

Heighington Draft Spatial Plan – Consultation Responses Summary

Total number of representations received – 28

Breakdown

Developers / Landowners - 4

Local Residents – 22

Local Organisations - 2

Friends of the Earth, Darlington

Campaign to Protect Rural England, Darlington

Name / Organisation	Comments
<p>Savills (Agent) Mr D. Porterfield</p>	<p>As part of the consultation on the Draft Spatial Plan for Heighington, we would like to propose a new site to be considered for residential development in the village. Please find enclosed a Location Plan identifying a parcel of land that is within sole ownership of our client.</p> <p>Our clients land is approximately 1.03 hectares in size and is located on the eastern edge of Heighington Village. It is well defined by strong physical boundaries. Existing residential development is located to the west, the A6072 (Bypass) bounds the site to the east, and Station Road is located to the north. The south of the site is also defined by a fence, established hedgerow and some mature trees. As such, the site is well bounded and any future development would be well contained by the bypass, avoiding any future urban sprawl to the east.</p> <p>The larger villages have been identified in the Core Strategy as the next most favourable location for housing Development to that of the main urban area of Darlington Town. Our clients land is therefore considered a prime site to accommodate future residential development to meet the identified need of the village / local area.</p> <p>Site is in a sustainable location and no physical constraints identified. Although the site is in the conservation area this should not preclude development. Recent planning consent ref 16/00820/FUL provided as a comparison. The site is considered to be suitable, available, achievable and deliverable to accommodate residential development.</p>



Promap
This plan is published for convenience only.
Although it is thought to be correct, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

**Savills (Agent)
Mrs McKinlay**

I act on behalf of Mrs McKinlay who owns and occupies 16 Snackgate Lane, Heighington – edged blue below. The land edged red is garden space belonging to Mrs McKinlay and directly adjoins 16 Snackgate Lane. Both the red land and blue land are within the same curtilage, enclosed by a boundary wall and mature trees.

We would support an amendment to Draft Spatial Plan which incorporates the red-land within the development limits.

The red land is considered to be suitable for residential development in terms of its relationship to neighbours, access (which can be easily accommodated from Snackgate Lane) and proximity to local services. The land is extremely well screened by views to the south by existing boundary treatment and mature trees and hedgerows (which could be retained as part of development scheme).

The McKinlay family wish to develop a bungalow on the land in order to free-up the existing family sided host-dwelling for occupation by Mrs McKinlay's daughter who would provide care and support for Mrs McKinlay into later life.

The proposed bungalow represents a suitable development solution for the site and including the site within the development limits would allow for logical development of a windfall site thus making efficient use of land within the village and relieving pressure for the same accommodation elsewhere within Heighington.



Fairhurst (Agent)
Bellway

This representation will act to confirm the commitment of Bellway Homes to the delivery of residential development on land to the west of Walworth Road and support the allocation of the site within the Draft Spatial Plan, alongside supporting the principle of growth

	<p>in the village outlined in the Draft Spatial Plan.</p> <p>Bellway support the principle that sites for housing within larger villages must be identified to ensure that the need for housing in the borough is met.</p> <p>Current policy position in Core Strategy and Interim Planning Position Statement supports the growth of the village. Suitability of the village for residential development summarised in terms of access to services and sustainable transport links.</p> <p>Bellway are aware that in order to facilitate any significant housing growth in the village the existing primary school would require expansion with adjacent parking and recreational facilities identified for improvement.</p> <p>The site subject to this representation is considered to form the most logical extension to the village. The development of the site would form a modest expansion of the village while ensuring that the development does not extend the village further to the east or west. To the south of the site lies an existing barn conversion with the proposed extension of the village to the south not extending the village any further to the south than this existing residential development.</p> <p>Bellway can also confirm that a range of technical surveys have been undertaken including an ecology appraisal, noise assessment, geophysical survey and tree survey which demonstrate that the development of the site is achievable and will not conflict with planning policies which aim to protect the built and natural environment.</p> <p>In respect of discussions undertaken during the plan-making process, pre-application discussions and the progression of an imminent planning application and associated technical documentation, there is also certainty that the development will come forward should planning permission be granted and/or a positive allocation be received. In this regard Bellway can also demonstrate that the site is 'deliverable' in terms of footnote 11 of the NPPF in that it is available, suitable and achievable.</p> <p>Bellway support both the principle of the growth of the village of Heighington and the allocation of land west of Walworth Road for residential development.</p>
<p>PlanArch Design Ltd (Agent)</p>	<p>Whilst the principles set out in the Council's approach to a spatial plan for Heighington, and the need for development in the larger villages, is fully supported, the solution for new housing on the south side of the village comes across as almost one of planning by accident or default, rather than logical, proactive forward planning. The proposal for the south edge of the village gives the impression of being only half thought through, responding solely to what the developer is offering, rather than providing a more consolidated and</p>

