

Comment

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Consultee Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)

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Event Name Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)

Comment by Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)

Comment ID DBLPPS64

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Files [DDBF - DBC Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft Reps Sept 2020.pdf](#)
[DDBF-local-plan-reg-19-response-form Monitoring Framework.pdf](#)

Question 1b

Do you consider that the Local Plan sound? No

Question 2

Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

- . Effective
- . Justified
- . Consistent with national policy

Question 3a

Your Comments

Please give details of why you consider that this part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate.

It is essential that appropriate measures are in place to monitor the delivery of housing sites to ensure that there is not a shortfall at any point during the plan period. We do not consider that the measures outlined within paragraphs 11.0.1 to 11.0.4 and Table 11.1 provide an appropriate arrangement to ensure proper monitoring and corrective action is taken should it become apparent that a shortfall in development, especially housing provision, is occurring.

There are no specific timeframes or triggers within the Draft Local Plan for undertaking or requirement for completion of a review. Paragraph 11.0.2 of the monitoring text on page 128 only states that the Council need to determine if targets are being met and determine whether policies remain relevant. It is considered that the monitoring framework could be improved by incorporating trigger points specifying when action will be taken with regard to meeting the development needs of the Borough. For example, a lack of a 5 year housing land supply should be a trigger for a Review and highlighted as such in the document.

Question 4

Changes Sought

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See above.

Question 5

Attendance at Examination Hearings

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearings? No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

Question 6

Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan? Yes, I request to be notified

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Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Event Name	Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)
Comment by	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)
Comment ID	DBLPPS65
Response Date	10/09/20 10:41
Consultation Point	Policy H 1 Housing Requirement (Strategic Policy) (View)
Status	Processed
Submission Type	Email
Version	0.8
Files	DDBF - DBC Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft Reps Sept 2020.pdf DDBF-local-plan-reg-19-response-form H1.pdf
Question 1b	
Do you consider that the Local Plan sound?	No
Question 2	
Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Effective <input type="checkbox"/> Justified <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent with national policy
Question 3a	
Your Comments	

Please give details of why you consider that this part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate.

We have five comments to make in respect of the policy text and these are set out below. 1. Minimum figure, 2. OAHN, 3. Remove reference to two housing requirement figures, 4. Five Year Housing Land Supply, and 5. Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements. Firstly, it is key that there is flexibility built into the Plan with regard to housing numbers and future development opportunities. This is to ensure that housing need and demand is met throughout the Plan period. It is therefore vital that the proposed housing figure in the Local Plan is a minimum figure, rather than viewed as a cap and a restriction to new development and we welcome this approach by the Council. Secondly, we note that the housing requirement is more than that set out in the Standard Methodology. We fully support this approach and consider this element of the policy to be sound. As required by the NPPF, the emerging Local Plan must define the overall level of growth over the Plan period (up to 2036), based on the requirement to meet the Borough's objectively assessed needs (OAN). As per paragraph 60 of the NPPF 2019, "To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals." The Standard Method provides a minimum starting point, and there may be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether the actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates. The SHMA Update 2017 identifies an OAN of 492 dwellings each year. The SHMA is based on a market signals, job growth and the need for bedspaces in Class C2 dwellings. This approach is justified and in line with the requirements of paragraph 60 of the NPPF and corresponding Planning Practice Guidance (PPG - Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20190220) set out above. Furthermore, we support the Council's job target of 7,000 jobs (taken from the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan). It is considered that it is appropriate to plan for a higher figure than the standard method indicates as exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated in that the figure identified within the Standard Methodology does not take into account projected economic growth.

If the Council did not seek to meet the most appropriate level of development needed, the Borough would suffer significantly from out-migration, reduced / limited employment opportunities and have a detrimental impact on the existing supply of local services and facilities. This would go against the strategic Vision, Strategy and Objectives of the Plan and would therefore be unsound as the plan would not have been planned positively. We therefore support the approach proposed by the Council to meet 492 dwellings per annum due to the fact that the standard method could have implications for housing targets in some areas of the country (principally in the north of England), where affordability and economic growth strategies may not be supported by local authorities that plan for the minimum number of additional dwellings as indicated by the standard methodology. By only using the proposed methodology it could lead to the Borough not planning enough homes to support the economic growth strategy. We therefore fully support the Council's approach to a higher base requirement and consider this element of the policy sound. Thirdly, Draft Policy H1 states that 'housing will be delivered to meet a minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036'. It goes on to state the Council also has a 'Local Plan housing target of 492 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036' and that 'the above approach has been taken to provide a housing requirement range rather than a single figure' and that 'the housing target is not a restrictive maximum figure'. Whilst we fully agree that the housing target should not be a restrictive maximum figure, having the two figures set out in the Draft Plan could cause confusion. In accordance with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes (paragraph 59 of the NPPF), any figure prepared should be clearly written and unambiguous to ensure that paragraph 16 criterion d) of the NPPF is met. As such it is proposed that the Council refers to 492 dwellings per annum as a minimum requirement. Fourthly, Policy H1 goes on to state that 'at any point in the Local Plan period where there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five-year land requirement, sustainable housing sites located beyond development limits, that would both make a positive contribution to the five-year supply of housing land and be well related to the development limits of the main urban area or service villages (as defined in policy SH 1) will be supported. Such proposals should comprise of sustainable development and be consistent with relevant national and Local Plan policies'. Our client supports the recognition in Policy H1 that where there is no five year housing land supply, sustainable sites beyond the settlement limits will be supported. However, it is important that, as soon as there no longer a five-year housing land supply, the Council should consider any site subject to its own merits in a serious attempt to re-meet the development

need and to make a contribution to the five-year supply. This should not just be restricted to the main urban area or service villages. As per our comments to Draft Policy SH 1, we have concerns over the proposed settlements listed in the Settlement Hierarchy. It is considered that there are sustainable settlements listed within the Rural Villages that could accommodate some future growth which are currently neglected due to the spatial distribution proposed by Draft Policy SH1. Please see our comments to Draft Policy SH 1 for further details on this matter.

Finally, we note that Draft Policy H1 sets out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. As part of this, it is proposed that there is a zero (0) housing requirement for the designated neighbourhood housing area of Sadberge. The introduction of the Localism Act (2011) allows Parish Councils and community groups from the community, called Neighbourhood Forums, to formulate Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders, to guide and shape development in a particular area. From inception it is enshrined within the concept of Localism that these plans and orders must have regard to national policies and not override, but work underneath Local Strategic Policies, setting out policy on non-strategic matters. This is more recently set out at paragraph 13 of the NPPF. Housing need, for example is a key strategic policy along with settlement hierarchy and housing supply. We are happy that the Draft Darlington Borough Local Plan is sufficiently clear on this point. However, paragraph 30 of the NPPF states: "Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies." The preparation of the Sadberge Neighbourhood Plan was put on hold in 2015 where it was decided not to proceed any further with the document. Therefore, development in terms of the designated neighbourhood areas is to be established by the Local Plan. It is considered that the housing need for this designated neighbourhood areas is not being addressed through the proposed housing allocations or spatial distribution. Sadberge is a settlement which has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 making it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside. Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number. It is therefore vital that some growth is supported in this village over the plan period (for both market and affordable homes) to ensure that the village remains viable, thrives and supports the community as a whole. We therefore disagree with paragraph 6.2.10 of the Draft Plan and propose that amendments are made as Sadberge is not remote, does have facilities and services, is sustainable and should therefore have housing allocations proposed in this area to ensure it remains a thriving community. Please see our comments to Draft Policy H2 setting out a proposed housing allocation for Sadberge to help meet the identified housing requirements whilst ensuring that the village remains sustainable for existing and future residents. As made clear by paragraph 78 of the NPPF, a settlement is not an island and that growth in one settlement can ensure the future sustainability of a wider rural area. Sadberge is sustainably located with a range of services and facilities with access to both Darlington Town Centre and Teesside beyond and therefore it is critical that this role is not hindered by the Local Plan and that sufficient housing allocations are identified to meet the needs of these important smaller settlements and rural areas. As such, we recommend that the policy is amended to remove the zero (0) housing requirement for the designated neighbourhood housing area as this does not promote positive planning.

