



# **Burdon Hill, Darlington**

Infrastructure Delivery Statement

September 2020

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Bellway Homes (North East Division) ('Bellway Homes') and Story Homes to provide information on infrastructure delivery in support of the emerging allocation in the Darlington Local Plan of land at Great Burdon on the eastern edge of Darlington known as 'Burdon Hill'.

## Background and Purpose

- 1.2 Burdon Hill is a proposed strategic urban extension housing allocation in the 'Darlington Borough Local Plan – Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016 – 2036' (August 2020). It is referred to as 'Great Burdon (strategic)' in the Plan and allocated under Policy H2 with 500 dwellings to be delivered during the Plan period and 750 dwellings beyond 2036. It is identified as Site 20 in Appendix B – 'Housing and Employment Allocation Statements'.
- 1.3 The Site was also included in the previous iteration of the emerging Local Plan which was published in June 2018 where it was allocated for 550 dwellings during the Plan period and 700 dwellings beyond 2036. Part of the Site was also part of the Eastern Urban Fringe strategic allocation in the adopted Core Strategy (2011).
- 1.4 Bellway Homes and Story Homes consider that the Site offers a unique opportunity to deliver a high quality sustainable neighbourhood in the east of Darlington. The development would provide quality housing in an accessible landscape led scheme which will contribute to meeting Darlington's future housing aspirations.
- 1.5 Bellway Homes and Story Homes have been working with Darlington Borough Council and other stakeholders to promote the Site. This Statement sets out key considerations about the Site including identifying the infrastructure requirements linked to the proposals and the approach to the schemes delivery.

## Structure

- 1.6 This Statement comprises a series of sections which set out the strategic context, opportunity and deliverability of the Burdon Hill site as follows:
- **Section 2: Strategic Context** – a strategic description of the context of the Site;
  - **Section 3: The Opportunity at Burdon Hill** – a description of the proposed opportunity that Burdon Hill offers to Darlington;
  - **Section 4: Infrastructure Provision** – details of the infrastructure provision related to the proposals for Burdon Hill;
  - **Section 5: Site Deliverability** – discussion on the deliverability and phasing of infrastructure for the Burdon Hill development; and
  - **Section 6: Summary and Conclusions** – a summary of the main factors and merits of the Burdon Hill proposals.

## 2. Strategic Context

- 2.1 This section of the Statement describes the strategic context of the Site.
- 2.2 Darlington is one of the most strategically located Boroughs in the North East of England, mainly due to its transport connections (road, rail and air transport) and the strength and versatility of its local economy. Darlington, is therefore, an attractive location to both live and work within the North East of England. The introduction of additional residential and employment-led development will help stimulate economic growth which will ultimately aid regeneration within the urban core and make Darlington a more attractive place to live, work and invest in.
- 2.3 The site at Burdon Hill should be considered against all levels of policy making, starting with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) of which all proposals seek to accord with. The NPPF is used as a plan-making tool with the emerging Darlington Local Plan, which is currently at Proposed Submission draft. The site at Burdon Hill is included within the emerging Local Plan as a Strategic Allocation (site reference 20) for approximately 1,250 dwellings across and beyond the Plan period. It should be noted that the site was previously included within the previous iteration of the Local Plan (published June 2018).
- 2.4 The emerging Darlington Local Plan is the strategic development plan which will enable and facilitate growth within Darlington Borough. It is critical to implementing and grasping the opportunities presented in the Region, as well as planned investments elsewhere in the North East. In this respect, the emerging Darlington local Plan seeks to establish a pragmatic and achievable yet aspirational plan for growth which can revitalise communities and encourage the local economy.
- 2.5 As outlined within this document, and the associated Site-Specific Representation, Darlington Borough Councils spatial strategy is led by a series of large-scale developments which deliver a significant proportion of the housing requirement. This is alongside a level of medium and small-scale development in settlements outside of the urban core to provide a mix and variance to residential development in the Borough. With this in mind, the allocation of Great Burdon aligns with this spatial strategy, allowing the Council to pursue an ambitious growth strategy. The planned expansion of the Borough, through a plan-led approach, not only aligns with the principles within the NPPF but allows it to be brought forward in a sustainable manner.
- 2.6 Bellway Homes and Story Homes are supportive of the emerging Darlington Local Plan and are encouraging of the Councils pro-growth stance. Through collaborative work with the Council and key stakeholders, it is thought a sustainable and high-quality scheme can be brought forward and the Burdon Hill site.

