

**Darlington Local Plan Examination in Public
Response to Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions
Made on Behalf of Bellway Homes**

Matter 4- Housing Development**Introduction**

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement is made on behalf of Bellway Homes and Story Homes (our 'Clients') in advance of making verbal representations at the Examination in Public of the Darlington Local Plan. Our Clients have made comments throughout the local plan consultation process, including at the Pre-Submission Draft stage in June 2018 and Submission Draft in August 2020.
- 1.2 This Hearing Statement represents our Clients view on the overarching policies and targets in the Plan, but is also specifically related to our Clients land interest at Great Burdon (housing allocation reference 20). The site is an allocated urban extension to the east of the main urban area with an indicative yield of 1,250 homes, including 500 which are estimated to be delivered during the plan period. Bellway Homes does have other land interests on the edge of the town, including at Burtree Lane.
- 1.3 Our response to the relevant questions in Matter 4 are found below. We have had specific regard to the tests of soundness outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); namely that the policies in the Local Plan must be justified, effective, positively planned and consistent with national policy in order to be found sound.

Q4.1. Is there a reasonable prospect that a total of 2,652 dwellings will be built on the housing commitment sites listed in table 6.4 between 2020 and 2036?

- 1.4 There is not a reasonable prospect that over 2,600 dwellings will be built on committed sites up to 2036. There are 40 committed sites outlined in the Plan but there is little to no information on their status, particularly those sites where construction has not yet begun or when planning permission will expire on site. These account for just over a quarter of committed sites in the plan as well as some of the largest commitments too including for example High Stell (198 dwellings and not yet started, site reference 45). In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the Council should demonstrate and set out how reasonable a prospect there is that all the commitments are developable, particularly those which have not yet had a start on site. Our Clients would also like to point out that there is very little information on commitments. However, several sites are close to becoming expired and some are not expected to deliver housing until 2025 or 2026. Our Clients questions why some committed sites are due to be delivered so late after a consent being granted and if the Council has evidence for the delivery of those sites where the consent is close to expiration.
- 1.5 Furthermore, not all planning permissions will be delivered in full and in some cases residential permissions will lapse completely without delivering new dwellings. Local plans do normally build in a lapse rate and this varies across local authorities and is based on the evidence. However, the Council has not built in a lapse rate in their submission plan and not provided any evidence as to what the lapse rate has been over the past few years. It is particularly important in Darlington that a lapse rate is built in as commitments account for 40% of the housing requirement.
- 1.6 To be realistic and deliverable, the Council need to take into account non-delivery. As an absolute minimum, the lapse rate should be 10% but the Council should review the data, and provide the evidence as this number should be locally specific to the Borough.

Q4.3. Was the approach to selecting the housing allocations in the Plan justified and consistent with national policy and guidance?

- 1.7 Paragraph 6.2.13 of the plan sets out a number of criteria which were used to select housing allocations. The supporting evidence behind the policy is the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2017) (document reference SD10). In most cases the selection of allocations is sound and in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.

- 1.8 However, there are some instances where the Council has not considered the evidence and dismissed sites which meet all the applicable criteria without justification. Our Clients consider that these sites should be reviewed including our Client (Bellway Homes) land at Burtree Lane. In accordance with the criteria, and evidenced in the HELAA it is adjacent to the proposed urban area development limits, is in a sustainable location, avoids physical and environmental constraints and is considered to be deliverable being suitable, available and achievable.

Q4.4. Is the Council's proposed modification to policy H2 to distinguish between "strategic" and "non-strategic" housing allocations necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would it be effective in that regard?

- 1.9 Although our Clients consider that the proposed changes are not needed to make the Plan sound, the inclusion of "strategic" and "non-strategic" after each allocation is helpful and clears up any ambiguity between the two different types of sites.

Q4.11. Is the proposed Great Burdon housing allocation, with total capacity for 750 dwellings and an indicative yield of 500 dwellings during the plan period, justified? In particular:

- a) Would the development be suitably located in the context of policy SH1?***
 - b) Subject to the Council's proposed modification, would the requirements of appendix B, along with relevant policies in the Plan, be effective in achieving sustainable development on the site?***
 - c) Are the assumptions in the housing trajectory (appendix A) about the site justified, including that 500 dwellings will be completed by 2036?***
- 1.10 The housing allocation at Great Burdon is justified. Our Clients consider the site is well suited in the context of Policy SH1 and a draft Statement of Common Ground has been prepared confirming that Great Burdon is in a suitable and sustainable location. The Policy sets out the hierarchy of settlements in the Borough within the Darlington Urban Area at the top of the hierarchy due to its sub-regional role for "transport connectivity, services, employment and retail and leisure".
- 1.11 The site is well related to the urban area and has strong defensible boundaries which beyond which development could not extend in future. This includes two A roads (the A66 to the east and the A1150 to the north) and the B6279 to the south adjacent to which is employment development. Due to its location, the site has excellent transport connectivity across the Borough as well as the sub region and nationally due to the proximity, and ease, the A1(M) and A19 can be accessed. The train station is only 3km away and is on the East Coast Main Line which connects London to York, Newcastle and Edinburgh, and there are bus stops located in close proximity to the site on the roads to the north and south.