We support the OAHN for the Borough and consider this element of the plan to be sound, however, there are some elements which we do have some concerns over in respect of the smaller settlements in the Borough. We proposed that to make Policy H1 sound in its entirety, it should be amended to state that: "At any point in the Local Plan period where there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five year land requirement, sustainable housing sites located beyond development limits, that would make both a positive contribution to the five year supply of housing land and be well related to the development limits of the settlements main urban area or service villages (as defined in Policy SH 1) will be supported.". Some of the identified Rural Villages are capable of accommodating some future growth and this should not be hindered by the policy wording of Policy H1. Finally, it is considered that as Sadberge Parish Council is no longer progressing a Neighbourhood Plan, reference to the Sadberge Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements should be removed from the policy to allow flexibility for growing the settlement in a commensurate and sustainable manner during the plan period.

Table 6.1 Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements

Low Coniscliffe & Merrybent 1520

Blackwell 0

Hurworth 625

Middleton St George 260

Sadberge 0

It is the responsibility of the Local Plan to address the housing need of the Borough and whilst limiting the requirements for Sadberge to 0 it is not considered that the Plan has been produced in a positive manner or in accordance with national policy or guidance.

Question 4

Changes Sought

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See above.

Question 5

Attendance at Examination Hearings

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No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

Question 6

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Comment

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Consultee	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)
Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Event Name	Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)
Comment by	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)
Comment ID	DBLPPS66
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Consultation Point	Policy H 3 Development Limits (Strategic Policy) (View)
Status	Processed
Submission Type	Email
Version	0.16
Files	DDBF-local-plan-reg-19-response-form H3.pdf DDBF - DBC Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft Reps Sept 2020.pdf
Question 1b	
Do you consider that the Local Plan sound?	No
Question 2	
Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Justified <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent with national policy
Question 3a	
Your Comments	

Please give details of why you consider that this part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate.

We support Draft Policy H3 in principle, however, development limits should be extended to go around the existing housing commitments. Whilst this appears to be the case for several settlements (such as Heighington, Low Coniscliffe and Neasham), it is not the case for all. At Sadberge, there is a housing commitment to the south of the village (Site 078) but this housing commitment is not included within the revised development limits for the settlement. The development limits for Sadberge should be amended to rectify this. Furthermore, whilst we note in the policy justification text that development limits have been drawn to include areas identified for future planned growth of housing and employment adjoining the main urban area and service villages, we consider that a further housing allocation should be identified in Sadberge and therefore, if our clients land is allocated, then this site should also be included within the final development limits for the village.

Question 4

Changes Sought

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Question 5

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Event Name Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)

Comment by Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)

Comment ID DBLPPS67

Response Date 10/09/20 10:52

Consultation Point Policy H 2 Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy)
([View](#))

Status Processed

Submission Type Email

Version 0.12

Files [DDBF - DBC Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft
Reps Sept 2020.pdf](#)
[DDBF-local-plan-reg-19-response-form H2.pdf](#)

Question 1b

Do you consider that the Local Plan sound? No

Question 2

**Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is
unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)**

- . Positively prepared
- . Effective
- . Justified
- . Consistent with national policy

Question 3a

Your Comments

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It is important that the housing allocations contained within the Draft Plan are deliverable over the plan period and planned to an appropriate strategy. In accordance with Spatial Policy SH1 'Settlement Hierarchy', sustainable development should be considered acceptable in a range of market areas. As per our comments to Draft Policy SH1, we propose that further flexibility is built into the settlement hierarchy to ensure all relevant settlements with a range of services and facilities have the ability to grow to ensure that the communities and the services provided remain viable and thrive. Please see our comments to Policies SH1 and H1 for further details on this matter. As per our comments in respect of the objectively assessed housing need for the Borough, it is considered that the Council should be seeking to achieve a minimum housing requirement of 492 dwellings per annum over the plan period and ensure the maintenance of a 5-year housing land supply.

To assist with delivery, this should be via a range of housing allocations, both strategic and non-strategic and whilst there are a range of sites listed as housing allocations in Draft Policy H2 it is not considered to fully comply with national policy. Paragraph 68 of the NPPF states that "small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly". Therefore, as part of the preparation of the Local Plan (and brownfield registers), at least 10% of the housing requirement should be on sites no larger than one hectare (unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved). When looking at Table 6.3 which sets out the housing allocations for the Plan period, out of the 18 sites listed, only 1 site is 1 hectare or under and that is a town centre redevelopment site. On this basis, to ensure that not just strategic sites are allocated to address the identified housing need, further consideration should be given to providing growth in the surrounding villages of Darlington on smaller sites to ensure that all communities have the opportunity to flourish and support existing and proposed services and facilities commensurate with the size of each settlement.

Sadberge is a sustainable village which should be supported by the provision of new housing. Sadberge has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 making it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside. Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number. It is therefore vital that some growth is supported in this village over the plan period (for both market and affordable homes) to ensure that the village remains viable with a community that supports and utilises the existing services and facilities.

Land west of Middleton Road, Sadberge Our client owns land to the south of the village. The site is circa 0.4 hectares in size and is west of Middleton Road, an adopted road which runs north – south from the village centre. The site does not flood and it is not protected in terms of heritage, ecology or landscape (albeit is adjacent to but not within the village Conservation Area). The site is considered to be suitable, available and achievable for residential development of circa 15 dwellings which would help address the housing need identified for the Borough (which is a target, not a cap / ceiling) whilst also ensuring that the allocations set out in the Local Plan comply with the guidance set out in the NPPF with regard to some allocations being identified on sites less than 1 hectare in size. Furthermore, at 15 dwellings, it is considered that such a yield would be appropriate for village growth in Sadberge where there is a need to support the existing facilities such as the pre-school, restaurants and bars. Please see Appendix A for a location plan of the site. An aerial image below for ease of reference (see attached document).

The site is adjacent to an existing commitment site (Site 078) and therefore would not lead to the development extending Sadberge past that which already has consent to the south of the village.

In short, Sadberge is a sustainable village with a range of services and facilities and its continued growth should be supported going forward through the Local Plan. Smaller housing allocations should be identified and allocations proposed to ensure that the Local Plan complies with the national policy and guidance by supporting the future development of small and medium sized development sites (NPPF paragraph 68). Finally, we support that the yield identified per housing allocation is for indicative purposes only and the final number of homes to be delivered on site will be determined by the planning application process as this provides the flexibility needed to ensure that each site is assessed on its own merits enabling it to be developed in an efficient and effective manner.

