term (up to 2021), improving connectivity across the inner ring road between the town centre and the Town Centre Fringe.*

Throughout the plan period, the needs of disabled people will be considered in the design and implementation of the transport system and works will be undertaken to ensure that the Borough's transport infrastructure remains effective as the climate changes.

Measuring Progress

9.18 The following indicators will be used to measure the success of Policy CS19, and reported on in the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.

Monitoring Indicators	
NI 167	Congestion – average journey time during morning peak.
NI 175	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling.
NI 176	Working age people with access to employment by public transport, demand responsive transport, walking and cycling.
NI 177	Local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the Borough.
NI 178	Bus services running on time.
NI 198	Children travelling to school - mode of transport usually used.
LI 0303	Change in peak period traffic flows.
LI 0305	Cycle flows.
LI 0306	Area wide traffic flows.
LI 0307	Percentage of rights of way that are easy to use by the public

10. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

10.1 Identifying the resources and infrastructure required to implement plan policies gives the public commitment necessary to attract new private and public sector funding to the Borough. It also helps potential developers to see what contributions they will be expected to make towards the costs of new infrastructure needed to mitigate the impact of their development on existing communities and environments (see Policy CS4). The remainder of this section sets out the main ways each of the plan policies will be delivered. More detail about exactly what will be provided, where, when, and by whom, is set out in the Darlington Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

10.2 This Core Strategy will help ensure that there is sufficient, appropriate physical, social and green infrastructure in all parts of the Borough, so that people are not disadvantaged by where they live, so that quality of life is maintained and so that the Borough can benefit economically from being 'Perfectly Placed'. Making the best use of and improving existing infrastructure is a strong underlying theme, particularly where provision is well located to the people or things it serves. This Core Strategy also emphasises bringing forward solutions to planning issues that minimise the need for additional physical infrastructure.

10.3 Throughout the life of this Core Strategy, the way some forms of key infrastructure are provided is likely to change, to meet changing local demand and aspirations, and to ensure the most efficient and effective delivery of services. Durham Tees Valley Airport is expected to expand passenger and freight business, Teesside University is expected to move into a new facility at Central Park, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College has indicated that it would like to expand, and three secondary schools are likely to be upgraded and modernised. In the area of healthcare, Darlington Memorial Hospital is expected to continue to make a key contribution to existing accessible healthcare provision at its existing site. Provision there, and in complementary facilities like West Park (mental health), Woodlands private hospital at Morton Park, the Walk-in Centre at Dr. Piper House, and a community based network of primary care facilities, such as GP surgeries and dentists, will need to respond to any national changes to policy on how healthcare services should be delivered.