### 3. The Opportunity at Burdon Hill

- 3.1 Burdon Hill offers the opportunity to deliver a sustainable development within the eastern urban fringe of Darlington. The c. 96 hectare Site is located in a sustainable location with good transport connections close to a range of services and facilities which can be easily accessed by local residents. These include retail, employment, schools, medical facilities, and sports facilities all within reasonable walking distance.
- 3.2 The size of the Site provides the opportunity to create a landscape-led community providing housing within green surroundings. There is significant potential for Green Infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements across the Site as part of the proposals.
- 3.3 The Site is considered to be one of the best sites in the Borough and its allocation has been supported by Darlington Borough Council through various planning policy documents. Part of the Site was allocated within the Eastern Urban Fringe strategic allocation in the adopted Core Strategy in 2011. The Site has been supported through subsequent evidence base work by the Council culminating in its current emerging allocation in the new Local Plan.
- 3.4 It is noted that the development will necessitate delivery of new and enhanced infrastructure provision within the Site and local area. This will ensure that the development is capable of integrating with existing neighbouring communities and the character and sense of place in its eastern Darlington location.

#### Site Suitability

- 3.5 Bellway Homes and Story Homes have undertaken wide ranging and detailed technical surveys and assessments of the Site over a number of years to ensure that opportunities and constraints of the Site have informed the indicative masterplan proposals. These have included in relation to:
  - Transport
  - Ecology
  - Landscape
  - Heritage/Archaeology
  - Topography
  - Air Quality
  - Noise
  - Flood Risk and Drainage
  - Ground Conditions
  - Utilities
- 3.6 These have been discussed in previous representations to emerging local planning policy and included in a previous Vision Statement for the Site.

- 3.7 The surveys and assessment work has demonstrated that the Site is not subject to any significant or insurmountable constraints which would present an obstacle to development. Indeed, they highlight the opportunities that exist at the Site to create a sustainable residential community.
- 3.8 It is recognised that updated surveys, including those relating to ecology and archaeology, will be required to support a future planning application for the development of the Site. These will be conducted at the appropriate times to ensure that the relevant information is accurate and available to enable the consideration and determination of an application. It should be noted that Bellway Homes and Story Homes are working collaboratively to update some technical documents ahead of the Examination in Public of the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.9 Details from some of the surveys carried out to date are referenced in Section 4 of this Statement and have informed the proposed infrastructure provisions for each element of the emerging indicative masterplan proposals.

## The Proposed Development

- 3.10 Bellway Homes and Story Homes' proposals for Burdon Hill will be familiar to the Council and have been provided indicatively in a Vision Document in 2014. This set out proposals for the delivery of a residential led scheme of approximately 1,500 dwellings including family and affordable homes with private garden spaces and substantial areas of public open space.
- 3.11 Bellway Homes and Story Homes has continued to refine the proposals for the Site in parallel to the Council's move towards a new Local Plan for the Borough. This has involved reducing the number of proposed dwellings to be delivered at the Site to approximately 1,250 new dwellings including appropriate provisions of market and affordable homes.
- 3.12 The indicative masterplan for the Site has been developed further to respond further to physical and technical constraints and opportunities set out in the Context Plan at Appendix 1 ensuring that:
- Site vehicle access is to be taken from Darlington Road (A1150) (including new east and westbound bus stops) and Tornado Way (B6279) via signalised junctions with a distributor road through the Site connecting the two accesses.
  - Development is concentrated on the southern part of the Site to the south/ south east of Burdon Hill. A limited proportion of development is proposed to the north of Burdon Hill.
  - Development avoids the western parts of the Site which lie in Flood Zones 2 and 3.
  - The River Skerne corridor on the western edge of the Site will be protected and enhanced through Green Infrastructure provision including new linkages to the area.
  - Local recreation and Green Infrastructure links surrounding Red Hall Local Wildlife Site will be strengthened.

