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### **Written statements in response to the Inspectors questions:**

Q4.5. Is the proposal in policy H10 for the development of up to 4,500 dwellings; a neighbourhood centre; two primary schools, a secondary school, and other community facilities; roads and other transport infrastructure; and a network of green and blue infrastructure on 487 hectares at Skertingham justified? In particular:

- a) Would the development be suitably located in the context of policy SH1?
- b) Is there a reasonable prospect that the site will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged?
- c) Subject to the modifications proposed by the Council, would the requirements of policy H10, along with other relevant policies in the Plan, be effective in achieving sustainable development on the site having regard to NPPF 72?
- d) Does paragraph 6.10.10 need to be modified with regard to reference to a northern link road? Is the designation of a northern link road on the key diagram (map 1) and the Skertingham masterplan framework (figure 6.1) justified?

### **Policy H10 – Skertingham Strategic Allocation**

I object on the following grounds:

In relation to Policy H10 I do not believe that the plan is justified or consistent with the NPPF.

*I consider policy H10 to be unsound for the following reasons.*

I believe that the proposal to allow the loss of green space in the Skertingham Strategic Allocation directly conflicts with Policy ENV4, in particular point G as it can be demonstrated that this loss of space would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. According to the Darlington Landscape Character Assessment 2015 the landscape in this area is unlikely to accommodate further development without altering its character. This proposed development could potentially sit on land that was identified by Darlington Borough Council as a 'Jewel in the Crown' in their 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan' with access to very high grade 'quality' countryside, countryside which has been used extensively by residents during lock-down. It would therefore adversely affect the recreational needs of all residents of the Borough.

It further conflicts with ENV 1, as within the development is a designated Prehistoric Village, the remains of which will be destroyed.

Further more there is an area of consecrated land in which a number of natural burials have taken place in recent years. No allowance for this is made in the Plan.

The Skertingham development is designated as a 'Garden Village', I would ask the question, when does it become a 'Garden Village', certainly not in the foreseeable future. It is proposed to build 1800 dwellings within the period of the plan, 2036, so not before then.

As I'm lead to believe a Garden village is not dependant on the services from the local Town. However according to the programme only 1800 dwellings will be complete by 2036, will this

amount of dwellings support neighbourhood centre; two primary schools, a secondary school, and other community facilities; roads and other transport infrastructure; and a network of green and blue infrastructure. I do not think so, we there for have the classic urban sprawl, with the residents dependant upon existing overloaded facilities, schools, doctors surgery's, roads etc

Policy H10 also directly conflicts with policy IN1 in so far as it will result in the loss of existing footpaths and impair their functioning for recreational purposes.

Policy H10 does not demonstrate other principles contained in Policy IN1 as, because of its remoteness to the **town** centre, it does not demonstrate connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to make cycling and walking the first choice for short journeys.

The NPPF states that plans should be sustainable. We believe that Policy H10 is not sustainable as the Council have not been able to demonstrate that the already overloaded road infrastructure in and around Whinfield will be able to cope with an increase of traffic up to 180% of its current volume. This is based only on 1,800 houses and not the full 4,500 homes envisaged in this plan.

Barmpton Lane 'south' is a residential road with many homes having no 'off street parking' with the result many vehicles are parked on the Lane, or I should say on the footpath to avoid an accident, off which this year alone there has been two vehicle badly damaged. With the anticipated increase in traffic this Lane will become impossible for the residents, plus the increase in carbon emissions will be a health hazard particularly to vulnerable people.

I support the comments made by Highways England in response to the draft Local Plan Consultation in 2018, namely their concerns regarding the potential impact of the Strategic Road Network of Policy H10. none of these concerns appear to have been addressed in this Local Plan submission.

To make this plan sound we would expect that there be no conflict with policy ENV4, the Darlington Landscape Assessment or policy IN1. We would also expect a clear explanation of how the Council intends to mitigate the increase in volume of traffic on already full to capacity local roads, which to date they have not. If Policy H10 is unsustainable and these conflicts cannot be removed or explanations provided then Policy H10 should be removed from the Local Plan.

### **Policy ENV3 – Local Landscape Character**

I objects on the following grounds:

In relation to Policy ENV3 we do not believe that the plan is justified when taken into consideration with Policy H10 above.

*I consider policy ENV3 to be unsound for the following reasons.*

Policy ENV3 is contradicted by Policy H10 as Policy H10 involves development in the area between Darlington and Barmpton Village which Policy ENV3 states should be retained.

### **Policy ENV7 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity and Development**

I objects on the following grounds:

In relation to Policy ENV7 we do not believe that the plan is justified when taken into consideration with Policy H10 above.

***I consider policy ENV7 to be unsound for the following reasons.***

Point F of policy ENV7 refers to wildlife friendly green spaces, parks and parklands, in particular to protect and improve the wildlife value of green spaces, parks and parklands. Given that Policy H10 intends to build directly on these green spaces currently habituated by wildlife policy ENV7 directly conflicts with Policy H10.

To make this plan sound Policy H10 should either be removed from the Local Plan or amended so it does not conflict with the other policies within the Local Plan.

We have seen on recent TV programmes, presented by David Attenborough, the current issues of the loss of Habitat for wildlife, all this Plan does is reduce the Habitat for wild live within Darlington even further. Does the Darlington council consider the issues as identified in these programmes do not apply to our Town.

*Q4.5 (b) Is there a reasonable prospect that the site will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged?*

The programme to complete 1800 dwellings before the end of the plan period of 2036 is very tight, my reasoning for saying this are as follows:

600 dwellings to the former Muscar house farm should be achieved as the land belongs to DBC. 1200 dwellings are to be built on land currently owned by the Darlington Golf Club, before the construction can commence on these dwellings the land needs to be purchased and another golf course built. Darlington Golf Club will not move from their current course until another course is available. How long will it take to purchase the existing course and build another, then for it to mature before play commences? Then build 1200 dwellings.

*Q4.5 (d) Does paragraph 6.10.10 need to be modified with regard to reference to a northern link road? Is the designation of a northern link road on the key diagram (map 1) and the Skerningham masterplan framework (figure 6.1) justified?*

As the Local Plan is not dependent on the 'Northern Link Road' all reference to the 'Northern link Road should be removed from the 'Plan' in total, should the reference be in written form or detailed graphical on a diagram.