Implementation Framework

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
CS1 Darlington's Sub Regional Role and Locational Strategy	Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe Area Action Plan Core Strategy Policies CS5, CS7 and CS10 Development Management Decisions	DBC	Allocation of land for new development.
		Private Sector	Investment decisions, e.g. of Peel Holdings at Durham Tees Valley Airport, or Marchday at Lingfield Point.
		DBC / Fabrick / Keepmoat / Yuill	Using HCA / ONE / Housing Growth Point funding to bring forward Central Park, surplus school sites, housing sites, sites for development in the town centre and the Town Centre Fringe.
CS2 Promoting High Quality, Sustainable Design	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Design of New Development SPD Affordable Housing SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Darlington Characterisation Study Development Management Decisions Building Control Decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Design Codes Development Briefs / Masterplans Conservation Area Character Appraisals Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Darlington Tree Strategy Tees Valley Highways Design Guide Local Transport Plan	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or improve existing open space, children's play and priority habitats, sustainable transport and transport infrastructure improvements.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / Housebuilders	Allocation of land for new development.
		DBC	LTP2 and LTP3 funding to secure transport infrastructure measures.
		DBC	Bidding for Single Programme / HCA funding to support the strategic masterplanning of the Town Centre Fringe.
CS3 Promoting Renewable Energy	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Design of New Development SDP Planning Obligations SPD Development Management Decisions Building Control Decisions Development briefs /	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or provide connections to renewable and local carbon technologies.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / Housebuilders	Allocation of land through new development and through on site provision.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
	masterplans Design, Access and Sustainability Statements	Renewable Energy Providers	Provision of commercial scale renewable energy.
CS4 Developer Contributions	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Affordable Housing SPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Development Management Decisions	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or improve physical, social and / or green infrastructure.
CS5 Supporting the Local Economy	Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Employment Land Review Darlington Economic Assessment (pending) Development Management Decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements	DBC / One North East / HCA	Bidding for Single Programme Funding for site acquisition sites in the Town Centre Fringe. Bidding for funding from HCA to assist with the preparation of Area Action Plan, master planning and site-specific development briefs. Central Park: Facilitate the development of the southern (employment uses) end of the site with possible European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) money to assist in the provision of a business incubator unit.
		DBC / Developer	Allocation of land for new development.
CS6 Vibrant and Cultural Tourism Offer	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Planning Obligations SPD Development briefs and masterplans Development Management Decisions Taking forward the Darlington Gateway	DBC	Bidding for Single Programme Funding / HCA funding to support the strategic master planning.
		Commercial Estates Group / Keepmoat / Yuill Homes / Hotel Provider	Private sector funding to enable provision of a hotel at Central Park.
		Private sector hotel providers	Provision of hotels in the Borough.
CS7 The Town Centre	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Design of New Development SPD Adding to Quality: A Development Strategy for Darlington Town Centre Commercial Street Development: Planning and Highways Requirements	Private sector / DBC	Private sector funding and construction of a retail-led scheme in Commercial Street area, with DBC contribution of land.
		Private sector / DCSF / DBC	Private sector / Department for Education (DfE) funding, construction of offices and other development in Feethams / Beaumont Street area, with DBC contribution of land.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
	Feethams Planning & Development Brief Development briefs and masterplans Development Management decisions Commenting on neighbouring authorities planning applications Town centre management.	DBC / Government / ONE / HCA / private sector	Funding of phased extension of the town centre into the Town Centre Fringe, including improvements in connections across the ring road.
		DBC	Town centre management and promotion.
CS8 Additional Retail Provision	Making Places DPD Design of New Development SPD Adding to Quality: A Development Strategy for Darlington Town Centre Commercial Street Development: Planning and Highway Requirements Development Management Decisions Development briefs / masterplans	Private sector / DBC	Private sector funding and construction of a retail-led scheme in Commercial Street area, with DBC contribution of land.
		Private sector	Private sector funding and construction of any further retail floor space.
CS9 District and Local Centres and Local Shops and Services	Making Places DPD Design of New Development SPD Development Management decisions	Private sector	Private sector funding and construction of retail floor space.
CS10 New Housing Development	Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Affordable Housing SPD Development Management decisions Darlington Housing Strategy 2008-2012 Tees Valley Housing Growth Point Programme of Development, 2008	DBC	Allocation of land for new development and through on site provision, including the Town Centre Fringe.
		DBC / Fabrick / Keepmoat / Yuill	Using HCA / ONE / Housing Growth Point funding to bring forward Central Park, surplus school sites, housing sites, sites for development in the town centre and the Town Centre Fringe.
		DBC	Using HCA Local Authority Housing Programme Funding to deliver new social rented homes on Council owned land; £3 million secured from Round 1 for 62 units to be completed by 2011.
		Private sector house builders	Private sector house builder resources.
		Registered Social Landlords	Using RSL resources and grants from HCA to provide affordable housing. In some cases using land provided by private house builders in lieu of making affordable housing provision.
CS11 Meeting Housing Needs	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Affordable Housing SPD	DBC	£3 million government funding to deliver 65 affordable housing units by 2011.
		DBC / Tees Valley Living / Fabrick Housing Group	£206,000 Community Infrastructure Funding and £4.1 million Kickstart public sector funding to deliver housing at the former Beaumont Hill School Sites.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
	Planning Obligations SPD Design of New Development SPD Darlington Housing Strategy 2008-2012 Older Person Housing Strategy 2007 Homelessness Strategy Development Management decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Building Control Decisions	DBC / RSLs	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new affordable and / or lifetime housing.
		DBC	£10 million annually from the Housing Investment Programme to meet other identified housing needs.
		DBC	Disbursement of Disabled Facilities Grant to adapt existing dwellings.
		DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to adapt existing housing and / or to improve the energy efficiency of existing housing.
		DBC	Bidding for share of Tees Valley Single Housing Investment Programme from 2011.
		DBC / agencies / voluntary sector	Provision of temporary accommodation for the homeless.
CS12 Existing Housing	Town Centre Fringe AAP Planning Obligations SPD Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy, 2008 Housing Strategy 2008-2012 Development Management decisions	DBC	Appropriate interventions according to a planning or regeneration framework drawn up with the involvement of the local communities affected.
		DBC	Making loans to people to carry out repairs to privately owned houses.
		DBC / Regional Housing Board / Single Housing Investment Programme / Central Government	Planned repairs to Council owned housing funded from Major Repairs Allowance, prudential borrowing supported by the Housing Revenue Account and other grant funding; totaling approximately £8 million per year until 2014 when will reduce to £5-6 million per annum.
CS13 Accommodating Travelling Groups	Accommodating Growth DPD Town Centre Fringe AAP Design of New Development SPD Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2009 Development Management decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements	DBC	Bidding for HCA grants, where appropriate, for sites with planning permission, for the development of new sites and for refurbishment, including remodeling and extension of existing sites.
		DBC	Allocation of land for new development.
CS14 Local Character and Distinctiveness	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Darlington Characterisation Study Development Management decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Development briefs / masterplans	DBC	Bidding for English Heritage Funding to secure improvements to the management of Conservation Areas.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
	Conservation Area Character Appraisals Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Darlington Tree Strategy Local List Local at risk register Scheduled ancient monument audit		
CS15 Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Development Management decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Development briefs / masterplans Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Darlington Tree Strategy Ecological masterplans and management plans UK and Durham Biodiversity Action Plans	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or improve priority habitats.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / House builders	Allocation of land for new development.
		DBC	£152,000 Big Lottery Fund 'Reaching Communities Programme' to improve access and management at Maidendale Nature Reserve.
		DBC	£45,200 development grant to develop a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' Programme to secure improvements to Brinkburn Denes.
		DBC	Bidding for up to £878,727 by December 2009 to secure funding to refurbish The Denes through the 'Parks for People' programme.
		DBC / TV Biodiversity Partnership / Durham Biodiversity Partnership / Durham Wildlife Trust	Bidding for Environment Agency funding for improvement of watercourses, Landfill Tax contributions and other grants to secure improvements to biodiversity sites.
CS16 Protecting Environmental Resources and Human Health and Safety	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Darlington Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2009 Development Control decisions Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Development briefs / masterplans Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Contaminated Land Strategy	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure flood risk mitigation or remediation of contaminated land.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / House builders	Allocation of land through and for new development.
		DBC	Remediation of land through planning applications.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
CS17 Strengthening the Green Infrastructure Network	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Development Management Decisions Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Darlington Allotments Strategy Durham Biodiversity Action Plan Rights of Way Improvement Plan Play Strategy Local Transport Plan 2 & 3	DBC	£1.1 million government Playbuilder grant to deliver 22 natural play sites by 2011.
		Darlington Children's Trust	£185,000 Area Based Grant for play in 11 most disadvantaged wards.
		LTP2	£100,000 for Green Lane improvements.
		LTP3	Bidding for funding for green sustainable transport projects linking the town and the countryside like creating a new link between Baydale Beck and Merrybent.
		DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or improve existing open space, children's play and priority habitats.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / House builders	Allocation of land through and for new development.
CS18 Promoting Quality, Accessible Sport and Recreation Facilities	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Design of New Development SPD Planning Obligations SPD Open Space Strategy Development Management decisions Regional Facilities Strategy Tees Valley Facilities Strategy Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Darlington Playing Pitch Strategy Darlington Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Play Strategy	DBC	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure new or improve existing playing pitches and sports and recreation facilities.
		DBC	Capital Programme.
		LEA	Primary Capital Programme.
		DBC / Developers / House Builders	Allocation of land through and for new development.
		Darlington College	Provision of two playing pitches and associated facilities at Blackwell Meadows.
		DBC / LEA / School governing body	£3.5 million Government 14-19 diploma funding to enhance sports provision at Longfield School to be committed by April 2010.
		DBC / LEA	Bidding for potential £38 million BSF funding to rebuild or significantly renew 3 secondary schools with associated sports and recreation provision.
		Parish Council / club / community groups	Bidding for Football / Foundation / Heritage Lottery / voluntary / public sector funding.
		Private sector	Provision of five-a-side facilities.
		DBC / LEA	Secure community access agreements with education facilities.