- There are opportunities to strengthen vegetation along existing road corridors on the northern, eastern and southern boundaries in order to enhance green connectivity.
  - Historic field boundaries will, where possible, be maintained.
  - Appropriate easements for the existing gas pipe line, electricity pylons, water mains and sewers that cross the Site have been allowed for unless diversions are proposed.
  - A buffer has been provided to the scheduled monument (a World War II bombing decoy control shelter) located in the north east part of the Site to improve interpretation and accessibility to it whilst conserving its setting.
  - The historic route of the former Stockton and Darlington Railway along the southern boundary of the Site has been considered and incorporated into the emerging indicative masterplan proposal. This will enable interpretation and access to be provided as part of the proposals.
  - The Public Right of Way (PRoW) which crosses the western part of the Site (north to south) and Buess Lane which crosses the eastern part of the Site (also north to south) have been accommodated in the emerging indicative proposals as part of an internal pedestrian connectivity network within the Site and to the wider surrounding network.
- 3.13 These proposals are consistent with the Council's stated requirements for development at the Site (Site 20) set out in Appendix B of the 'Darlington Borough Local Plan – Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016 – 2036' (August 2020).
- 3.14 It is acknowledged that the current masterplan proposals are still indicative. As the proposals are developed for a planning application in discussions with the Council and stakeholders they will continue to evolve and be improved upon. This will include providing greater detail on housing mix and locations, vehicular access and circulation arrangements, pedestrian connectivity routes, Green and Blue Infrastructure provision, and design principles.
- 3.15 Notwithstanding this, the current indicative masterplan (at Appendix 2) highlights the quality of the opportunity that exists at the Site for the Borough and the extensive technical and design work that has been carried out to date to demonstrate the deliverability of the proposals.

## Land Ownership

- 3.16 The Site is currently under the control of a single landowner; Durham Cathedral. Bellway Homes and Story Homes have an agreement with Durham Cathedral to promote the Site for development.
- 3.17 Both Bellway Homes and Story Homes have strong track records of delivering residential development within the North East and other parts of the country. Our involvement is therefore a key attribute which will assist in ensuring:
- Early delivery of the Site as there are willing developers already involved who have undertaken significant work to-date to develop proposals.

- A high-quality development given the commitment to core planning and design principles.
  - Complementary styles which will assist in place making and delivery rates for the Site yet ensure appropriate diversity.
- 3.18 The size of the proposed development will allow the delivery of a diverse range of house types including homes for first time buyers, family homes and a proportion of dwellings that accommodate a range of accessibility needs. It is currently envisaged that there would also be a proportion of affordable homes provided on-site.

## 4. Infrastructure Provision

- 4.1 This section of the Statement summarises the infrastructure provisions related to the Burdon Hill proposals.

### Highways and Access

- 4.2 The proposed Burdon Hill development is bounded to the north by the A1150 (Darlington Road), to the south by the B6279 (Tomado Way) and bounded to the east by the A66.
- 4.3 Burdon Hill will be accessed to the north via a new junction formed with the A1150 (Darlington Road). At present this is proposed to be via a new signal controlled junction. The proposed southern access will utilise the existing signal controlled junction along the southern boundary of the Site.
- 4.4 The Site is located within the development corridor associated with an area wide assessment model developed by Darlington Borough Council and the Highways England. The model is aimed at providing an integrated approach to the delivery of physical improvements to the road network and sustainable travel in the area, to avoid a piecemeal approach associated with individual developments. The proposed development at Burdon Hill will embrace the collaborative approach associated with the model and will work with the Council and Highways England to deliver sustainable and equitable solutions as required to the strategic and local networks.
- 4.5 The proposed access arrangements will allow the provision of a north/south distributor link road through the Burdon Hill development which will be designed to standards to accommodate bus services. The introduction of such services will ensure that the dwellings within the development will have good access to public transport services to ensure that the majority will be within 400m of bus stops. At present the public transport services operate distinctly to the north and south of the site area. The link through Burdon Hill will provide the bus operators with an opportunity to expand existing services to serve this new sustainable community and to maintain services to the existing community. In the short-term bus stops on the east and west bound carriageways of the A1150 are proposed as part of the initial junction works for the northern Site access.
- 4.6 The development will establish strong links with the existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure surrounding the Site. The external links will connect with internal greenway infrastructure to ensure excellent permeability within the development, designed to encourage integration with and between the existing communities. In particular, the enhancement of Buess Lane as a north-south greenway will not only link the development to the surrounding pedestrian-cycle network, it will also provide benefits to the wider community. Buess Lane will connect the two existing east-west cycle routes to the north and south of the Site; the route to the south is part of the National Cycle Network (Route 14). The enhancements of connections to the Red Hall Local Wildlife Site and the River Skerne corridor as well as the improvement of the existing PRoW running north/south through the Site will all be benefits of the development.