- 1.12 In terms of services, employment and retail and leisure, the Lingfield Point business park/ industrial estate is located adjacent to the south with only the B6279 separating the two sites. This business park This has recently seen significant growth due to the development of an Amazon factory. At the southern end of the estate, there are two retail parks, one of which includes a large supermarket. Beyond Lingfield Point there is further employment. The Town Centre, which has hotels, a cinema, leisure centre and other gyms, as well as other services, is located only 3km to the west of the site.
- 1.13 The site is clearly suitably and well located in terms of Policy SH1.
- 1.14 In terms of the requirements set out in Appendix B, our Clients considers that the development of the site will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. However, there are elements which are considered not to be justified and which need to be reviewed.
- 1.15 The allocation is subject to a number of constraints including watercourse, pylons and heritage assets. There is also a gas easement running north east to south west through the north western corner of the site and our Clients have always considered this easement to be the point where development should not extend beyond. The Council has prepared landscape and heritage evidence which proposes that development is excluded from the Green Wedge with the allocation boundary set back to the east from the easement along an existing field boundary. A previously commissioned landscape report by our Clients, considered that the development of the site would not undermine the Green Wedge designation. Therefore, our Clients disagree with the Council's latest Landscape Sensitivity of Potential Housing Sites Report (2020) (document reference SD31). It is not clear how the report has come to the conclusion that there is a 'High-Medium' sensitivity (page 44) and this appears to suggest it is because of the Green Wedge rather than the sensitivity justifying the designation of a Green Wedge and certainly to the extent proposed.
- 1.16 Our Clients consider that the boundary of the Green Wedge should be revised to the alignment of the gas main as an alternative and equally defensible boundary. This would provide a degree of housing development within the north west of the allocation to ensure that the full capacity of the wider site can be met whilst respecting the character and setting of Great Burdon. Our Clients will ensure that any housing on this edge of the site will be developed sensitively and having regard to the natural and heritage assets that are in close proximity through the detailed design process.
- 1.17 In addition, in terms of viability, our Clients have always maintained that having a quantum of development to the north of Burdon Hill as part of the first phase will ensure the

comprehensive deliverability of the wider scheme. Requiring development to extend further into the site at the north would increase infrastructure costs such as additional lengths of link road during the early part of the development. Therefore, unless amended the Local Plan Policy in its current form may impact upon deliverability of not only homes but the proposed link road too.

- 1.18 In light of this, our Clients have prepared a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) signed by Bellway Homes, Story Homes and Darlington Borough Council. The SOCG sets out that our Clients have been working collaboratively with the Council to bring forward the Great Burdon allocation and that it is acceptable for any development proposal to be provided on part of the Green Wedge provided a separation is maintained between the proposed development and Great Burdon. A plan is attached to the SOCG showing the extent of the area which may be developed upon as well as the separation gap between the site and Great Burdon. The SOCG is appended to this Hearing Statement (comprising a signed scanned version as well as a version which is easier to read).
- 1.19 In light of this, our Clients consider that the Proposals Map should also be updated to reflect this change and to offer further clarity.
- 1.20 In terms of the indicative yield of 500 homes delivered during the plan period, our Clients consider this an under-estimate and believes more homes will be delivered as set out in their Infrastructure Delivery Statement which was appended to the response to the Submission Plan in August 2020. This Statement sets out that at least 625 homes could be delivered throughout the plan period to 2036.
- 1.21 Our Clients expect to be on site by late 2022/early 2023. There are currently two housebuilders involved with the scheme and they would expect the construction of approximately 60 dwellings per annum in total.

Q4.14. Is the assumption that a total of 6,709 dwellings will be built on the allocated sites between 2020 and 2036 justified?

- 1.22 Our Clients do not wish to comment on sites except their own and wish to reiterate to the Inspector that they expect to be on site at Great Burdon by late 2022/early 2023. Furthermore, our Clients own evidence suggests that delivery will be able to deliver at least 125 dwellings in excess of the Council's 500 dwellings figure for completions on the site during the plan period. This is set out in the Infrastructure Statement appended to our representations in September 2020.

Q4.15. Has the Council provided clear evidence to demonstrate that a total of 735 dwellings will be built on the allocated sites without planning permission between 2020 and 2025?

- 1.23 In terms of the land at Great Burdon, our Client has provided robust evidence throughout the plan making process that there will be a start on site by 2023 and that they expect to be 60 units delivered per annum as two housebuilders are involved.
- 1.24 In some cases, the Council has not provided clear or robust evidence that allocations will be built on allocated sites before 2025, particularly where a developer has not been identified.
- 1.25 In light of this, the Council should consider allocating further sites to ensure that there is some flexibility built in. This is also pertinent as the Council have not included a lapse rate.

Q4.16. Is it reasonable to assume that, in addition to the supply identified in the Plan, around 600 dwellings are likely to be built on windfall sites during the Plan period? If so, is it necessary to modify the Plan to refer to such an assumption?

- 1.26 The Council has not produced any up to date evidence regarding windfall sites. The only data appears in the HELAA and only relates to small sites. Our Client therefore considers that there is no justification for the inclusion of a windfall allowance. Our Client notes that the number of windfalls has increased in recent years but this was due to the age of the adopted Local Plan. With a recently adopted Plan in place, there should be fewer windfalls coming forward.
- 1.27 Policy H1 sets out if the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing, 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 main urban area or service villages (as defined in Policy SH 1) will be supported. Our Client considers this is sufficient.

Q4.17. Will the Plan be effective in ensuring that sufficient land will be available to allow at least 9,840 net additional dwellings to be completed in the Borough between 2016 and 2036?