Proposed changes: To ensure that the Plan is 'Positively prepared', 'Justified', 'Effective' and 'Consistent with national policy' it is proposed that more smaller allocations are identified within Policy H2. This is to ensure that the Local Plan complies with paragraph 78 of the NPPF. Throughout our representations to the Proposed Submission Draft we consider that some growth should be supported in Sadberge as it is a sustainable settlement with a range of services and facilities in desperate need for more family homes. We therefore propose that our clients land, located west of Middleton Road (circa 0.4 hectares in size capable of accommodating approximately 15 new dwellings), is allocated for housing during the plan period to ensure that the Local Plan is planned positively and in accordance with national guidance. This will ensure that a mix of sites, in terms of size and location, which can meet both the quantitative and qualitative housing needs over the plan period, are identified in sustainable locations with good access to public transport, services, shops, employment locations and community facilities; (aligning the Policy H2 with the sustainability principles set out at paragraph 6.2.13 of the Draft Plan). As highlighted above, we have reservations and concerns over the current locational strategy, particularly in respect of the Rural Villages, and therefore, along with the proposed changes to be made to Policy H2, further consideration would need to be given to Policy SL1 too assist with allocating land in settlements such as Sadberge.

Question 4

Changes Sought

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Event Name Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)

Comment by Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)

Comment ID DBLPPS68

Response Date 10/09/20 10:54

Consultation Point Policy SH 1 Settlement Hierarchy (Strategic Policy)
([View](#))

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[DDBF - DBC Local Plan Proposed Submission Draft
Reps Sept 2020.pdf](#)

Question 1b

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Question 2

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- . Positively prepared
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Question 3a

Your Comments

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Policy SH1 is the strategic policy which describes the role of the different settlements in the Borough of Darlington and the hierarchy in which they sit. It describes three tiers within the hierarchy; Darlington Urban Area, Service Village and Rural Villages. Whilst we support the use of a settlement hierarchy being included within Policy SH1 of the Local Plan to help guide the location and scale of new development within the Borough, we do have some concerns over the restrictive nature to development proposed in some of the lower tiered settlements. Our client has interest in the village of Sadberge which is identified as a Rural Village in the Settlement Hierarchy. As it currently stands, with regard to Rural Villages, the policy wording in Policy SH1 states that “the character of the Rural Villages, including their relationship to and setting within the surrounding countryside, will be protected and where possible enhanced. Development in these villages will make efficient and sustainable use of existing buildings and infill opportunities. On the edges of Rural Villages, housing development will meet clearly identified local needs, recognising that an element of open market housing may be required to deliver essential affordable units”. Paragraph 4.0.12 of the Draft Plan then goes on to state that Rural Villages are generally of a very small scale and offer limited, and in some cases, no service provision. However, this is not case for Sadberge. Sadberge has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 which makes it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside. It is therefore considered that settlements such as Sadberge, which has a range of facilities and services, should have the ability to grow commensurate with the size of the settlement so that development will meet local needs (both market and affordable housing) and facilitate the economic diversification of the rural area. We propose that, whilst a settlement hierarchy is useful to help guide development to sustainable locations, the settlements listed in the hierarchy need reconsidering or perhaps an additional tier should be included to help differentiate between the rural villages which have services and facilities against those that do not. We do not consider it appropriate to list Sadberge alongside Brafferton or Merrybent, for example, in respect of its sustainability. In respect of Brafferton, the Foresters Arms, a public house, is not located within the village centre and requires a 10 minute walk along a country lane with no footpaths to get there from the village centre. Furthermore, Merrybent does not have any facilities other than bus services running through it. As such, these villages are not considered comparable when assessing them in sustainability terms in respect of future development. As set out above, Sadberge has a range of serves and facilities as well as being in easy access to the A66 linking it to Darlington Town Centre and the rest of Teesside.

It is therefore proposed that it may be beneficial to add an additional tier to the settlement hierarchy separating the Rural Villages; those with a range of services and facilities and those that do not. This would be helpful in ensuring that appropriate development is located to appropriate locations. As set out in the Sadberge Website (<https://www.sadberge.org.uk/about.htm>), “Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number”. As such, new homes are required to ensure that the existing services and facilities in the village remain and thrive in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF which advises that “housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities” (our emphasis). Paragraph 78 goes on to state that “Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.” (our emphasis) Whilst we support that new housing development on the edge of Rural Villages (outside the defined Development Limits) will be supported to meet local and other functional needs, i.e. through the delivery of ‘exception(s) sites’ (affordable housing schemes), allowing for an element of open market housing where this helps the viability and deliverability of an exception(s) site as a whole, it is not considered that this is flexible enough. Our client considers that the wording of policy SH1 should be stronger to recognise the importance of growth in the rural settlements, particularly Sadberge, and to put in place a requirement for the local authority to maintain the vitality and services of these villages specifically. Without these amendments the policy is too ambiguous about the role of the local plan in maintaining the status of these villages within the settlement hierarchy. Furthermore, the ‘Proposed Submission Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (August 2020) confirms that a shortfall of housing and affordable housing provision in rural areas is a key sustainability issue (Table 3.3). Housing allocations in the Rural Villages will help address this. Finally, the proposed development limits should be extended to go around the housing commitments. This appears to be the case of several settlements (such as Heighington, Low

Coniscliffe and Neasham) but not for all settlement. For example, at Sadberge, there is a housing commitment to the south of the village (Site 078) but this housing commitment is not included within the development limits for the settlement. As such, it is considered that the development limits for Sadberge should be amended to rectify this. Please see our comments to Policy H3 for further detail on this matter. Proposed changes: To ensure that the Plan is 'Positively prepared', 'Justified', 'Effective' and 'Consistent with national policy' it is proposed that the settlements identified in the Rural Villages tier is reviewed and that those with a range of services and facilities should be supported to accommodate some future development commensurate with the size of the settlement which would support both market and affordable homes to ensure that the services remain in viable supporting the community now and in the future (not just through rural exception sites).

Sadberge should be allowed to grow to ensure that the number of young families in the village will increase and that the existing services and facility in the village remain and thrive in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF. We propose that our clients land should be allocated for residential development which would bring circa 15 new dwellings to the south of the village providing both market and affordable units to address the identified housing needs as set out in Policy H1. Please see below our comments to Policy H1 as a separate matter.

Question 4

Changes Sought

Please Note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage. There is the opportunity to attach Word or PDF files before submitting your comment.

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Please see above and attached document.

Question 5

Attendance at Examination Hearings

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearings?

No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

Question 6

Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan?

Yes, I request to be notified

Comment

Agent	Jennifer Longstaff (1251247)
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Company / Organisation	Savills
Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Consultee	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)
Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Event Name	Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 (Regulation 19)
Comment by	Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (1251248)
Comment ID	DBLPPS710
Response Date	10/09/20 07:58
Consultation Point	Darlington Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 Proposed Submission Local Plan August 2020 (View)
Status	Processed
Submission Type	Email
Version	0.4

Question 2

Do you consider that this part of the Local Plan is unsound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Question 3a

Your Comments

Please give details of why you consider that this part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or unsound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate.