- 4.7 The development has been assessed and shown to be accessible to existing facilities in the surrounding area. The Burdon Hill development is within acceptable walking and cycling distance of the following existing facilities:
- Education: Primary and Secondary Schools;
  - Convenience shopping;
  - Doctor and Dental Surgeries;
  - Employment Opportunities; and
  - Public Transport.
- 4.8 In a wider context the A66 forms part of the strategic road network. The road is of regional and national significance, providing an east-west link to the A1 and the A19, which in turn provide direct connections to Tyneside and Scotland to the north and to North Yorkshire and the south and midland regions of England to the south. Darlington Rail Station, located within Darlington Town Centre, is part of the East Coast Mainline railway, and provides direct services to destinations including Newcastle, London, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. There are also First Trans Pennine Express rail services to Manchester and Liverpool.
- 4.9 Durham Tees Valley Airport is located to the south-east of the Burdon Hill development, providing flights to various destinations within Europe.
- 4.10 The Site is situated in a location that makes it possible to utilise the existing infrastructure in the area to encourage and enhance the use of sustainable modes of travel whilst providing access to the local, regional and nationally significant strategic road network and mainline rail services.

## Education

- 4.11 Burdon Hill is located within sustainable distances of primary education provision at Whinfield Primary School (north west of the Site), and Red Hall Primary School (west of the Site), as well as Springfield Academy – The Education Village (west of the Site). Secondary education provision is located at Houghton Academy which is also part of The Education Village located to the west of the Site.
- 4.12 It is proposed that financial contributions in line with the provisions set out in emerging Policy IN 10 of the Local Plan will be made towards any necessary creation of additional capacity at these schools. Contributions would be made on a phased basis as required given the scale of proposed development at Burdon Hill.

## Health

- 4.13 Whinfield Medical Practice is located to the north west of the Site and providing local GP surgery access. It is also noted that the proposed Skertingham masterplan envisages a Health Hub being located as part of the Skertingham proposals to the north of the Site.

- 4.14 Should there be any evidenced and demonstrable need for financial contributions towards enhancements to capacity of existing local medical services these will be considered during discussions with the Council in developing proposals for the Site.

## Green Infrastructure

- 4.15 The Site has been assessed for its key landscape and visibility characteristics. It is an area of pastoral and arable farmland on the eastern edge of Darlington with a relatively poor tree and hedgerow pattern. The line of the River Skerne marks the Sites western boundary; other boundaries are formed by a network of roads (A1150, A66 and the B6279 that form three sides of a rectangle. The landform pattern of the Site is a distinctive feature of the site. The western boundary lies in the flood plain of the River Skerne (at approximately 44m AOD); the land then rises in an undulating pattern to a local high point in the northern and central part of the site (at approximately 64m AOD); levels then fall to the north, east and south.
- 4.16 The Site is currently accessed from the A1150 entrance to Great Burdon Farm and from a gated entrance from the B6279. A track from Great Burdon Farm runs southwards and then eastwards to link with another north-south track called Buess Lane. A bridleway connects the village with Red Hall. Significantly the line of Bridleway 61 in Darlington runs along the site's southern boundary, connecting the centre of the town with the South Burdon Community Woodland.
- 4.17 The Site falls within the Tees Lowland National Character Area and exhibits many of the characteristics of that landscape, being:
- Gently undulating low lying land;
  - With visible urban and industrial development;
  - With pylons and overhead power lines;
  - With sparse woodland cover;
  - With a distinctive lowland along the line of the Skerne;
- 4.18 The Site is visible from residential areas of Great Burdon, Haughton le Skerne and Red Hall. It is also visible from the A1150, A66 and B6279 roads.
- 4.19 The line of the River Skerne is identified as a Wildlife Corridor and Green Wedge in the Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 4.20 The River Skerne is identified as a part of the Strategic Network of Green Infrastructure for the Tees Valley as follows:
- Darlington, Middleton St George, A66/67 Corridor to Stockton
  - A potentially major corridor linking with the River Skerne Corridor in Darlington via the Sustrans route towards Middleton St George.
- 4.21 The key landscape issues arising from any development proposal on the Site are as follows:
- Avoiding the floodplain;