- 1.28 We have set out in our response to Matter 2 that our Client considers the 9,840 net additional dwellings to be appropriate. The trajectory identifies 11,540 dwellings to be delivered within the plan period and this buffer should be appropriate in ensuring the delivery of homes in the Borough.

Q4.18. Would basing the five year requirement on 422 dwellings per year be effective in helping to ensure that identified needs, and the target of 492 dwellings per year, can be met?

1.29 Please refer to our response to (Matter 2) which sets out that our Client considers that the Council should pursue a single housing requirement of 492 dwellings per annum ensuring the right balance can be achieved between economic growth and the provision of homes in the Borough. Furthermore, the target of 492 homes, rather than 422, would ensure that more affordable homes.

Q4.19. Is the Council's proposed modification to paragraph 6.0.2 to refer to a 5% buffer necessary to make the Plan sound and, if so, would it be effective in so doing? To be effective, does the Plan need to be modified to set out how the five year requirement will be calculated throughout the plan period? If so, which of the approaches described by the Council in its response to PQ23 should be included, having regard to national policy and guidance?

1.30 Our Client is supportive of the 5% buffer, but the modification repeats national policy, and is not required. The Council do not need to set out how the five year requirement will be calculated as again this is set out in national guidance and does not need to be repeated. If the calculation is to be included, it should be based on the guidance.

Q4.20. Does the housing trajectory (Appendix A) and associated evidence demonstrate that the Plan will be effective in helping to ensure that there will be a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet an appropriately calculated five year requirement when the Plan is adopted and thereafter?

1.31 Our Client has set out that in terms of the allocation at Great Burdon they will be on site by 2023 and that completions will be greater than that projected by the Council. The trajectory should be updated in light of this.

Q4.21. Is the approach set out in policy H1 to allowing development outside development limits if there is no longer a demonstrable supply of sites to fully meet the five year requirement justified and consistent with national policy?

1.32 Although our Client welcomes the inclusion of the policy, as well as the Council being proactive where there is no five year housing land available, the justification of the wording used is not clear and it is not effective or positively prepared.

1.33 It is not clear how a site makes a "*positive contribution to the five year supply*". Surely, if the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply all sites make a positive contribution (subject to material considerations).

1.34 The policy also makes reference to "*sustainable sites located beyond development limits*". There is no justification for the latter part of this statement and the policy should be reworded to make reference to "*sustainable sites*" only regardless of its location within, or outwith, of the development limits.

Appendix 1- Statement of Common Ground signed by Bellway Home, Story Homes and Darlington Borough Council

Statement of Common Ground

Between: Darlington Borough Council and:
Story Homes Limited and Bellway Homes (North
East Division)

**Darlington Borough Local Plan 2016-36 Proposed
Submission (August 2020):**

Draft Policy H2: Housing Allocations (Strategic
Policy) – Great Burdon

May 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared jointly by Darlington Borough Council, Story Homes and Bellway Homes (North East Division) (here known as "the Developer Group").
- 1.2 The Statement relates to the draft policy H2: Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy), specifically the emerging allocation of land at Great Burdon (Site Reference 20) as included within the Submission Version of the Darlington Borough Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Statement sets out the Areas of Common Ground between the Parties.

2. Background

- 2.1 Land at Great Burdon 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'.
- 2.2 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).
- 2.3 Collaboratively the site is under the control of Story Homes and Bellway Homes. Through representations previously submitted and meetings with Darlington Borough Council, both Story Homes and Bellway Homes have consistently expressed clear support for the site's allocation and the Council's decision to bring forward a growth-led Local Plan.
- 2.4 Story Homes and Bellway Homes have continued to refine proposals for the scheme at Great Burdon. This has largely been undertaken via the instruction or update of technical evidence and the enhancement of the Masterplan. Whilst the Developer Group had previously expressed the site capacity as approximately 1,500 homes within a Vision Document that was prepared in 2014, this has now been reduced to 1,250 new homes. A direct result of the Master-planning process following updated technical evidence.
- 2.5 The Developer Group recently prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Statement, which was appended to the joint Representations to the Submission Version of the Darlington Local Plan in September 2020. In this document, the Developer Group explored the sites capacity in detail and provided greater clarity to the delivery and viability of homes at Great Burdon.
- 2.6 Story Homes and Bellway Homes believe there is betterment to the Council's delivery trajectory. Whilst Darlington Borough Council note that 500 homes can be delivered within the Plan-Period, the Developer Group believed that it is realistic to deliver 625 homes within the Plan-Period. More detail of this can be found within the Infrastructure Delivery Statement (Appendix 3).
- 2.7 The Developer Group believes that approximately 625 new homes can be achieved on-site and within the Plan Period. In order to meet the indicative yield of 1250 homes within the site, as directed by the Local Plan, alongside the necessary infrastructure requirements the Developer Group has sought to align the north western extent of the scheme with the presence of a Gas Pipeline (see Appendix 1 for Graphic Detailing suggested re-alignment of Green Wedge Boundary). As opposed to the boundary created by the policy designation ENV4 (g) 'Green Wedge'.
- 2.8 The Green Wedge boundary is largely defined through the presence of historic field boundaries. Instead, the Developer Group wishes to align the Green Wedge boundary with the gas pipelines present in the north west corner of the site. This will create a logical, and defensible physical boundary, whilst also maintaining a degree of separation from the listed farmhouses.

