

Sunderland Core Strategy and Development Plan Examination – Sunderland City Council’s response to Inspector’s Preliminary Views on Matters and Issues for the Examination

Matter 1 – Legal Compliance, Procedural Requirements and the Duty to Cooperate (DTC)

Paragraph 13

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken at all stages of Plan preparation. The submitted SA (SD.5) was prepared alongside the Publication Draft of the Core Strategy and Development Plan (CSDP) (SD.1) and helped to inform the policies within the Plan.

As set out in Section 4.3 of the SA (SD.5: pg.33), the assessment of each substantive component of the Publication Draft CSDP was initially undertaken on a pre-mitigation basis, which allowed any ambiguities and other weaknesses to be identified and any appropriate mitigation or enhancement recommendations be devised by the consultants preparing the SA.

In early May 2018, a schedule of the proposed mitigation and enhancement recommendations was shared with the Council. As a result of these recommendations a number of changes were incorporated into the final Publication Draft of the Plan which was subject to consultation between June and July 2018.

A schedule of these recommendations and the changes made is set out within Table 4.2 of the SA report (SA.5: pg.43). Where no changes were made as a result of these recommendations, this is also set out within the table. It is considered that no further changes are required to the Plan as a result of the SA.

Paragraph 14

The Council can confirm that this is a correct interpretation of the HRA process undertaken. The Council are satisfied that the process has been legally compliant in light of the ruling and have agreed the approach undertaken with Natural England, as set out within the Statement of Common Ground appended to the Report of Representations (SD.8). No legal advice has been sought on this as it has not been considered necessary to do so.

Paragraph 15

No specific representations have been made on the contents of the DtC Statement (SD.11).

The DtC Statement sets out the continuous and ongoing dialogue which Sunderland City Council has undertaken with neighbouring authorities during the preparation of the Plan. This included discussions with neighbouring planning authorities regarding Sunderland’s development requirements. A summary of the DtC with each of the neighbouring authorities is set out in Part 4 of the DtC Statement and a schedule of meetings is provided in Appendix 2 of the Statement.

In addition, the Council wrote directly to each of the neighbouring authorities to ascertain whether they would be able to accommodate any of Sunderland’s development needs without incursion into the Green Belt. All neighbouring authorities responded to advise that

they would be unable to meet Sunderland's development needs without their own Green Belt incursion. A copy of the Council's letter and each of the responses is provided in Appendices 3-6 of the DtC Statement.

Matter 2 – Spatial Strategy

Paragraph 17

The Council will consider the inclusion of tables to apportion the distribution of housing and employment growth based on the current evidence available in the Stratgic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Employment Land Review. The preference would be to include this as supporting text to Policy SP1.

Paragraph 18

The 130.86 hectares noted in the CSDP (at figure 11 of the Plan) refers to the baseline of total available employment land supply as reported in the ELR (2016)¹. The ELR set out core and further recommendations that suggested specific sites that should be removed from the employment land supply. Moreover, officers at the Council determined that an additional site (North of Campanile Hotel) should also be removed.

When all deductions are taken into account, available employment supply falls to 97.75 hectares. Table 1 sets out the main reasons for why the former employment sites have been removed.

Table 1: Reasons for Removal

Reason	Net Site Area Lost (ha)	Proportion (%)
Potential/ Commitment to Housing Supply	26.17	79%
Infrastructure	0.24	0.7%
Retail Led Development	0.89	2.7%
Typology Issue / Dilapidated Condition or Access Issues	3.53	12.1%
Environmental Constraints	0.08	0.2%
Industrial Uses Likely to Be Inappropriate	0.47	1.4%
Weak Demand for Offices	1.25	3.8%
Total	33.12	100%

¹ This was originally reported in the Employment Land Review (ELR) (2016)¹. See Sunderland Employment Land Review, 2016, page 91.

Since these recommendations were undertaken a further update of the employment land supply position suggests that the identified total employment supply is 92.85 hectares². This reduction has been due to recent site take up and new employment land becoming available which has established the current total employment supply of 92.85 hectares. It should be noted as demonstrated in the Compliance Statement (2018) (SD.66), that given likely employment needs of between 95 to 115 hectares employment supply is becoming particularly tight.