- Creating an attractive edge to the River Skerne corridor;
  - Responding to the distinctiveness of Great Burdon;
  - Significantly enhancing the woodland, tree and hedgerow structure of the Site;
  - Enhancing the high point within the Site as a green space;
  - Retaining key features of the old, agricultural landscape structure of the Site;
  - Enhancing public access;
  - Enhancing landscape character;
  - Enhancing habitat value;
  - Making the development a significant enhancement of the green infrastructure of Darlington and the River Tees.
- 4.22 The principal landscape and visual mitigation features arising from a proposal to construct housing on the Site are subordinate to the landscape, recreation and biodiversity opportunities that good masterplanning can provide. For, correctly considered, the need to retain and enhance the flood capacity of the River Skerne whilst designing a new community according to best design practice creates a generational opportunity to see a significant enhancement of the landscape setting, public open space facility and nature conservation value of this eastern part of Darlington.
- 4.23 The indicative masterplan has developed three landscape led ideas for the Site:
- The retention and enhancement of the flood plain as the Skerne River Meadows;
  - The containment of the built development within a structure of accessible planting that will, over time, contain and hide views of housing, while increasing the biodiversity value of woodland, tree and hedgerow cover on the Site;
  - The retention of the idea of a high point of open ground on the Site by a considered increase of the Sites current higher ground; and the fixing of this as a focal point in a number of key view corridors.
- 4.24 These simple but powerful ideas contain a potential to transform the pattern of public open space and access on the eastern edge of Darlington, with a major increase in area, use and management for landscape, recreation and biodiversity purposes with appropriate new woodland, tree, shrub, hedge and meadow planting. The developments landscape proposals will make the link between an old parkland asset of Darlington and its newest: between the Skerne Corridor and South Burdon Community Woodland.
- 4.25 Such a Green Infrastructure strategy will more than mitigate any short term visual impact from the construction and early years of the scheme and for the longer term substitution of residential land for arable agriculture.

## Ecology

- 4.26 Extensive ecological work has been undertaken over a prolonged period at the Site identifying only a limited number of features of ecological importance which need to be taken into account.
- 4.27 Key features within the Site are:
- Small number of birds of high conservation importance, such as skylark and yellowhammer;
  - A few habitats that are of principal importance (as defined under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006), in particular hedgerows and ponds;
  - A small number of mature trees that may be used by roosting bats.
- 4.28 Key features outside of the Site area:
- The River Skerne corridor to the west, which forms part of the green network that is identified in the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy;
  - An unnamed watercourse adjacent to the southern boundary of the Site providing a link with the River Skerne;
  - Red Hall Nature Reserve (also a Local Wildlife Site), which is recently created outside the southern boundary of the Site where new ponds are located.
- 4.29 It is noted that the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Plan proposes to designate Red Hall Nature Reserve as a Local Nature Reserve. The proposed habitat creation within the Site will ensure that the Nature Reserve links up with habitats within and outside the Site, resulting in a much stronger habitat network.
- 4.30 Ecology will be protected and enhanced by undertaking the following where possible:
- Protection and enhancement of the River Skerne corridor and floodplain which could be utilised to accommodate any potentially displaced birds;
  - Protection and enhancement of the unnamed watercourse corridor which could also be utilised to accommodate any potentially displaced birds and to maintain a habitat corridor that links Red Hall Nature Reserve to the River Skerne corridor;
  - Replacement of any ponds and hedgerows which will be removed elsewhere on Site as part of the landscaping proposals;
  - Retention of mature trees, particularly those along the green land that runs from north to south across the northern part of the Site being proposed as a corridor within the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy;
  - Providing a buffer along the southern edge of the Site adjacent to the Red Hall Nature Reserve.
- 4.31 Immediately to the east of the A66 is the South Burdon Community Woodland which is another area of accessible green space. There is scope for the development to include

recreational opportunities such as green infrastructure to provide a circular walking route or dedicated walking areas and this can be explored further.

- 4.32 The work carried out for the Site demonstrates that it has very few ecological features, all of which can be mitigated and enhanced. There is considerable scope to ensure that delivering approximately 1,250 newhomes results in achieving net gains for nature conservation in accordance with paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

## Noise

- 4.33 Noise survey and assessment work has been carried out on Site to assess the noise levels resulting from road traffic on the A1150, A66 and B6279. Attended noise measurements were taken at various monitoring locations.
- 4.34 The results of this work indicated that to achieve an acceptable outdoor amenity some form of acoustic mitigation would be required for any proposed outdoor living areas facing or with direct line of sight of the A1150, A66 and B6279. However, where gardens are located on the screened sides of dwellings it is unlikely that any noise mitigation will be required.
- 4.35 With regards to achieving acceptable internal noise levels in living room and bedroom areas, the use of standard thermal double glazing in a solid brick or blockwork façade has been assessed as being sufficient. The implementation of such glazing would ensure that internal noise levels are met in living rooms and bedroom areas across the Site with the windows closed. However, it is noted that acoustic ventilation would be required within habitable rooms located nearest to, and with a direct of sight of the A1150, A66 and B6279, to enable the windows to remain closed.
- 4.36 The facades and garden areas of any dwellings further into the site are likely to be protected by other more peripheral buildings.
- 4.37 The noise survey and assessment work carried out demonstrates that acceptable internal and external noise levels can be achieved at the site through appropriate mitigation and scheme design. This will ensure that there would be no detriment to the amenity of future residents from noise sources external to the site.

## Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.38 The Site is within Environment Agency Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3. The River Skerne flows along the western boundary of the Site and flood risk is fluvial, caused by overspill of water from the river channel onto low lying land to the east and west of the River Skerne. In accordance with the NPPF and Environment Agency guidance, development of residential dwellings and community facilities will only be considered within Flood Zone 1 (areas which have a flood risk of 1 in 1,000 years or greater from fluvial sources).
- 4.39 The development of the western of the Site will be restricted to appropriate uses for Flood Zones 2 and 3, as required by NPPF. These uses will include the creation of wildflower meadows, wetlands, and public open landscape.

- 4.40 The development will be designed to ensure that there will be no net increase in surface water flows to the river and surface water from the development will be restricted to pre development 1 in 1 year Greenfield rates, via SuDS attenuation ponds and wetlands created as part of the landscape area. The creation of SuDS areas will allow surface water from the development to be treated naturally in accordance with SuDS guidance, to ensure that water quality is maintained or even enhanced from the current use.
- 4.41 In addition to the attenuation of flows, wetland areas and ponds will add to the ecological diversity of the open space.
- 4.42 Surface water from the development will be designed in accordance with the drainage hierarchy in Building Regulations, SuDS guidance and Sewers for Adoption. The sewer network will be adopted and maintained by Northumbrian Water Ltd on completion.
- 4.43 Due to ground conditions attenuation of surface water flows will be achieved via ponds/wetlands within the open space area. Landscape and ecological benefits will be maximised via the input of an appropriate specialist landscape and ecological consultant, and guidance within the SuDS Manual will be used to achieve water quality and safety objectives.
- 4.44 Water discharged from the Site will flow via a series of swales to the ponds where sufficient capacity to store up to the 1 in 100 year plus climate change rainfall event will be designed. The attenuation ponds will flow into tributary watercourses of the River Skerne at a controlled rate equivalent to current 1 in 1 year greenfield rates.
- 4.45 Foul flows from the development will outfall to the existing foul network with connection points, subject to phasing, into the 825mm diameter foul sewer running along the western bank of the River Skerne, or alternatively a connection into the 450mm diameter foul sewer which runs within the landscape open space to the north of Red Hall Estate. Discussions are ongoing with Northumbrian Water Ltd in terms of likely connection points and development phasing.

## Utilities

- 4.46 Service utility plans have been obtained for the surrounding area and discussions with utilities regarding the means of providing services to the development are ongoing.

### Electric

- 4.47 There are two electric overhead lines within the Site. A 132 KV line runs diagonally across the Site south west to north east on pylons. The emerging proposals for the Site respect the line of the existing lines as a constraint to development. A 6KV overhead line runs parallel to Darlington Road within the Site. This cable could be placed underground through the northern development cells along a route to be agreed with the operator.
- 4.48 The development will be supplied via the HV network with a series of sub stations which will be located within the development.

### Gas

- 4.49 There are two intermediate pressure gas mains running through the northern development cell east of Great Burdon Farm. The majority of the gas main route is within land designated as land at risk of flooding and will not be affected. The intention is to divert the mains along new estate roads through the northern development cells in agreement with Northern Gas Networks.
- 4.50 The Site would be supplied via a low pressure mains network supplied from a gas governor house from the intermediate pressure mains.

#### Water

- 4.51 There is a 600mm diameter trunk water main within the northern verge of Darlington Road with smaller distribution mains within Great Burdon and Red Hall Estates.
- 4.52 The development will be supplied via an extension of the distribution main system from the 600mm diameter trunk main to the north subject to phasing and discussion with Northumbrian Water.

#### Telecoms

- 4.53 There are existing telecoms network within Darlington Road to the northern boundary and also Red Hall Estate.
- 4.54 The development can be served by an extension of the existing network from both the north and the south.

## 5. Site Deliverability

5.1 This section of the Statement considers the deliverability and potential approach to phasing for the Burdon Hill site. Whilst this information is indicative at present, as the proposals for the Site are developed with more detailed information it will be possible to refine the approach to the delivery of the Site.

### Deliverability

5.2 Bellway and Story Homes have established track records in delivering high quality residential development with successful schemes. Within the Borough Bellway Homes currently has developments at Hurworth and Heighington, and Story Homes currently has developments at Blackwell Grange and Middleton St George.