- 2.9 The Developer Group believes that the presence of development in part of the north western extent of the scheme is warranted to deliver the full capacity requirement and to ensure that the initial northern phase does not carry an excessive relative burden of infrastructure costs at the early stage of delivery, such as elongated sections of the link road.
- 2.10 Story Homes and Bellway Homes, jointly, have previously commissioned Landscape and Heritage Assessments of the development impact on the significance of the value of the nearby heritage assets including the SAM Starfish RAF Decoy site and the listed farmhouses to the north west of the site (associated with Great Burdon village). It is considered that the resultant effect of development in this location would not demonstrably impact the listed farmhouses to the north west of the scheme nor would it undermine the Green Wedge designation. The Developer Group considers that the SAM can be successfully integrated within the scheme at the detailed design stage.
- 2.11 The preparation of the infrastructure Delivery Statement and current update of the Masterplan has allowed the Developer Group to fully understand the infrastructure requirements of the scheme. The site 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. A distributor link road is to be delivered through the site connecting the two access points.
- 2.12 The Developer Group considers it appropriate to align the delivery of infrastructure on-site with the delivery of homes. This will not only ensure infrastructure is delivered in a timely and appropriate manner but ensure viability does not impede delivery. The Developer Group does not consider that there will be a negative impact as a result of the proposals. Due to the uplift in delivery of homes from 500 units (Darlington Borough Council's assumption) within the Plan Period to approximately 625 homes, as noted in the Infrastructure Delivery Statement, there will naturally be an uplift in the degree of infrastructure delivered within the Plan Period.

3. Common Ground

3.1 It is common ground between the Parties that:

- a) Land at Great Burdon is a suitable and sustainable location for major residential development within the Borough and presents an opportunity to deliver a significant amount of housing within the Plan Period and beyond.
- b) The delivery of homes at Great Burdon is significant in meeting the housing needs of the Borough but also the Vision and Objectives of the emerging Darlington Local Plan. Land at Great Burdon can deliver above the Council's expected delivery trajectory within the Plan Period and significantly boost the supply of housing within the Borough.
- c) The land at Great Burdon is in part constrained by the presence of physical assets (water courses, over-head electricity lines and heritage assets) and as such alternative methods of delivery and design will be explored by the Developer Group and Darlington Borough Council collaboratively.
- d) Policy ENV4 (g) 'Green Wedge' will be respected and maintained within the scheme for Great Burdon. The Council has indicated that it will be acceptable for any development proposal to be provided on part of the currently defined 'Green wedge' provided that a separation is maintained between the development and Great Burdon. The proposal shown at figure 2 to Appendix 1 is considered appropriate. This will provide a defensible boundary and retain an appropriate separation between the existing development edge at Great Burdon Village and the new development edge. The treatment of the edge of the new development in this area will be designed to respect the natural and heritage assets (listed farmhouses) within proximity to the site. The Developer Group will work collaboratively with Darlington Borough Council to bring forward a suitable scheme.
- e) The land at Great Burdon will feature access from both the north at a new junction formed on the A1150 (Darlington Road) and the south utilising the existing signal control on the B6279. A distributor link road will be provided within the scheme, this will be delivered in a phased manner which is linked to the delivery of homes whilst ensuring the viability of the scheme is not impacted upon. With the uplift on Darlington Borough Council's delivery trajectory, it is considered that a significant portion of necessary infrastructure will be delivered within the Plan Period.

4. Declaration

Signed on behalf of Darlington Borough Council:

Name: Ian Williams

Date: 7/5/21

Signature: 

Signed on behalf of Bellway Homes (North East Division):

Name: MARK MAKEWEEY

Date: 06/05/2021

Signature: 

Signed on behalf of Story Homes Limited:

Name: JOAN WINSTANLEY

Date: 06/05/2021

Signature: 

Appendix 1: Graphics Detailing suggested re-alignment of Green Wedge Boundary

Figure 1: Green Wedge Boundary as identified through Emerging Darlington Local Plan