	<p>comprehensive planning solution both visually as well as pragmatically.</p> <p>Land is potentially available for consideration immediately adjacent, on its western side, to the proposed housing allocation on the southern edge of the village. In the short term, an area of the field west of the proposed allocation is available for development in association with the allocated land, this additional area providing for a rounded-off solution to the development area, rather than the present solution of the proposed allocation appearing something of an appendage attached to the village’s southern edge.</p> <p>Not only does this additional area provide a more visually acceptable solution, it also offers opportunities for more appropriate connectivity with the village and with the surrounding countryside, particularly via Snackgate Lane and the routes connecting to this well-used footpath. The proposed allocation appears to lack an attractive level of connectivity.</p> <p>In the longer term and for appropriate forward planning, further areas of land could be considered for the future development of the western side of the village, again offering environmental opportunities as well as simply development potential, but it is felt these areas are not for immediate consideration, although on the face of it, they do offer what could be argued more logical planning solutions than the somewhat random and arguably unsustainable development recently approved at nearby School Aycliffe.</p>
<p>Darlington Friends of the Earth</p>	<p>Any housing / residential proposals need to be sympathetic to the existing wildlife and their habitat and promote its longevity. Indeed FoE are keen to understand how wildlife can be encouraged within any proposed development.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements. The Council updated its SHLAA on a regular basis up until September 2015, however it has not been updated since then, and so the Council is in breach of the Government’s national planning policy.</p> <p>The publication of the Government’s consultation on housing need, “Planning for the right homes in the right places” gives a basic calculation for Darlington of 177 dwellings per year as opposed to the 446 per year which the Council is using. This calls into question the whole premise of the number of dwellings required in the borough. More localised demand modelling and a revised way forward needs to be considered.</p> <p>I understand that are now revisions to one of the options to the proposed Northern Relief Road which will act as an enabler for circa 5,000 new homes to the north east of Darlington. I am particularly concerned that this new road running parallel to the A1150 and the new housing development will exacerbate traffic congestion in the area and degrade air quality by creating an air pollution corridor. There are alternative options that need to be examined which are less damaging to the environment and the rural villages to the north</p>

	<p>east of Darlington. Provide a new four way junction off the A1 with the A66 or provide a new cross town link road from the A66 direct to the A1 with four-way access.</p> <p>Heighington sees a half hourly bus service and an hourly rail service between Darlington and Bishop Auckland. New housing will only exacerbate car demand and current road congestion. We are concerned with the capacity of the road network, existing NHS services including GP practices and schools to absorb this growth.</p> <p>We would urge ecological surveys to be undertaken in April - June to confirm the current status of all breeding species and to help mitigate and offset the effects of any habitat loss.</p> <p>Development within flood plain areas should be avoided.</p>
<p>Campaign to Protect Rural England, Darlington.</p>	<p>CPRE Darlington is deeply concerned at proposals for additional housing sites in Heighington:</p> <p>The additional sites if developed will represent a major increase in the number of dwellings and it is questioned whether the local facilities and services can cope.</p> <p>CPRE questions whether the number of houses Darlington Borough Council is planning for are required. However, this is a difficult topic to comment upon as at the time of this consultation on the Draft Spatial Plan for Heighington the Council is currently working on this figure. We understand the council is planning for substantially more than the 177 houses per year as proposed in the Government's "Right Homes Right Place" consultation. We consider that the lower figure proposed by the Government is the way forward and consider this can be absorbed within the urban area and not require further expansion of the villages.</p> <p>There are particular concerns about the site to the south of the village. Depending on the elevations and the precise design of any development there is a possible potential for buildings to be visible from a great distance in view of the village's elevated position. This is an impact on the landscape CPRE would not wish to see.</p>
<p>Local Residents</p>	<p>Summary of comments submitted:</p> <p>Housing and employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns with the provision of affordable homes in the village. - If new homes are necessary bungalows are needed for the elderly and affordable homes. - Clarification required over housing and jobs needs over the plan period.