We write to you on behalf of our client, the Durham Diocesan Board of Finance, in response to the Darlington Borough Draft Local Plan: Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) consultation. Our client's focus is in respect of the village of Sadberge. Our comments therefore focus on this area and the associated policies. The main comments and suggested changes proposed as part of this consultation are therefore in respect of the following policies:

- Policy SH1 Settlement Hierarchy (Strategic Policy)

- Policy H 1 Housing Requirement (Strategic Policy)

- Policy H 2 Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy)
- Policy H 3 Development Limits (Strategic Policy)
- Monitoring Framework

In addition to making comments to the above policies of the Proposed Submission Draft, we also support the future allocation of the following site for residential development within Sadberge: • Land west of Middleton Road, Sadberge – circa 0.4 hectares with an estimated yield of 15 dwellings.

The Site is considered suitable, available, achievable and deliverable for future residential development. Please see Appendix A for a Location Plan of the Site. The draft Local Plan will need to be found sound in accordance with national planning policy and guidance. As such, and where appropriate, reference has also been made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as currently published. The NPPF, at paragraph 36, sets out the ‘tests of soundness’ for a Local Plan stating that plans should be: • Positively prepared - “provides a strategy which will, as a minimum, meet as much as possible of the area’s objectively assessed needs (particularly for housing, using a clear and justified method to identify needs) [...]”

- Justified - “an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence”
- Effective - “deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters”
- Consistent with national policy – “enables the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this framework” These representations respond to, and address specific elements of the draft Local Plan, along with making recommendations and suggested amendments.

We therefore suggest that several changes should be made to the aforementioned listed draft policies and strategies above and propose that our clients land is allocated for residential development during the Plan period prior to the adoption of the Local Plan up to 2036. We trust that the comments provided are instructive in drafting the next iteration of the Local Plan however, should any clarifications be required, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Question 4

Changes Sought

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Changes proposed set out in detailed representations.

Question 5

Attendance at Examination Hearings

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearings? No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

Question 6

Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan?

Yes, I request to be notified



<i>Office Use Only</i>
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Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016-2036

Representation Form

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Part A: Your Details

1. Your Contact Details	2. Agent Details (if applicable)
Title: <input type="text"/>	Title: <input type="text" value="Mrs"/>
Name: <input type="text" value="Savills obo DDBF"/>	Name: <input type="text" value="Jennifer Longstaff"/>
Organisation/ Group: <input type="text" value="Durham Diocesan Board"/>	Organisation/ Group: <input type="text" value="Savills (UK) Ltd"/>
Address: <input type="text" value="C/o Agent"/>	Address: <input type="text"/>
Post Code: <input type="text"/>	Post Code: <input type="text"/>
Telephone number: <input type="text"/>	Telephone: <input type="text"/>
Email address: <input type="text"/>	Email address: <input type="text"/>
If you have supplied an e-mail address, are you happy for it to be the main way that the Council contacts you about future consultations on planning policy documents?	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please return the completed form by 17 September 2020 to: Planning Policy Team
Darlington Borough Council
Town Hall
Darlington DL1 5QT

Or Email : planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

If you are replying on behalf of a group, how many people does it represent?

Part B: Your Representation – Please use a separate Part B for each representation

1: To which part of the Local Plan does your representation relate? (Please state the policy reference, paragraph number, figure number or Policies Map reference)

Policy	<input type="text" value="Monitoring Framework"/>	Paragraph	<input type="text"/>	Figure/ Table	<input type="text"/>	Policies Map	<input type="text"/>
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2: Do you consider that the Local Plan is:

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| a. Legally compliant | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sound | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you have entered 'no' to Question 2 (b), please continue to Question 3. In all other circumstances, please go to Question 4.

3: Do you consider this part of the Local Plan is not sound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Positively prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with national policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. Your Comments

Please give details of why you consider that part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or not sound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. If you wish to support any of these aspects, please also use this box to set out your comments.

Please see attached document.

(Please continue on a separate sheet or expand this box if necessary)

5: Changes Sought

Please set out what change(s) to the Local Plan you consider necessary to make it legally compliant or sound. You will need to say why this change will make the Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording for any policy or text.

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Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearings

No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

7: If you wish to participate at the examination hearings, please outline why you consider it to be necessary?

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Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan?

No, I do not request to be notified

Yes, I request to be notified

Part C: Declaration

How we will use your personal information

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Please sign and date this form. Forms signed electronically will be accepted.

Declaration:

By completing and signing this form I agree to my name, organisation and representations being made available for public inspection on the internet.

Signature:

Savills obo DDBF

Date:

10.09.2020

We would also like to retain your contact details on our database to keep you informed of future Local Plan consultations and updates.

Yes, please add me to your database

No, I do not wish to be added to your database



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Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016-2036

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1: To which part of the Local Plan does your representation relate? (Please state the policy reference, paragraph number, figure number or Policies Map reference)

Policy	<input type="text" value="H 1"/>	Paragraph	<input type="text"/>	Figure/ Table	<input type="text"/>	Policies Map	<input type="text"/>
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2: Do you consider that the Local Plan is:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. Legally compliant | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sound | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

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Positively prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with national policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. Your Comments

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Yes, I request to be notified

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10.09.2020

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Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016-2036

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Policy Paragraph Figure/
Table Policies Map

2: Do you consider that the Local Plan is:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. Legally compliant | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sound | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you have entered 'no' to Question 2 (b), please continue to Question 3. In all other circumstances, please go to Question 4.

3: Do you consider this part of the Local Plan is not sound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Positively prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with national policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. Your Comments

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Signature:

Savills obo DDBF

Date:

10.09.2020

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1: To which part of the Local Plan does your representation relate? (Please state the policy reference, paragraph number, figure number or Policies Map reference)

Policy	<input type="text" value="H 2"/>	Paragraph	<input type="text"/>	Figure/ Table	<input type="text"/>	Policies Map	<input type="text"/>
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2: Do you consider that the Local Plan is:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. Legally compliant | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sound | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you have entered 'no' to Question 2 (b), please continue to Question 3. In all other circumstances, please go to Question 4.

3: Do you consider this part of the Local Plan is not sound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Positively prepared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with national policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. Your Comments

Please give details of why you consider that part of the Local Plan is not legally compliant or not sound or fails to comply with the Duty to Cooperate. If you wish to support any of these aspects, please also use this box to set out your comments.

Please see attached document.

(Please continue on a separate sheet or expand this box if necessary)

5: Changes Sought

Please set out what change(s) to the Local Plan you consider necessary to make it legally compliant or sound. You will need to say why this change will make the Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording for any policy or text.

Please see attached document.

(Please continue on a separate sheet or expand this box if necessary)

Please Note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

6: Attendance at Examination Hearings

If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearings?

Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearings

No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearings

7: If you wish to participate at the examination hearings, please outline why you consider it to be necessary?

Please note the inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the examination hearings.

Do you request to be notified that the Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 22(3) of the regulations and to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan?