As noted in Table 1, previous employment land can make a contribution to housing land supply. There are four sites identified from the process described above that could potentially deliver 1,167 dwellings over the plan period, based on the assessment set out in the SHLAA (2018) (SD.22). This equates to approximately nine percent of housing requirements (2015 to 2033).

Notwithstanding the above the issues set out in CSDP paragraph 4.20 are still pertinent to wider issues about the delivery of PDL. As demonstrated by the Whole Plan Viability Assessment (with CIL Scoping) (SD.60), much PDL is highly constrained through contamination or other prevailing factors which impact on site viability. In addition, the surplus employment sites earmarked for housing development are in many cases on greenfield land or sites which have become partially naturalised green spaces in more desirable semi-rural locations within the Sunderland Administrative Area.

Paragraph 19

The Council note the comments from the Inspector and will seek to add a concise justification for each of the Green Belt releases within the text of the Local Plan.

Paragraph 20

The Council propose to move Paragraph 4.44 of the Plan to follow Paragraph 4.29. The new text following would be as follows:

“Furthermore, and in line with the NPPF, the Council has identified ‘Safeguarded Land’ in order to provide a degree of permanence to the Green Belt boundaries in the longer term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the Plan period.”

Paragraph 21

The Council has set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in the city. This land represents the most sustainable and deliverable options within the plan period. They take account of the varying roles and character of local areas, they promote the vitality of our main urban areas and help to protect the overall role of the city’s Green Belt. In identifying these sites, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside has been duly considered. The city’s ‘open countryside’ as identified by Policy NE8 has been considered as part of this process, and while parts of this identified area adjoins the edge of urban settlements, these areas are distant from local facilities and infrastructure and do not represent sustainable sites.

The land supported by this policy represents isolated unsustainable development land, save for the exceptions criteria set out within the policy. This land is beset by significant physical

² See Compliance Statement (2018) (SD.66) – page 295 (September 2018 - Employment Land Available Supply Update)

constraints, as set out in the city's Strategic Land Review (SP.18), and by Paragraphs 12.188 and 6.256 of the Compliance Statement (SD.66). Policy NE8 represents an overall area of higher landscape value with quality wildlife/Green Infrastructure corridors, protected species and protected habitat.

Paragraph 22

The Council notes the Inspectors comment and propose a modification to change the word 'inappropriate' to 'unacceptable'.

Paragraph 23

Comment noted. The Council propose to amend the policy to make criterion 7(iii) its own part of the policy.

Matter 4 – Housing Land Supply

Paragraph 26

The SHLAA figure referred to in paragraph 4.22 (13,233) **does not** take into account the allocations within the HGAs proposed as part of the Plan.

Paragraph 27

The residual amount is 177 dwellings, with additional numbers for flexibility (see response to Paragraphs 29 & 30). The 13,233 homes includes all of the sites that are likely to be allocated in the A & D Plan (i.e. this includes all of the deliverable and developable sites in the SHLAA).

Paragraph 28

Table 22 of the Council's Compliance Statement (SD.66: Para 8.44; Pg.245), breaks down the housing supply into completions, units under construction, outline and full planning permission, small sites, demolitions, strategic sites, other SHLAA sites and HGA's. This table will be updated to provide more clarity with regards allocations within the Plan and allocations to be made within the A& D and will be inserted into the CSDP within Section 6.

Paragraph 29

The Council has applied a flexibility factor of 8.5% as part of the housing supply to ensure that the housing requirement can be met. The Council has assessed the lapse rate over the recent years which demonstrates that the lapse rate has been below the flexibility factor applied. On this basis, the Council are satisfied that the 8.5% flexibility factor will ensure that the housing requirement is met over the plan period.

Paragraph 30

As detailed in the Council's response to Paragraph 29, an 8.5% flexibility factor has been applied.

Paragraph 31

As set out in the SHLAA (SD.22; Paras 4.65-4.66;Pg.24), the windfall allowance has been considered in line with paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2012). The evidence indicates that over the past seven years an average of 39 dwellings per annum have been delivered by windfall sites, (five dwellings or more have been considered as this is in line with SHLAA thresholds).

However, this has been reducing over this time period due to the robustness of the SHLAA and even though it is still expected that windfall sites will be developed (hence the reference to them in Policy SP8) it is not anticipated that they will be at the same level as they have been previously. As such it is not considered that compelling evidence is in place for a windfall allowance (five dwellings or more) in line with the NPPF to be included.