5.3 Both Bellway Homes and Story Homes can confirm that the Site is developable in the short-term because it is:

- **Available** - land at the Site is under the control of Bellway Homes and Story Homes as willing developers with an existing agreement in place with the landowners as set out in Section 3. The Site is not subject to any significant legal or ownership constraints, such as ransom strips or tenancies, which might be obstacles to early delivery of dwellings. Therefore, the Site is 'available' for development now.
- **Achievable** – the Site is located in a good market area with high demand for new homes. The Site is also largely free from any environmental or technical constraints and there are none which would preclude development coming forwards.
- **Suitable** – the Site is in a sustainable location within the emerging settlement boundary of Darlington and offers the potential for good transport connections to services and employment opportunities in the surrounding urban area. It was accepted as a suitable location in being partly included within the Eastern Urban Fringe strategic development location in the adopted Core Strategy (2011) and in subsequent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.

5.4 The development opportunity at Burdon Hill is deliverable and capable of contributing new homes quickly subject to the grant of planning permission. The involvement of two respected developers should provide the Council and stakeholders confidence that the scheme can begin to be developed in the short term and in a high-quality manner.

### Delivery Trajectory

5.5 Bellway Homes and Story Homes wish to progress with development at the earliest opportunity at Burdon Hill and are in the process of preparing a planning application for the entire Site.

5.6 At present the application is proposed to be a hybrid planning application with some parts in detail and some in outline. It is envisaged that there would be elements of residential development and highways infrastructure in the north and also in the south

along with Green Infrastructure in west of the Site submitted in detail, with the remainder of the Site to be considered in outline. This approach would:

- facilitate early delivery of homes and infrastructure; and
- allow flexibility for the future phases of delivery consistent with a holistic approach to the principle of the development of the Site.

- 5.7 It is hoped that a hybrid planning application could potentially be submitted in Spring/Summer 2021 and would run in parallel to the preparation of the Local Plan. This would provide further certainty to the Council about Bellway Homes and Story Homes' commitment to the Site and its deliverability.
- 5.8 It is envisaged that the hybrid planning application would potentially be determined soon after the Local Plan is anticipated to be adopted in Summer 2022. There would then need to be a period allowed for the discharge of relevant pre-commencement conditions and obligations prior to the commencement of development.
- 5.9 Given the scale of the proposals it is considered appropriate to allow an 18 month lead in period from the submission of the hybrid planning application until a site start occurs. This would mean a site start potentially in late 2022 or early 2023.
- 5.10 Allowing for a lead in for initial Site preparation and infrastructure works it is estimated that the first occupations of dwellings could potentially occur in Autumn 2023. This is earlier than currently projected in Appendix A of the 'Darlington Borough Local Plan – Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016 – 2036' (August 2020) which anticipates delivery beginning in 2027.
- 5.11 With regards to the projected delivery rates on the Site Appendix A of the 'Darlington Borough Local Plan – Proposed Submission Local Plan 2016 – 2036' (August 2020) anticipates that there would be delivery of 50 dwellings per annum (dpa). This is considered to be conservative and could be exceeded due to the good market location of the Site and if additional outlets are added to the Site.
- 5.12 Based on this earlier start on-site and 50 dpa delivery it is estimated that during the Plan period to 2036 Burdon Hill has the potential to deliver at least 625 dwellings rather than the 500 dwellings set out in the emerging Local Plan Policy H 2. Should any additional outlets be added to the wider Site then this would increase the delivery rates further.

## Infrastructure Phasing

- 5.13 The development of Burdon Hill will involve the delivery of enabling infrastructure including highways improvements, site accesses, utilities, Green Infrastructure, and pedestrian/cycle connections. The delivery of this infrastructure will be phased throughout the development of approximately 1,250 dwellings to ensure infrastructure is in place when it is needed whilst ensuring a viable scheme.
- 5.14 Notwithstanding this, it is possible to set out an indicative delivery programme based on the potentially anticipated delivery trajectory for the Site set out above. This involves phasing delivery of new infrastructure throughout the build programme for the Site.

- 5.15 The precise timing of the delivery of infrastructure will be agreed with the Council through the consideration of the hybrid planning application for the Site. This will be dependent on a variety of factors including viability, infrastructure needs, delivery programme and partners, and external funding opportunities.