No, I do not request to be notified

Yes, I request to be notified

Part C: Declaration

How we will use your personal information

The personal information you provide on this form will be processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations 2018. The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of the preparation of the Local Plan as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), and may be used by the Council to contact you if necessary regarding your submission. Your name, organisation and comments will be made available for public inspection when displaying and reporting the outcome of the statutory consultation stage, and cannot be treated as confidential. You will not be asked for any unnecessary information, and in order to protect personal data, we will not publish signatures, telephone numbers, addresses or email addresses on the internet.

Your details will be kept until the Local Plan is adopted plus a further five years to evidence that a fair and transparent process has been followed. Processing is kept to minimum and data will only be processed in accordance with the law. When other agencies are involved in the preparation of the Local Plan, we may need to share details about you to enable us to work together for your benefit. Information shared on this basis will be reused for any other purpose. We will take all reasonable precautions to protect your personal data from accidental or deliberate loss or unauthorised disclosure.

Please sign and date this form. Forms signed electronically will be accepted.

Declaration:

By completing and signing this form I agree to my name, organisation and representations being made available for public inspection on the internet.

Signature:

Savills obo DDBF

Date:

10.09.2020

We would also like to retain your contact details on our database to keep you informed of future Local Plan consultations and updates.

Yes, please add me to your database

No, I do not wish to be added to your database



<i>Office Use Only</i>
Ref No:
Date Received:
Date Acknowledged:

Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016-2036

Representation Form

Thank you for your interest in planning in Darlington. Please complete the form in black ink or type. The main method for representation responses to be submitted is via our online consultation portal darlington.objective.co.uk/portal. We would recommend that if you have a lot to say, or would like to comment on multiple areas of the plan, you reply this way. If you need help filling in this form please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01325 406724.

All comments received will be acknowledged and your feedback will help inform the Darlington Borough Local Plan Document. You can read the Proposed Submission Local Plan, and find other related material and details about the consultation on the Council's website www.darlington.gov.uk/localplan or at the Town Hall Customer Service Centre (by appointment).

Part A: Your Details

1. Your Contact Details	2. Agent Details (if applicable)
Title: [Redacted]	Title: Mrs [Redacted]
Name: Savills obo DDBF	Name: Jennifer Longstaff
Organisation/ Group: Durham Diocesan Board	Organisation/ Group: Savills (UK) Ltd
Address: C/o Agent [Redacted]	Address: [Redacted]
Post Code: [Redacted]	Post Code: [Redacted]
Telephone number: [Redacted]	Telephone: [Redacted]
Email address: [Redacted]	Email address: [Redacted]
If you have supplied an e-mail address, are you happy for it to be the main way that the Council contacts you about future consultations on planning policy documents?	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please return the completed form by 17 September 2020 to: Planning Policy Team
Darlington Borough Council
Town Hall
Darlington DL1 5QT

Or Email : planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

If you are replying on behalf of a group, how many people does it represent?

Part B: Your Representation – Please use a separate Part B for each representation

1: To which part of the Local Plan does your representation relate? (Please state the policy reference, paragraph number, figure number or Policies Map reference)

Policy	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">SH 1</div>	Paragraph	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 25px;"></div>	Figure/ Table	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 25px;"></div>	Policies Map	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 25px;"></div>
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2: Do you consider that the Local Plan is:

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| a. Legally compliant | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sound | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you have entered 'no' to Question 2 (b), please continue to Question 3. In all other circumstances, please go to Question 4.

3: Do you consider this part of the Local Plan is not sound because it is not: (tick all that apply)

Positively prepared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Justified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with national policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Please see attached document.

(Please continue on a separate sheet or expand this box if necessary)

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Please see attached document.

(Please continue on a separate sheet or expand this box if necessary)

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Please sign and date this form. Forms signed electronically will be accepted.

Declaration:

By completing and signing this form I agree to my name, organisation and representations being made available for public inspection on the internet.

Signature:

Savills obo DDBF

Date:

10.09.2020

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Yes, please add me to your database

No, I do not wish to be added to your database

DARLINGTON BOROUGH DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19)
Consultation

Darlington Borough Draft Local Plan

Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation



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Introduction

We write to you on behalf of our client, the Durham Diocesan Board of Finance, in response to the Darlington Borough Draft Local Plan: Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) consultation.

Our client's focus is in respect of the village of Sadberge. Our comments therefore focus on this area and the associated policies. The main comments and suggested changes proposed as part of this consultation are therefore in respect of the following policies:

- Policy SH1 Settlement Hierarchy (Strategic Policy)
- Policy H 1 Housing Requirement (Strategic Policy)
- Policy H 2 Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy)
- Policy H 3 Development Limits (Strategic Policy)
- Monitoring Framework

In addition to making comments to the above policies of the Proposed Submission Draft, we also support the future allocation of the following site for residential development within Sadberge:

- Land west of Middleton Road, Sadberge – circa 0.4 hectares with an estimated yield of 15 dwellings.

The Site is considered suitable, available, achievable and deliverable for future residential development. Please see Appendix A for a Location Plan of the Site.

The draft Local Plan will need to be found sound in accordance with national planning policy and guidance. As such, and where appropriate, reference has also been made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as currently published.

The NPPF, at paragraph 36, sets out the 'tests of soundness' for a Local Plan stating that plans should be:

- Positively prepared - *"provides a strategy which will, as a minimum, meet as much as possible of the area's objectively assessed needs (particularly for housing, using a clear and justified method to identify needs) [...]"*
- Justified - *"an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence"*
- Effective - *"deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters"*
- Consistent with national policy – *"enables the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this framework"*

These representations respond to, and address specific elements of the draft Local Plan, along with making recommendations and suggested amendments.

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We therefore suggest that several changes should be made to the aforementioned listed draft policies and strategies above and propose that our clients land is allocated for residential development during the Plan period prior to the adoption of the Local Plan up to 2036.

We trust that the comments provided are instructive in drafting the next iteration of the Local Plan however, should any clarifications be required, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Policy SH1 Settlement Hierarchy (Strategic Policy)

Policy SH1 is the strategic policy which describes the role of the different settlements in the Borough of Darlington and the hierarchy in which they sit. It describes three tiers within the hierarchy; Darlington Urban Area, Service Village and Rural Villages.

Whilst we support the use of a settlement hierarchy being included within Policy SH1 of the Local Plan to help guide the location and scale of new development within the Borough, we do have some concerns over the restrictive nature to development proposed in some of the lower tiered settlements.

Our client has interest in the village of Sadberge which is identified as a Rural Village in the Settlement Hierarchy. As it currently stands, with regard to Rural Villages, the policy wording in Policy SH1 states that *“the character of the Rural Villages, including their relationship to and setting within the surrounding countryside, will be protected and where possible enhanced. Development in these villages will make efficient and sustainable use of existing buildings and infill opportunities. On the edges of Rural Villages, housing development will meet clearly identified local needs, recognising that an element of open market housing may be required to deliver essential affordable units”*.

Paragraph 4.0.12 of the Draft Plan then goes on to state that Rural Villages are generally of a very small scale and offer limited, and in some cases, no service provision. However, this is not case for Sadberge. Sadberge has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 which makes it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside.

It is therefore considered that settlements such as Sadberge, which has a range of facilities and services, should have the ability to grow commensurate with the size of the settlement so that development will meet local needs (both market and affordable housing) and facilitate the economic diversification of the rural area.