Policy Number / Title	Implementation Framework: Plans, strategies and decisions (of the Council unless indicated)	Delivery Organisation	Funding / Means of Delivery
CS19 Improving Transport Infrastructure and Creating a Sustainable Transport Network	Making Places DPD Accommodating Growth DPD Planning Obligations SPD Design of New Development SPD Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 Darlington Transport Strategy 2006-2030 Design, Access and Sustainability Statements Development Management decisions Decisions about context of next (third) Local Transport Plan 2011-26	DBC	Department of Transport funding through the Regional Funding Allocation for general transport improvements: up to about £13.271 million (integrated transport block) and £12.292 million (maintenance) between 2011/12 and 2018/19.
		DBC / Highways Agency	Bidding for Department of Transport Funding through the Regional Funding Allocation for specific major schemes including: Tees Valley rail improvement – if bid successful, phase 1 will be implemented by 2013; Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Programme; A66 / A19 / A174 Area Action Plan.
		DBC	£3 million of funding from Cycling England for 2005-2011.
		DBC	EU Boosting Advanced Public Transport Systems Programme Funding of £755k for 2008-2011.
		DBC / Private Developers	S106 agreements attached to the grant of planning permission to secure travel plans, contributions towards public transport, cycling and walking schemes, and new highway infrastructure.