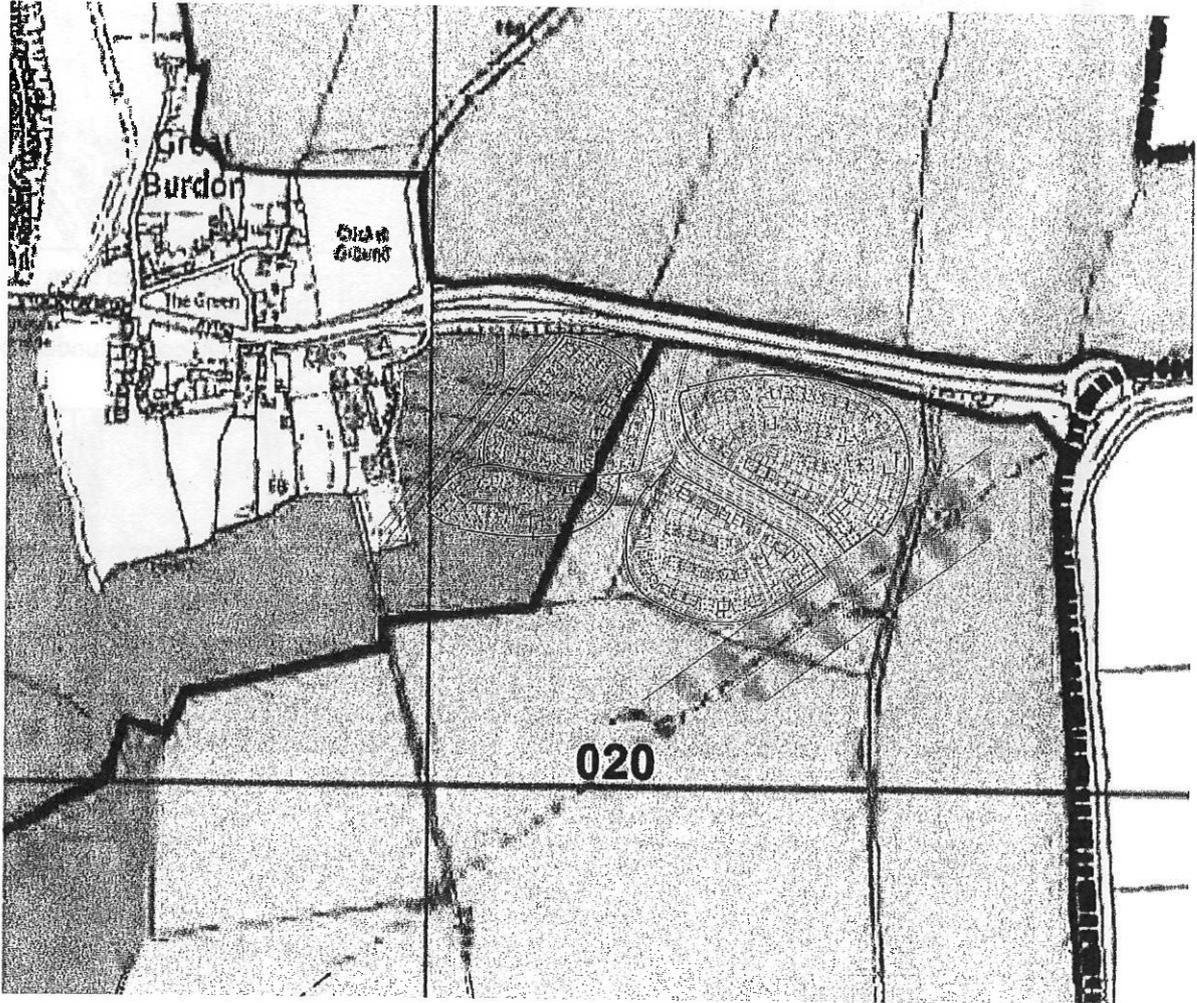
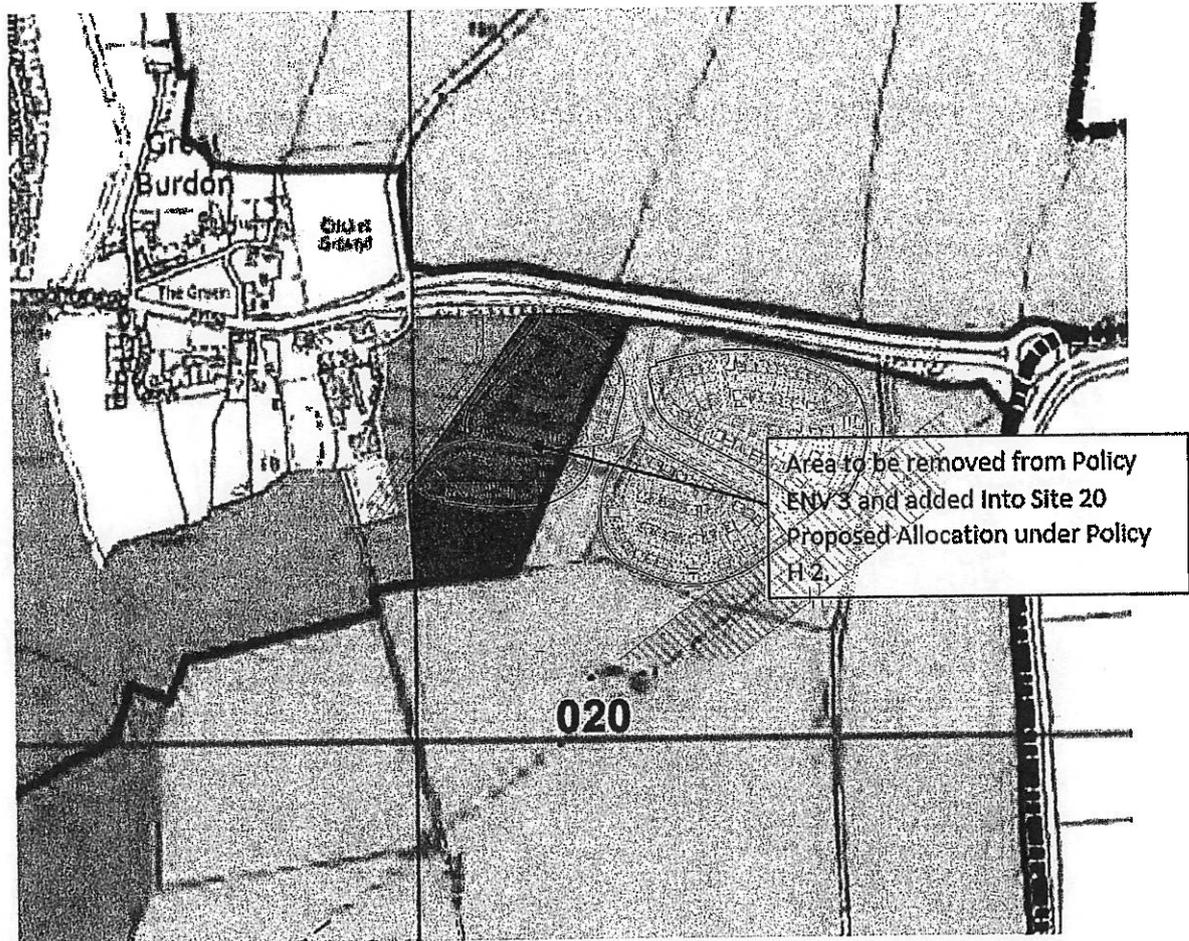