We propose that, whilst a settlement hierarchy is useful to help guide development to sustainable locations, the settlements listed in the hierarchy need reconsidering or perhaps an additional tier should be included to help differentiate between the rural villages which have services and facilities against those that do not.

We do not consider it appropriate to list Sadberge alongside Brafferton or Merrybent, for example, in respect of its sustainability. In respect of Brafferton, the Foresters Arms, a public house, is not located within the village centre and requires a 10 minute walk along a country lane with no footpaths to get there from the village centre. Furthermore, Merrybent does not have any facilities other than bus services running through it. As such, these villages are not considered comparable when assessing them in sustainability terms in respect of future development. As set out above, Sadberge has a range of serves and facilities as well as being in easy access to the A66 linking it to Darlington Town Centre and the rest of Teesside.

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It is therefore proposed that it may be beneficial to add an additional tier to the settlement hierarchy separating the Rural Villages; those with a range of services and facilities and those that do not. This would be helpful in ensuring that appropriate development is located to appropriate locations.

As set out in the Sadberge Website (<https://www.sadberge.org.uk/about.htm>), “Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number”. As such, new homes are required to ensure that the existing services and facilities in the village remain and thrive in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF which advises that “housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities” (our emphasis). Paragraph 78 goes on to state that “Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.” (our emphasis)

Whilst we support that new housing development on the edge of Rural Villages (outside the defined Development Limits) will be supported to meet local and other functional needs, i.e. through the delivery of ‘exception(s) sites’ (affordable housing schemes), allowing for an element of open market housing where this helps the viability and deliverability of an exception(s) site as a whole, it is not considered that this is flexible enough. Our client considers that the wording of policy SH1 should be stronger to recognise the importance of growth in the rural settlements, particularly Sadberge, and to put in place a requirement for the local authority to maintain the vitality and services of these villages specifically. Without these amendments the policy is too ambiguous about the role of the local plan in maintaining the status of these villages within the settlement hierarchy.

Furthermore, the ‘Proposed Submission Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (August 2020) confirms that a shortfall of housing and affordable housing provision in rural areas is a key sustainability issue (Table 3.3). Housing allocations in the Rural Villages will help address this.

Finally, the proposed development limits should be extended to go around the housing commitments. This appears to be the case of several settlements (such as Heighington, Low Coniscliffe and Neasham) but not for all settlement. For example, at Sadberge, there is a housing commitment to the south of the village (Site 078) but this housing commitment is not included within the development limits for the settlement. As such, it is considered that the development limits for Sadberge should be amended to rectify this. Please see our comments to Policy H3 for further detail on this matter.

Proposed changes:

To ensure that the Plan is ‘Positively prepared’, ‘Justified’, ‘Effective’ and ‘Consistent with national policy’ it is proposed that the settlements identified in the Rural Villages tier is reviewed and that those with a range of services and facilities should be supported to accommodate some future development commensurate with the size of the settlement which would support both market and affordable homes to ensure that the services remain in viable supporting the community now and in the future (not just through rural exception sites).

Sadberge should be allowed to grow to ensure that the number of young families in the village will increase and that the existing services and facilities in the village remain and thrive in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF.

We propose that our clients land should be allocated for residential development which would bring circa 15 new dwellings to the south of the village providing both market and affordable units to address the identified housing needs as set out in Policy H1. Please see below our comments to Policy H1 as a separate matter.

Policy H 1 Housing Requirement (Strategic Policy)

We have five comments to make in respect of the policy text and these are set out below.

1. Minimum figure,
2. OAHN,
3. Remove reference to two housing requirement figures,
4. Five Year Housing Land Supply, and
5. Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements.

Firstly, it is key that there is flexibility built into the Plan with regard to housing numbers and future development opportunities. This is to ensure that housing need and demand is met throughout the Plan period. It is therefore vital that the proposed housing figure in the Local Plan is a minimum figure, rather than viewed as a cap and a restriction to new development and we welcome this approach by the Council.

Secondly, we note that the housing requirement is more than that set out in the Standard Methodology. We fully support this approach and consider this element of the policy **to be sound**. As required by the NPPF, the emerging Local Plan must define the overall level of growth over the Plan period (up to 2036), based on the requirement to meet the Borough's objectively assessed needs (OAN). As per paragraph 60 of the NPPF 2019, "*To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.*". The Standard Method provides a minimum starting point, and there may be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether the actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates.

The SHMA Update 2017 identifies an OAN of 492 dwellings each year. The SHMA is based on a market signals, job growth and the need for bedspaces in Class C2 dwellings. This approach **is justified** and in line with the requirements of paragraph 60 of the NPPF and corresponding Planning Practice Guidance (PPG - Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20190220) set out above. Furthermore, we support the Council's job target of 7,000 jobs (taken from the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan). It is considered that it is appropriate to plan for a higher figure than the standard method indicates as exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated in that the figure identified within the Standard Methodology does not take into account projected economic growth.

If the Council did not seek to meet the most appropriate level of development needed, the Borough would suffer significantly from out-migration, reduced / limited employment opportunities and have a detrimental impact on the existing supply of local services and facilities. This would go against the strategic Vision, Strategy and Objectives of the Plan and would therefore be unsound as the plan would not have been planned positively. We therefore support the approach proposed by the Council to meet 492 dwellings per annum due to the fact that the standard method could have implications for housing targets in some areas of the country (principally in the north of England), where affordability and economic growth strategies may not be supported by local authorities that plan for the minimum number of additional dwellings as indicated by the standard methodology. By only using the proposed methodology it could lead to the Borough not planning enough homes to support the economic growth strategy. **We therefore fully support the Councils approach to a higher base requirement and consider this element of the policy sound.**

Thirdly, Draft Policy H1 states that *'housing will be delivered to meet a minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036'*. It goes on to state the Council also has a *'Local Plan housing target of 492 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036'* and that *'the above approach has been taken to provide a housing requirement range rather than a single figure'* and that *'the housing target is not a restrictive maximum figure'*.

Whilst we fully agree that the housing target should not be a restrictive maximum figure, having the two figures set out in the Draft Plan could cause confusion. In accordance with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes (paragraph 59 of the NPPF), any figure prepared should be clearly written and unambiguous to ensure that paragraph 16 criterion d) of the NPPF is met. As such it is proposed that the Council refers to 492 dwellings per annum as a minimum requirement.

Fourthly, Policy H1 goes on to state that *'at any point in the Local Plan period where there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five-year land requirement, sustainable housing sites located beyond development limits, that would both make a positive contribution to the five-year supply of housing land and be well related to the development limits of the main urban area or service villages (as defined in policy SH 1) will be supported. Such proposals should comprise of sustainable development and be consistent with relevant national and Local Plan policies'*. Our client supports the recognition in Policy H1 that where there is no five year housing land supply, sustainable sites beyond the settlement limits will be supported. However, it is important that, as soon as there no longer a five-year housing land supply, the Council should consider any site subject to its own merits in a serious attempt to re-meet the development need and to make a contribution to the five-year supply. This should not just be restricted to the main urban area or service villages.

As per our comments to Draft Policy SH 1, we have concerns over the proposed settlements listed in the Settlement Hierarchy. It is considered that there are sustainable settlements listed within the Rural Villages that could accommodate some future growth which are currently neglected due to the spatial distribution proposed by Draft Policy SH1. Please see our comments to Draft Policy SH 1 for further details on this matter.