Highways & sustainable transport

- Concerns over highway safety and traffic congestion in the village particularly around central areas e.g. Millbank, Snackgate Lane, South View, Water Lane, Highside Rd and Hall Lane.
- Traffic congestion and parking is an issue at school drop off and pick up times particularly around Hopelands.
- Access to Walworth Rd site is too close to other junctions and the bend in the road reduces visibility.
- Roads are too narrow.
- Footpaths are limited in the village particularly to the school.
- Parking is already an issue in the village.
- There should be adequate off street parking in new estates.
- Traffic calming, 20mph and new car park away from the village centre suggested.
- No direct bus link to Newton Aycliffe. Villagers are reliant on cars to get to Aycliffe and the industrial estate.
- Nearby centres are not easily accessed i.e. West Auckland, Darlington, Newton Aycliffe.
- New footpaths and cycle ways required.
- Bus services need to be improved.
- There are no jobs in the village, commuting will add to traffic congestion.

Infrastructure

- Infrastructure in the village is not suitable for a growth in population.
- The primary school is at capacity.
- Expansion of the school will affect standards.
- Education funding via pupil numbers is short sighted.
- Provision should be made for a nursery potentially at the school. A private nursery should be considered also to provide care outside of term time, if there is commercial interest.
- Development will affect secondary school choices.
- Suggestion to build a new school on the edge of the village and develop the existing site for housing.
- Reduce the number of children attending the local primary school from the Durham area.
- Doctor's surgery is at capacity.
- Concerns regarding surface and foul water drainage. There are existing problems with drainage; new homes will worsen the situation.
- Walworth Rd prone to flooding.
- New green spaces should be provided in the village including play facilities for all ages and abilities if possible.
- Issues with gas mains in the village.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developers should be required to pay significantly towards new infrastructure provision. <p>Heritage and Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development should be sensitive to the character of the village and conservation area. <p>Development Limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General objection to the expansion of the village and development limits. - Small amount of residents do comment that growth in the plan appears to be a controlled expansion. <p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is understanding that new homes need to be built but not in Heighington village. - The Council need to be more proactive in preparing a Local Plan. - Heighington's 'best village' status will be ruined. - Heighington will no longer be a village. - Growth should not be focused on the larger villages. Instead allow development in the smaller villages where infrastructure can be provided and altered. - Some support for the draft plan – the village boundaries have not been extended too much but infrastructure should be considered. - Brownfield sites within the urban area of Darlington should be developed first. - No concerns with the sites at School Aycliffe and Beech Crescent. - Walworth Rd site unacceptable; not sympathetic to the village character, impact on highways, junctions in this area are dangerous and road network not designed for such an increase in traffic. - At the Walworth Rd site concern that the SUDs area is also to be used as open space. How can this be the case if the area is in flood. - School Aycliffe site is an unsustainable form of development. It is disappointing that this scheme was approved. - New homes should include solar panels and triple glazing. These issues should be part of the planning process. - Concerns regarding the design and quality of new homes. New development should be in keeping with the character of the village and be low density. - Residents have not been consulted on highways or education issues. This should be undertaken and any assessments should be available to the public. - Land between Heighington and School Aycliffe should be considered for development rather than the village. - Concerns that Bellway held a consultation on the Walworth Rd site before the Council's consultation. Suggests that this scheme
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	<p>will be approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- No transparency of who the other developers are.- Will developers be able to sell these properties. Potential impact on the sale of existing properties.- Development which destroys green belt in an area of outstanding natural beauty should not be allowed.- Area adjacent to Cumby Arms suggested for development and car park to the rear of the village hall.
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