Figure 2: Suggested area to be removed from ENV 3 'Green Wedge' and be included within proposed Allocation Site 20 (Policy H2)



Appendix 2: Context Plan for Great Burdon

Statement of Common Ground

Between: Darlington Borough Council and:
Story Homes Limited and Bellway Homes (North
East Division)

Darlington Borough Local Plan 2016-36 Proposed Submission (August 2020):

Draft Policy H2: Housing Allocations (Strategic
Policy) – Great Burdon

May 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared jointly by Darlington Borough Council, Story Homes and Bellway Homes (North East Division) (here known as “the Developer Group”).
- 1.2 The Statement relates to the draft policy H2: Housing Allocations (Strategic Policy), specifically the emerging allocation of land at Great Burdon (Site Reference 20) as included within the Submission Version of the Darlington Borough Local Plan.
- 1.3 The Statement sets out the Areas of Common Ground between the Parties.

2. Background

- 2.1 Land at Great Burdon 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'.
- 2.2 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).
- 2.3 Collaboratively the site is under the control of Story Homes and Bellway Homes. Through representations previously submitted and meetings with Darlington Borough Council, both Story Homes and Bellway Homes have consistently expressed clear support for the site's allocation and the Council's decision to bring forward a growth-led Local Plan.
- 2.4 Story Homes and Bellway Homes have continued to refine proposals for the scheme at Great Burdon. This has largely been undertaken via the instruction or update of technical evidence and the enhancement of the Masterplan. Whilst the Developer Group had previously expressed the site capacity as approximately 1,500 homes within a Vision Document that was prepared in 2014, this has now been reduced to 1,250 new homes. A direct result of the Master-planning process following updated technical evidence.
- 2.5 The Developer Group recently prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Statement, which was appended to the joint Representations to the Submission Version of the Darlington Local Plan in September 2020. In this document, the Developer Group explored the sites capacity in detail and provided greater clarity to the delivery and viability of homes at Great Burdon.
- 2.6 Story Homes and Bellway Homes believe there is betterment to the Council's delivery trajectory. Whilst Darlington Borough Council note that 500 homes can be delivered within the Plan-Period, the Developer Group believed that it is realistic to deliver 625 homes within the Plan-Period. More detail of this can be found within the Infrastructure Delivery Statement (Appendix 3).
- 2.7 The Developer Group believes that approximately 625 new homes can be achieved on-site and within the Plan Period. In order to meet the indicative yield of 1250 homes within the site, as directed by the Local Plan, alongside the necessary infrastructure requirements the Developer Group has sought to align the north western extent of the scheme with the presence of a Gas Pipeline (see Appendix 1 for Graphic Detailing suggested re-alignment of Green Wedge Boundary). As opposed to the boundary created by the policy designation ENV4 (g) 'Green Wedge'.
- 2.8 The Green Wedge boundary is largely defined through the presence of historic field boundaries. Instead, the Developer Group wishes to align the Green Wedge boundary with the gas pipelines present in the north west corner of the site. This will create a logical, and defensible physical boundary, whilst also maintaining a degree of separation from the listed farmhouses.

- 2.9 The Developer Group believes that the presence of development in part of the north western extent of the scheme is warranted to deliver the full capacity requirement and to ensure that the initial northern phase does not carry an excessive relative burden of infrastructure costs at the early stage of delivery, such as elongated sections of the link road.
- 2.10 Story Homes and Bellway Homes, jointly, have previously commissioned Landscape and Heritage Assessments of the development impact on the significance of the value of the nearby heritage assets including the SAM Starfish RAF Decoy site and the listed farmhouses to the north west of the site (associated with Great Burdon village). It is considered that the resultant effect of development in this location would not demonstrably impact the listed farmhouses to the north west of the scheme nor would it undermine the Green Wedge designation. The Developer Group considers that the SAM can be successfully integrated within the scheme at the detailed design stage.
- 2.11 The preparation of the infrastructure Delivery Statement and current update of the Masterplan has allowed the Developer Group to fully understand the infrastructure requirements of the scheme. The site 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. A distributor link road is to be delivered through the site connecting the two access points.
- 2.12 The Developer Group considers it appropriate to align the delivery of infrastructure on-site with the delivery of homes. This will not only ensure infrastructure is delivered in a timely and appropriate manner but ensure viability does not impede delivery. The Developer Group does not consider that there will be a negative impact as a result of the proposals. Due to the uplift in delivery of homes from 500 units (Darlington Borough Council's assumption) within the Plan Period to approximately 625 homes, as noted in the Infrastructure Delivery Statement, there will naturally be an uplift in the degree of infrastructure delivered within the Plan Period.