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Finally, we note that Draft Policy H1 sets out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. As part of this, it is proposed that there is a zero (0) housing requirement for the designated neighbourhood housing area of Sadberge.

The introduction of the Localism Act (2011) allows Parish Councils and community groups from the community, called Neighbourhood Forums, to formulate Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders, to guide and shape development in a particular area. From inception it is enshrined within the concept of Localism that these plans and orders must have regard to national policies and not override, but work underneath Local Strategic Policies, setting out policy on non-strategic matters. This is more recently set out at paragraph 13 of the NPPF.

Housing need, for example is a key strategic policy along with settlement hierarchy and housing supply. We are happy that the Draft Darlington Borough Local Plan is sufficiently clear on this point.

However, paragraph 30 of the NPPF states: *“Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.”* The preparation of the Sadberge Neighbourhood Plan was put on hold in 2015 where it was decided not to proceed any further with the document. Therefore, development in terms of the designated neighbourhood areas is to be established by the Local Plan. It is considered that the housing need for this designated neighbourhood areas is not being addressed through the proposed housing allocations or spatial distribution.

Sadberge is a settlement which has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 making it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside. Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number. It is therefore vital that some growth is supported in this village over the plan period (for both market and affordable homes) to ensure that the village remains viable, thrives and supports the community as a whole. We therefore disagree with paragraph 6.2.10 of the Draft Plan and propose that amendments are made as Sadberge is not remote, does have facilities and services, is sustainable and should therefore have housing allocations proposed in this area to ensure it remains a thriving community. Please see our comments to Draft Policy H2 setting out a proposed housing allocation for Sadberge to help meet the identified housing requirements whilst ensuring that the village remains sustainable for existing and future residents.

As made clear by paragraph 78 of the NPPF, a settlement is not an island and that growth in one settlement can ensure the future sustainability of a wider rural area. Sadberge is sustainably located with a range of services and facilities with access to both Darlington Town Centre and Teesside beyond and therefore it is critical that this role is not hindered by the Local Plan and that sufficient housing allocations are identified to meet the needs of these important smaller settlements and rural areas. As such, we recommend that the policy is amended to remove the zero (0) housing requirement for the designated neighbourhood housing area as this does not promote positive planning.

Proposed changes:

Darlington Borough Draft Local Plan

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We support the OAHN for the Borough and consider this element of the plan to be sound, however, there are some elements which we do have some concerns over in respect of the smaller settlements in the Borough.

We proposed that to make Policy H1 sound in its entirety, it should be amended to state that:

“At any point in the Local Plan period where there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five year land requirement, sustainable housing sites located beyond development limits, that would make both a positive contribution to the five year supply of housing land and be well related to the development limits of the settlements ~~main urban area or service villages (as defined in Policy SH 1)~~ will be supported.” Some of the identified Rural Villages are capable of accommodating some future growth and this should not be hindered by the policy wording of Policy H1.

Finally, it is considered that as Sadberge Parish Council is no longer progressing a Neighbourhood Plan, reference to the Sadberge Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements should be removed from the policy to allow flexibility for growing the settlement in a commensurate and sustainable manner during the plan period.

Table 6.1 Neighbourhood Area Housing Requirements

Low Coniscliffe & Merrybent	1520
Blackwell	0
Hurworth	625
Middleton St George	260
Sadberge	0

It is the responsibility of the Local Plan to address the housing need of the Borough and whilst limiting the requirements for Sadberge to 0 it is not considered that the Plan has been produced in a positive manner or in accordance with national policy or guidance.

Policy H 2 Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy)

It is important that the housing allocations contained within the Draft Plan are deliverable over the plan period and planned to an appropriate strategy. In accordance with Spatial Policy SH1 ‘Settlement Hierarchy’, sustainable development should be considered acceptable in a range of market areas.

As per our comments to Draft Policy SH1, we propose that further flexibility is built into the settlement hierarchy to ensure all relevant settlements with a range of services and facilities have the ability to grow to ensure that the communities and the services provided remain viable and thrive. Please see our comments to Policies SH1 and H1 for further details on this matter.

As per our comments in respect of the objectively assessed housing need for the Borough, it is considered that the Council should be seeking to achieve a minimum housing requirement of 492 dwellings per annum over the plan period and ensure the maintenance of a 5-year housing land supply.

To assist with delivery, this should be via a range of housing allocations, both strategic and non-strategic and whilst there are a range of sites listed as housing allocations in Draft Policy H2 it is not considered to fully comply with national policy.

Paragraph 68 of the NPPF states that “*small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly*”. Therefore, as part of the preparation of the Local Plan (and brownfield registers), at least 10% of the housing requirement should be on sites no larger than one hectare (unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved). When looking at Table 6.3 which sets out the housing allocations for the Plan period, out of the 18 sites listed, only 1 site is 1 hectare or under and that is a town centre redevelopment site.

On this basis, to ensure that not just strategic sites are allocated to address the identified housing need, further consideration should be given to providing growth in the surrounding villages of Darlington on smaller sites to ensure that all communities have the opportunity to flourish and support existing and proposed services and facilities commensurate with the size of each settlement.

Sadberge is a sustainable village which should be supported by the provision of new housing. Sadberge has a range of services and facilities which include shops, places of worship, public houses, restaurants, a village hall (which includes a pre-school) and bus services. It also has easy access to the A66 making it popular with people working in Darlington or Teesside. Sadberge is also home to a significant number of elderly people, many of whom have lived in the village for considerable lengths of time. The number of young families in the village has declined to a low number. It is therefore vital that some growth is supported in this village over the plan period (for both market and affordable homes) to ensure that the village remains viable with a community that supports and utilises the existing services and facilities.

Land west of Middleton Road, Sadberge

Our client owns land to the south of the village. The site is circa 0.4 hectares in size and is west of Middleton Road, an adopted road which runs north – south from the village centre. The site does not flood and it is not protected in terms of heritage, ecology or landscape (albeit is adjacent to but not within the village Conservation Area).

The site is considered to be suitable, available and achievable for residential development of circa 15 dwellings which would help address the housing need identified for the Borough (which is a target, not a cap / ceiling) whilst also ensuring that the allocations set out in the Local Plan comply with the guidance set out in the NPPF with regard to some allocations being identified on sites less than 1 hectare in size.

Furthermore, at 15 dwellings, it is considered that such a yield would be appropriate for village growth in Sadberge where there is a need to support the existing facilities such as the pre-school, restaurants and bars. Please see Appendix A for a location plan of the site. An aerial image below for ease of reference.



Figure 1 Aerial image of site – source: google.com/maps

The site is adjacent to an existing commitment site (Site 078) and therefore would not lead to the development extending Sadberge past that which already has consent to the south of the village.

In short, Sadberge is a sustainable village with a range of services and facilities and its continued growth should be supported going forward through the Local Plan. Smaller housing allocations should be identified and allocations proposed to ensure that the Local Plan complies with the national policy and guidance by supporting the future development of small and medium sized development sites (NPPF paragraph 68).

Finally, we support that the yield identified per housing allocation is for indicative purposes only and the final number of homes to be delivered on site will be determined by the planning application process as this provides the flexibility needed to ensure that each site is assessed on its own merits enabling it to be developed in an efficient and effective manner.