In addition to the above windfalls the Council have also assessed the number of dwellings that contribute to the housing supply through small sites (4 units or less) which are excluded from the SHLAA. An allowance for 50 dwellings per annum on small sites within the supply has been made.

The Council consider the figure of 50dpa from small sites to be robust. Planning records indicate that over the past five years an average of 47 dwellings per annum (net) have been delivered through sites providing four or less units, which includes new build, change of use and residential splits. This is set out within the SHLAA (SD.22; Para.4.68.Pg.25).

Paragraph 32

The Council can confirm that an updated housing supply position will be available for discussion at the hearings that reflects the position at 31 March 2019.

Paragraph 33

The Council can confirm that additional text will be inserted into section 6 of the Plan to summarise the information contained within Section 6 of the SHLAA in relation to the five-year land supply.

Paragraph 34

The Council are proposing to produce a HIS later this year and it is proposed that Paragraph 6.8 of the Plan is amended to reflect this.

Matter 5 – Specific Housing Needs and Standards

Paragraph 36

The Council note this comment. Policy H2 Affordable Homes will be updated to reflect the definition of major development within the 2019 Framework (10 dwellings or more).

Paragraph 37

The Council note this comment. The policy will be updated accordingly with the insertion of the word '**exceptionally**' after 'However' in point 1 of Policy H2 Affordable Homes.

Paragraph 38

The Council note this comment. It is proposed to add an additional point to Policy H2, as follows:

“5. Reflect the latest available evidence with regards the tenure split and size of dwellings.”

Paragraph 39

The Council propose to include a cross-reference to the background text of Policy H2 Affordable Homes with the inclusion of an additional sentence at the end of paragraph 6.15 to read:

“Should a need be identified for a rural exception site, consideration will be given to Policy NE8 of this plan and national policy”.

The 2017 SHMA update (SD.23) considered the affordable housing needs of the city, breaking this down into sub-areas and wards. This evidence does not indicate any need for a rural exception policy, as such a policy of this nature has not been included within the Plan. The SHMA demonstrates that house prices within Sunderland are amongst the lowest in the region and are largely affordable. Furthermore, the administrative area is largely urban by nature with very few areas that could be considered remote, which could benefit from a housing exception sites policy.

Paragraph 40

The Council note this comment. It is proposed that Point 1 iii of Policy H1 Housing Mix will be amended to incorporate the following text:-

“iii. achieving an appropriate density for its location which takes into account the character of the area and the level of accessibility; and”

Paragraph 41

National Planning Practice Guidance (ID: 56-020-20150327) encourages LPAs to take account of need, viability and timing when adopting optional technical standards. The Internal Space Standards Reports (SD.25) and Whole Plan Viability Assessment (SD.60) set out the need for the introduction of NDSS, as well as the viability of adopting the standards. On timing, the PPG forewarns that “there may need to be a reasonable transitional period following adoption of a new policy on space standards to enable developers to factor the cost of space standards into future land acquisitions” (PPG, para 20). This point was also raised by several respondents to Policy BH1, including Barratt David Wilson Homes (PD1623) and the Home Builders Federation (PD4749).

Due to the responses the policy generated from developers and housebuilders, it was considered appropriate to incorporate a transitional period into the Local Plan to enable developers to factor the cost of NDSS into future land acquisitions. The transition period of one year is considered proportionate and is consistent with other Local Plans recently adopted. Should the Inspector be of the opinion that the suggested transitional period is appropriate, the Council accept the Inspectors view that this would be considered a Main Modification and would seek to incorporate the requirement within criterion 14 of Policy BH1 for clarity.

Paragraph 42

The Council note this comment. It is intended to use the definition for major development contained within the Glossary of the 2019 Framework. To clarify this the Council propose to make an amendment to the supporting text to the policy.

Paragraph 43

The Council note this comment. The Council propose a modification to add an additional point to Policy H6 as set out below:-

“6. the accommodation provides a good standard of living space and amenity for occupiers of the HMO.”