3. Common Ground

3.1 It is common ground between the Parties that:

- a) Land at Great Burdon is a suitable and sustainable location for major residential development within the Borough and presents an opportunity to deliver a significant amount of housing within the Plan Period and beyond.
- b) The delivery of homes at Great Burdon is significant in meeting the housing needs of the Borough but also the Vision and Objectives of the emerging Darlington Local Plan. Land at Great Burdon can deliver above the Council's expected delivery trajectory within the Plan Period and significantly boost the supply of housing within the Borough.
- c) The land at Great Burdon is in part constrained by the presence of physical assets (water courses, over-head electricity lines and heritage assets) and as such alternative methods of delivery and design will be explored by the Developer Group and Darlington Borough Council collaboratively.
- d) Policy ENV4 (g) 'Green Wedge' will be respected and maintained within the scheme for Great Burdon. The Council has indicated that it will be acceptable for any development proposal to be provided on part of the currently defined 'Green wedge' provided that a separation is maintained between the development and Great Burdon. The proposal shown at figure 2 to Appendix 1 is considered appropriate. This will provide a defensible boundary and retain an appropriate separation between the existing development edge at Great Burdon Village and the new development edge. The treatment of the edge of the new development in this area will be designed to respect the natural and heritage assets (listed farmhouses) within proximity to the site. The Developer Group will work collaboratively with Darlington Borough Council to bring forward a suitable scheme.
- e) The land at Great Burdon will feature access from both the north at a new junction formed on the A1150 (Darlington Road) and the south utilising the existing signal control on the B6279. A distributor link road will be provided within the scheme, this will be delivered in a phased manner which is linked to the delivery of homes whilst ensuring the viability of the scheme is not impacted upon. With the uplift on Darlington Borough Council's delivery trajectory, it is considered that a significant portion of necessary infrastructure will be delivered within the Plan Period.

4. Declaration

Signed on behalf of Darlington Borough Council:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Signed on behalf of Bellway Homes (North East Division):

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Signed on behalf of Story Homes Limited:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Appendix 1: Graphics Detailing suggested re-alignment of Green Wedge Boundary

Figure 1: Green Wedge Boundary as identified through Emerging Darlington Local Plan