Proposed changes:

To ensure that the Plan is 'Positively prepared', 'Justified', 'Effective' and 'Consistent with national policy' it is proposed that more smaller allocations are identified within Policy H2. This is to ensure that the Local Plan complies with paragraph 78 of the NPPF.

Throughout our representations to the Proposed Submission Draft we consider that some growth should be supported in Sadberge as it is a sustainable settlement with a range of services and facilities in desperate need for

more family homes. We therefore propose that our clients land, located west of Middleton Road (circa 0.4 hectares in size capable of accommodating approximately 15 new dwellings), is allocated for housing during the plan period to ensure that the Local Plan is planned positively and in accordance with national guidance. This will ensure that a mix of sites, in terms of size and location, which can meet both the quantitative and qualitative housing needs over the plan period, are identified in sustainable locations with good access to public transport, services, shops, employment locations and community facilities; (aligning the Policy H2 with the sustainability principles set out at paragraph 6.2.13 of the Draft Plan).

As highlighted above, we have reservations and concerns over the current locational strategy, particularly in respect of the Rural Villages, and therefore, along with the proposed changes to be made to Policy H2, further consideration would need to be given to Policy SL1 too assist with allocating land in settlements such as Sadberge.

Policy H 3 Development Limits (Strategic Policy)

We support Draft Policy H3 in principle, however, development limits should be extended to go around the existing housing commitments. Whilst this appears to be the case for several settlements (such as Heighington, Low Coniscliffe and Neasham), it is not the case for all. At Sadberge, there is a housing commitment to the south of the village (Site 078) but this housing commitment is not included within the revised development limits for the settlement. The development limits for Sadberge should be amended to rectify this.

Furthermore, whilst we note in the policy justification text that development limits have been drawn to include areas identified for future planned growth of housing and employment adjoining the main urban area and service villages, we consider that a further housing allocation should be identified in Sadberge and therefore, if our clients land is allocated, then this site should also be included within the final development limits for the village.

Monitoring Framework

It is essential that appropriate measures are in place to monitor the delivery of housing sites to ensure that there is not a shortfall at any point during the plan period. We do not consider that the measures outlined within paragraphs 11.0.1 to 11.0.4 and Table 11.1 provide an appropriate arrangement to ensure proper monitoring and corrective action is taken should it become apparent that a shortfall in development, especially housing provision, is occurring.

There are no specific timeframes or triggers within the Draft Local Plan for undertaking or requirement for completion of a review. Paragraph 11.0.2 of the monitoring text on page 128 only states that the Council need to determine if targets are being met and determine whether policies remain relevant. It is considered that the monitoring framework could be improved by incorporating trigger points specifying when action will be taken with regard to meeting the development needs of the Borough. For example, a lack of a 5 year housing land supply should be a trigger for a Review and highlighted as such in the document.

Darlington Borough Draft Local Plan

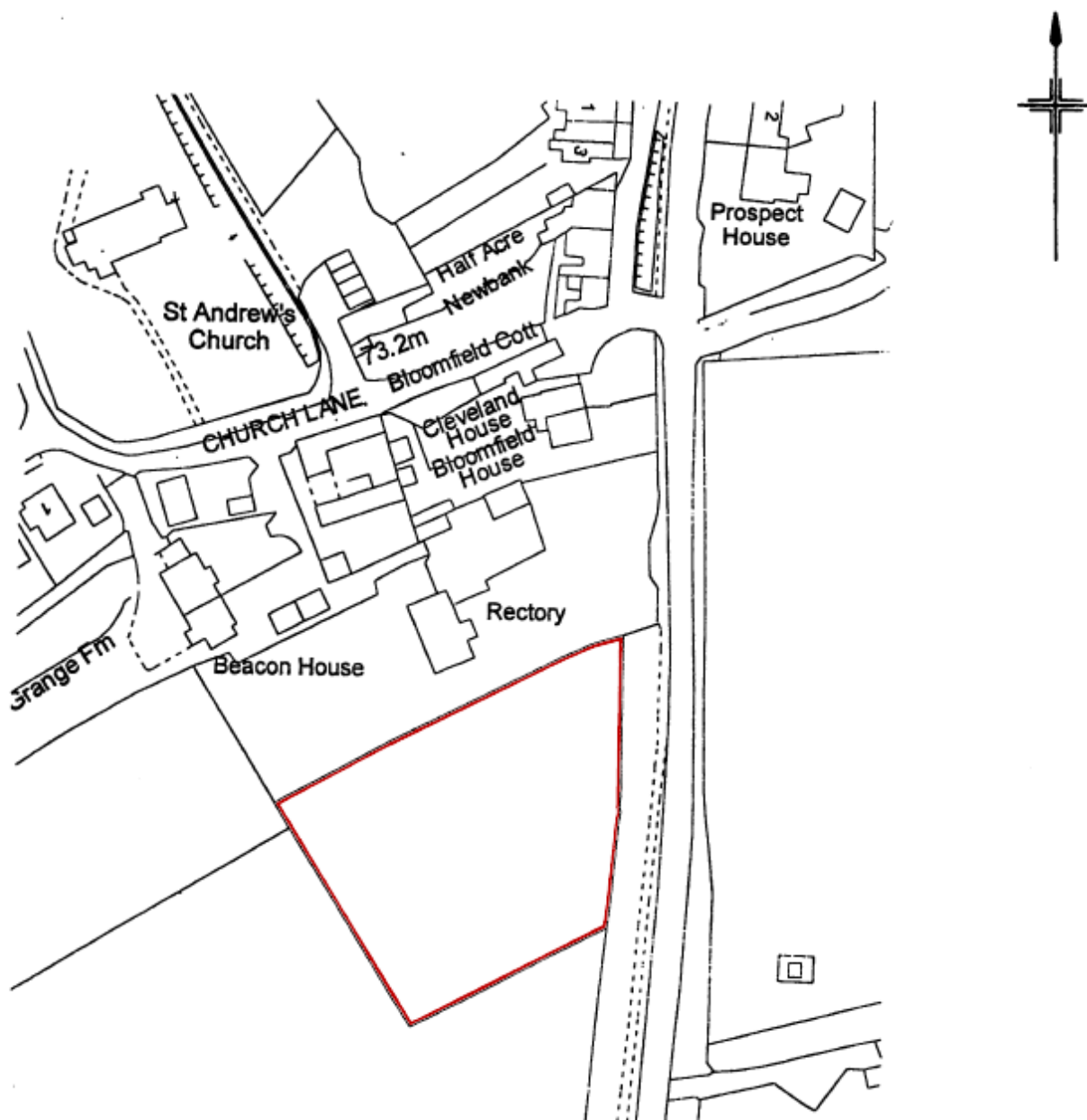
Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation



Without identifying triggers for a review or necessary policy updates, the Council runs a real risk of under delivering if they do not take action if a short fall is occurring.

As such, the text within the 'Monitoring Framework' section of the Draft Local Plan needs amending to comply with paragraph 33 of the NPPF. Reviews at least every five years are a legal requirement for all local plans (Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) and this should be embedded in to policy.

Appendix A – Land West of Middleton Road, Sadberge



Not to scale.