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## Examination of the Darlington Local Plan

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### **INSPECTOR'S NOTE NO. 16: ACTION POINTS FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL HEARING SESSION**

#### **Introduction**

Further to the discussions at the hearing session held on 7 September 2021, the following actions are required. I consider these to be necessary at this stage of the examination to inform my consideration of whether the Plan is sound and/or how it could be made sound by main modifications. I may decide in due course that other or different main modifications are required, including to the parts of the Plan that I refer to below.

Responses should be submitted to the Programme Officer by **midday on Friday 17 September 2021** unless otherwise specified.

#### **Housing supply**

**AP61.** Council to amend the proposed modification to the reasoned justification for the housing land supply identified in the Plan set out in DBC23 to:

- Delete "of 8,440 dwellings and a target" in the first sentence of paragraph 6.2.2.
- Add to the end of paragraph 6.2.6 "...5.3 year housing land supply, based on the type of evidence relating to deliverable sites required by national policy", or similar.
- Add text after the third sentence of paragraph 6.2.13 to explain that the figure of 3,119 homes on commitments is the total capacity of those sites based on the planning permissions as at 1 April 2021; that historically lapse rates in the Borough have been around 14%; and that if a similar lapse rate were applied to existing commitments this would reduce the overall supply summarised in Table 6.6 by around 440 dwellings.

- Add a sentence at the end of 6.2.13: "Furthermore, no allowance is made for windfalls over one hectare, and the small site allowance of 25 dwellings per year is below the historic average of 37 dwellings per year on such sites", or similar.

#### **Policy H4: Housing Mix**

**AP62.** Council to amend the proposed modification to policy H4 set out in DBC19.2 so that it refers to a requirement for 45% (rather than 47%) of homes to meet the Building Regulations M4(2) standard for accessible and adaptable homes.

**AP63.** Council to prepare a main modification to the reasoned justification to policy H4 so that it refers to the evidence for the policy H4 requirements for accessible and adaptable, and wheelchair adaptable, homes, and sets out the number of such homes that are needed and explains how this relates to the overall housing requirement set out in the Plan.

#### **Policy H10: Skerningham allocation**

**AP64.** Council to amend the proposed modification to policy H10 and reasoned justification set out in DBC19.2 to:

- Delete references to "land to the east/west of the allocation boundary" and instead refer to the "eastern/western part of the allocation", or similar.
- Amend the last sentence of 6.10.3 to clarify that the design code will be prepared within around six months of the Plan being adopted, and that it will be a supplementary planning document.
- Clarify that improvements will need to be made to Barmpton Lane, including the junction with Whinbush Way, to serve initial phases of development on the eastern part of the site.
- Clarify the types of physical, social/community and environmental infrastructure that the "infrastructure phasing plan" will be required to include. Further consideration should also be given to clarifying in the Plan the timing of the "neighbourhood centre" (and its various components) and "other local community facilities" referred to in parts (b) and (c) in relation to the phases / amounts of residential development.
- Clarify how the "review of all infrastructure requirements" (to be undertaken prior to the occupation of the 1,650<sup>th</sup> dwelling) relates to a future review of the Plan, having regard to NPPF footnote 37 and PPG ID: 61-060.

**AP65.** Council to prepare an alternative version of the Skerningham Masterplan Framework (Figure 6.1) that would apply if the Darlington Golf Club were not to be relocated.

## **Policy H11: Greater Faverdale allocation**

**AP66.** Council to amend the proposed modification to policy H11 and reasoned justification set out in DBC19.2 to:

- Amend paragraph 6.11.6 to delete the reference to the comprehensive masterplan and infrastructure phasing plan being approved by the Council in advance of any planning application being submitted.
- Clarify the types of physical, social/community and environmental infrastructure that the "infrastructure phasing plan" will be required to include. Further consideration should also be given to clarifying in the Plan the timing of the "neighbourhood centre" (and its various components) referred to in part (c) in relation to the phases / amounts of residential and employment development.
- Clarify the requirements relating to the Stockton and Darlington Railway / other designated and non-designated heritage assets (in the last part of (j) and the following paragraph) and ensure consistency with policy ENV1 and ENV2.
- Clarify how the "review of all infrastructure requirements" would be triggered by the occupation of the 750<sup>th</sup> home and/or development of 24 hectares of employment land, and how it relates to a future review of the Plan, having regard to NPPF footnote 37 and PPG ID: 61-060.

## **Policy ENV3(A): Rural Gaps**

**AP67.** Council to consider whether further changes are needed to the Policies Map to ensure that the Rural Gap between Great Burdon and housing site ref 20 is justified, and that policy ENV3(A) and requirements for site ref 20 can be effectively applied.

## **Policy IN1: Priorities for the road network**

**AP68.** Council to amend the proposed modification in DBC19.2 so that the list of road schemes in policy IN1 part (C)(vi) is consistent with the proposed modification to paragraph 10.5.11.

## **Policy IN2: Improving access and accessibility**

**AP69.** Council to amend the proposed modification to policy IN2 part (d) in DBC19.2 to clarify the requirement for 80% of dwellings to be within 400 metres walking distance of a bus stop.

## **Policy IN4: Cycle parking and storage**

**AP70.** Council to prepare a modification to paragraph 10.8.3 to clarify that the requirements for cycle parking and storage in the Tees Valley

Highway Design Guide are due to be reviewed in 2021/2022 and in the meantime nationally defined standards will be applied in the Borough.

*William Fieldhouse*

8 September 2021