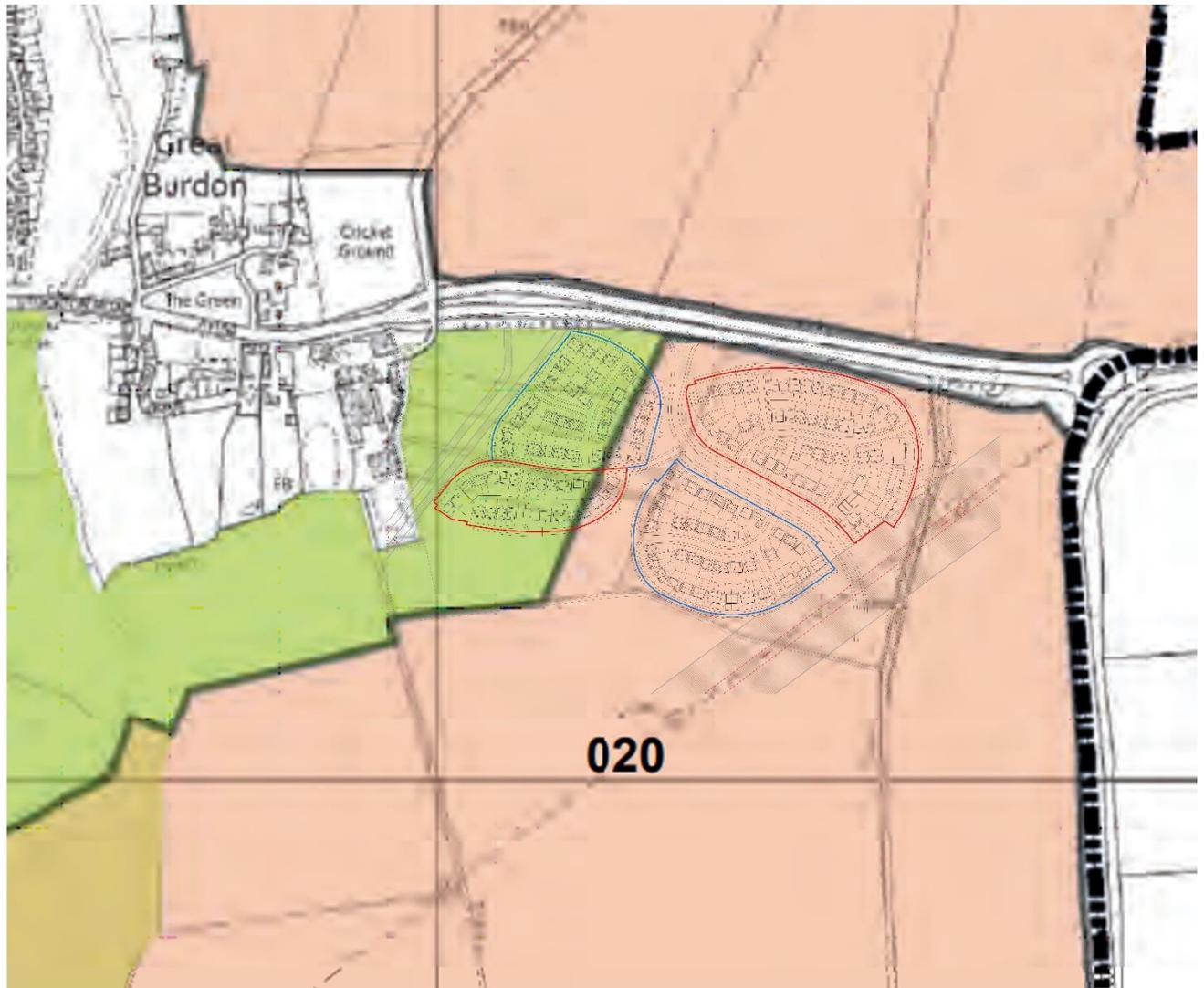
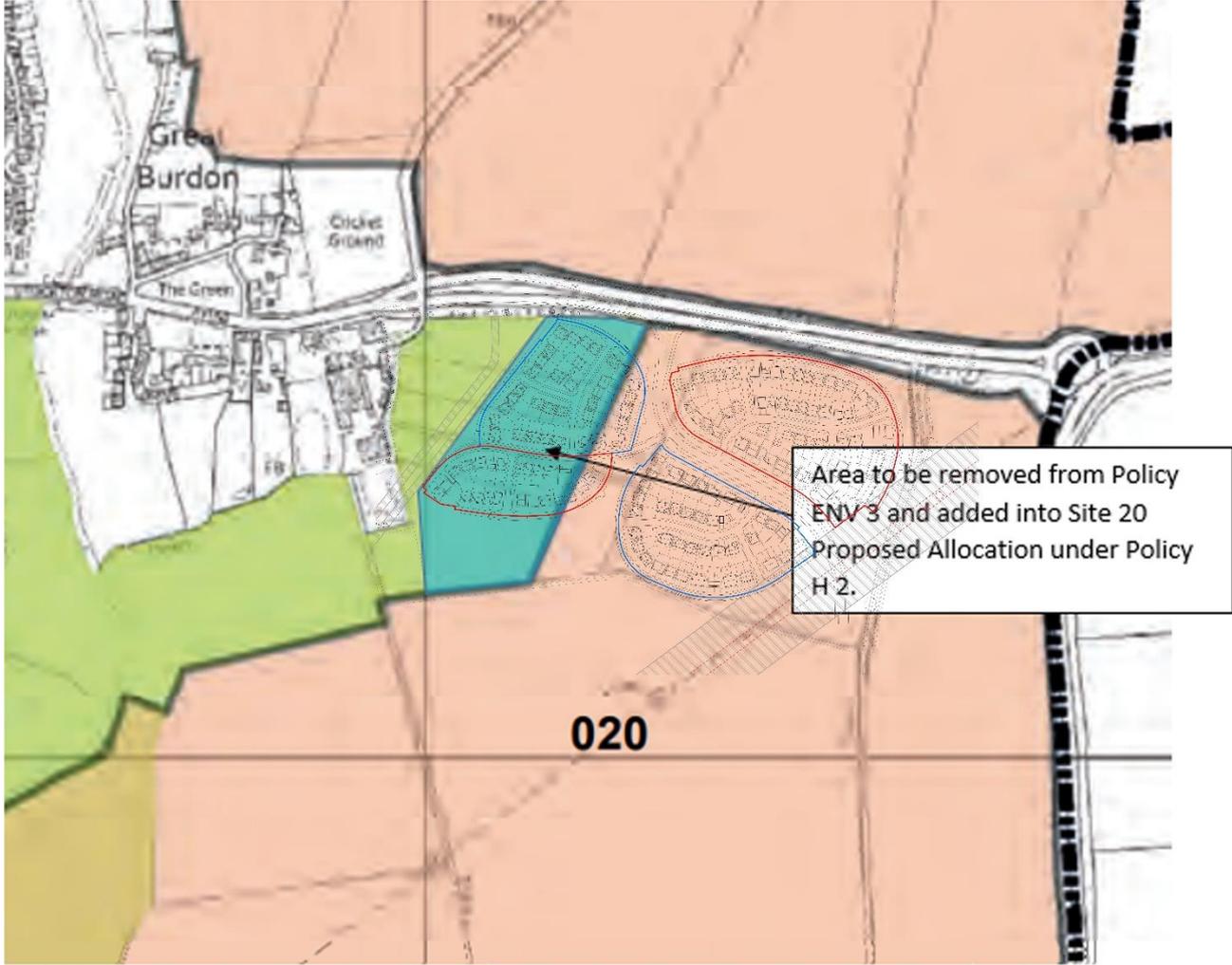


Figure 2: Suggested area to be removed from ENV 3 'Green Wedge' and be included within proposed Allocation Site 20 (Policy H2)



Appendix 2: Context Plan for Great Burdon

1. Vehicle access to the site from the surrounding road at 1:500 scale. (North West 10/20/20)
2. Distribution of road widths - all to north south street. (North West 10/20/20)
3. Development to be concentrated on the western part of the site to the west of the River Skerne.
4. The western area of the site is within flood zone 2.
5. The River Skerne is a public watercourse and is a natural feature of the site. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
6. Local recreation and green infrastructure links are shown. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
7. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
8. Historic field boundaries are shown.
9. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
10. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
11. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.
12. The plan shows the location of the River Skerne and the location of the River Skerne.

