

written statement for Matter 2 subjects**Wednesday 26 May am****M2. Amount of development needed in the Borough****Economic growth and employment land requirements**

The Plan aims to facilitate sustainable economic growth of 7,000 new jobs. The Council's response to PQ45 advises that this aim is "based on looking at specific evidence provided by various established organisations and econometric modelling". The Council's Housing Topic Paper provides clarification, advising that the allowance for 7,000 additional jobs between 2016 and 2036 is based on projecting forward the number of jobs created in the Borough between 2005 and 2015. This was considered aspirational but deliverable, in contrast to basing the Plan on Oxford Economics projections which indicated a decline in the number of jobs in the Borough. Further information is available in the Darlington Future Employment Needs Report (September 2017). This indicates projected job growth or decline between 2016 and 2036 by different sector, and sets out the potential requirements in terms of net additional floorspace (sqm). The Council's response to PQ45 states that it is very difficult to relate jobs to land take as different sectors are land intensive rather than jobs intensive, such as logistics. Table 7.1 in the Plan identifies a total of around 226 hectares (gross) / 158 hectares (net) of land for employment developments on existing and allocated sites between 2016 and 2036 in accordance with policies E1 and E2. The Council's Employment Land Review 2017 indicates that a total of around 55 hectares of employment land was developed between 2009 and 2019 (average 5.5 hectares per year). Around 80% was for storage and distribution uses (B8), and around 15% for industrial uses (B2)30.

Q2.1. Is the aim to facilitate economic growth of 7,000 net additional jobs in the Borough between 2016 and 2036 justified and positively prepared?

Can anyone demonstrate the profile of jobs lost as well and gained over the last 5 years and are the new jobs suggested aspirational or promised. The latest information from Tees Valley Major is only suggestion and aspirational number of 20000 across the entire Tees Valley Area, therefore suggesting Darlington is to provide 35%.

The projected jobs include approx. 1000 construction workers to presumably build the homes suggested in the plan along with the economic development, these are not in my opinion permanent jobs and are likely to be 50% from outside of the Borough anyway, just increasing traffic congestion.

Household growth and housing requirements (policy H1)

The Council's response to PQ19 advises that the Borough's local housing need calculated in December 2020 using the standard method set out in national planning guidance was 162 net additional dwellings per year. National guidance advises that whilst the standard method provides a minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed, a recently-produced strategic housing market assessment may show significantly greater need. Where an authority can show that an alternative approach identifies a need higher than the standard method, and that it adequately reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals, the approach can be considered sound as it will have exceeded the minimum starting point³¹. Policy H1 refers to a minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per annum, and also a target of 492 net additional dwellings per annum between 2016 and 2036. Policy H1 goes on to state that the housing requirement is expressed as a range, and that the target of 492 is not intended to be a restrictive maximum. The Council's Housing Topic Paper advises that the minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per year is based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017³² which adjusted the official 2014-based household projections upwards to take account of long term migration trends; concealed and

homeless households; second homes and vacancies; and institutional population change. The target of 492 net additional homes per year allows for increased net immigration to ensure that the working age population would be sufficient to meet demand for 7,000 net additional jobs in the Borough (assuming that commuting patterns, unemployment and economic activity rates remain unchanged).

Q2.3. Are (a) the minimum requirement of 422 net additional dwellings per year and (b) the target of 492 net additional dwellings per year between 2016 and 2036 justified, positively prepared and consistent with national policy?

Q2.4. Is expressing the housing requirement as a range clear and unambiguous, and does the plan clearly establish a housing requirement figure for the Borough for the Plan period as required by national policy?

I cannot see the clarity in the methodology of the net jobs or justification which looks to have been simply randomly picked from DCC and Tees Valleys figures and in my view incorrectly proportioned to Darlington. The numbers discussed look to have been cherry picked from the high end of all the models reviewed and do not follow the National Planning guidance as well as being based on 5 year old data, with a lack of transparency .

EG. Neither 422 or 492 per year equate to the 10000 new homes up to 2035 and using even the higher 422 figure this will be close to the current planning already granted in the borough and not yet built.