*Figure 5.1: Estimated Indicative Delivery*

Period	Total Approx. No. of Dwellings per Phase (and Overall)	Indicative Infrastructure Delivery
2022/23 – 2030/31	375 (375)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Junctions onto the A1150 and B6279.</li> <li>Off-site highway improvements to local and strategic road network.</li> <li>SuDS for appropriate phases.</li> <li>Utilities connections into the Site from the north and south, utility diversions in northern part of the Site, and sub-stations and any gas governors as required.</li> <li>Enhancement of Buess Lane.</li> <li>Initial Green Infrastructure improvements in the west of the Site including the River Skerne corridor, connections to Red Hall Local Wildlife Site and pedestrian/cycle connections.</li> <li>Enhancements to the planting of the northern and southern boundaries of the Site to the A1150 and B6279.</li> <li>Ensuring connections are made to the former Stockton and Darlington Railway to the south of the Site.</li> <li>Phased contribution towards local education and health provision as necessary.</li> </ul>
2031/32 – 2039/40	450 (825)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of entire distributor road through the Site.</li> <li>Contribution towards new/extended bus services through the Site.</li> <li>SuDS for appropriate phases.</li> <li>Sub-stations and gas governors as required</li> <li>Enhancement of PRow running north/south through western part of the Site.</li> <li>Further Green Infrastructure improvements in the west of the Site and along retained field boundaries in the centre of the Site.</li> <li>Enhancements to the planting of the eastern boundary of the Site to the A66.</li> <li>Phased contribution towards local education and health provision as necessary.</li> </ul>
2040/41 – 2048/49	425 (1,250)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SuDS for appropriate phases.</li> <li>Sub-stations and gas governors as required</li> <li>Further Green Infrastructure improvements in the west of the Site and along retained field boundaries in the centre of the Site.</li> <li>Phased contribution towards local education and health provision as necessary.</li> </ul>

- 5.16 Bellway Homes and Story Homes will continue to liaise with the Council to discuss the infrastructure requirements and delivery for Burdon Hill to secure agreement on the core infrastructure principles involved.

## 6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Statement demonstrates that Burdon Hill represents both a 'deliverable' sustainable site for high quality housing in Darlington and could provide in the region of 1,250 dwellings. It will offer an excellent opportunity to provide residential development in a landscape-led scheme which will offer:
- A range of high quality market and affordable homes which will contribute to addressing the local housing needs of Darlington.
  - Contribute to improvements in the capacity of the strategic and local highway network including through the introduction of the new site accesses and distributor link road between Darlington Road (A1150) to Tornado Way (B6279).
  - Bus connectivity through the introduction of services within the development to provide sustainable transport opportunities.
  - Improvements to pedestrian/cycle connectivity within the Site and to the wider surrounding local networks.
  - Accessible Green Infrastructure enhancements including along the River Skerne corridor in the west of the Site; enhanced vegetation on the site boundaries, and improved connections to the Red Hall Local Wildlife Site.
  - Improvements to local infrastructure such as schools and health provisions as required.
  - Sympathetic treatment of key landscape and heritage features within and surrounding the Site.
- 6.2 Consideration has been given to the need for associated education and health facilities and appropriate financial contributions towards appropriate new and enhanced local provisions will be made through appropriate mechanisms.
- 6.3 Whilst substantial work has been undertaken in respect of the deliverability of the Site further detailed work is still required in order to determine the precise scale and nature of infrastructure that the Burdon Hill proposals. These details will be considered through the preparation of a hybrid planning application for the Site.

# Appendices



# Appendix 1 Indicative Site Context Plan



- ① Vehicle access is to be taken from Darlington Road (A1150) and Tornado Way (B6279).
- ② Distributor road which will run north south across the site, linking Darlington Road (A1150) and Tornado Way (B6279).
- ③ Development to be concentrated on the southern part of the site to the south-east of Burdon Hill.
- ④ The western area of the site is within flood zone 2 and 3 Development avoided within this area.
- ⑤ The river corridor of the Skerne along the western boundary to be protected and enhanced.
- ⑥ Local recreation and green infrastructure links surrounding Red Hall Local Wildlife Site to be expanded, with additional green buffer before the development site.
- ⑦ Vegetation along existing road corridors strengthened in order to enhance green connectivity.
- ⑧ Historic field boundaries maintained.
- ⑨ Appropriate easements provided to pylons across the site.
- ⑩ Significant buffer to the scheduled monument located to the north east. With improved interpretation and accessibility to this historic asset.
- ⑪ Access to the historic routes of the Stockton & Darlington Railway
- ⑫ A public right of way crosses the western part of the site, north to south to be incorporated into the design.





## Appendix 2 Indicative Proposed Masterplan