Paragraph 45

The Council can advise that Hartlepool Borough Council through their Local Plan (adopted May 2018) identified a small need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches and indicated that the provision of a dedicated site, whether permanent or stop-over may not offer the best solution to meeting the small theoretical housing need. The plan goes onto state that this is supported by the fact that the local authority has never received any applications for pitches and only experiences very low instances of unauthorised encampments. The situation is very similar in Sunderland. The Plan does contain a criteria based policy, Policy HSG13, for gypsy and traveller provision. Hartlepool Borough Council do have an Unauthorised Encampment Policy in place.

South Lakeland District Council are now considering this issue through the preparation of their Single Local Plan and as such the issue was not considered in detail through their now adopted Development Management Policies (January 2019).

The Council will liaise with other planning authorities in the sub-region with a view to providing the inspector with further details on both the available and the proposed transit/stop-over provision within the Sub-Region.

Paragraph 46

The Council note this point. It is the Council's intention to propose a modification to set out the site specific considerations within Policy H4 and also incorporate site location plans. The detail of this will be made available in due course.

Matter 6 – Employment Land Supply, Employment Policies and Town Centres

Paragraph 48

The Council note the request and will produce a table to be included in Section 7 of the Plan setting out how the 95 ha of employment land required under Policy SP1 would be provided.

Paragraph 49

Table 7.3 of the Retail Needs Assessment (SD.39:pg.111) shows the summary of quantitative need in the comparison goods sector under the employment led population sensitivity test. This is not the spatial distribution taken forward in the Plan. Table 7.7 of the Retail Needs Assessment (SD.39:pg.113) contains the indicative distribution set out in Policy

SP9. This distribution of 45,400 sqm aims to reverse the recent trend of comparison retail polarisation in Sunderland City Centre by marginally reducing the City Centre's share of comparison floorspace, whilst boosting the shares for Washington and the Coalfield, with no impact on Sunderland North. The Council considers this to provide the most appropriate distribution and this is taken forward within the policy.

Paragraph 50

The spatial distribution set out in Policy SP9 is indicative. This is intended to allow greater flexibility in facilitating retail development across the plan-area. The Council will make site specific allocations through the A&D Plan to meet the needs identified within the policy. With regard to the development opportunities in the City Centre and in Washington and Houghton Town Centres, existing retail allocations made in the UDP will continue to be saved until replacement allocations are made in the Allocations & Designations Plan. The saved allocations include several city centre sites identified in UDP Alteration No. 2; the expansion to Washington Galleries (saved policy WA34) and Houghton Colliery site (saved policy HA31), amongst others. Therefore the policy framework exists to facilitate the development of these sites for retail use. It is not considered necessary to allocate these sites in the CSDP.

As no retail allocations are being made through CSDP the Council has not at this stage sought to identify potential sites for new retail development. Notwithstanding this, the Retail Needs Assessment (SD.39) does identify potential development sites within and on the edge of the City centre and Washington and Houghton Town Centres. The Council is satisfied that the indicative floorspace needs can be met within each of the sub-areas and the sequential assessment approach will be adopted when identifying sites through the A&D Plan.

The Council does not consider it necessary to allocate retail sites through the CSDP as most retail floorspace need is required towards the end of the Plan period, as set out within the Retail Needs Assessment (SD.39).

Paragraph 51

The interpretation is correct that development must meet the requirements of section 3 or section 4 of Policy VC3. The Council agrees with the recommendation to reverse the order of these two sections to improve clarity. The proposed modified wording is set out below:

"3. Proposals for non-A1 use within primary shopping areas will normally be resisted if they would result in:

- i. more than 15% of each Primary Frontage thoroughfare in Sunderland City Centre being in non-A1 retail use; or
- ii. more than 25% of each Primary Frontage thoroughfare in Washington Town Centre being in non-A1 retail use; or
- iii. more than 40% of each Primary Frontage thoroughfare in Houghton Town Centre being in non-A1 retail use.

4. Where proposals for non-A1 use within Primary Frontages will exceed the above thresholds, they will only be considered acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the

premises have been vacant and marketed unsuccessfully for A1 uses for a period of least 24 months."

The Council acknowledges the recommendation in SD.42 that a stricter control of non-A1 development should be imposed on Fawcett Street. This approach was considered too restrictive as the amount of retail floorspace on Fawcett Street has reduced in recent years, therefore this was not taken forward in the CSDP. The Council seeks to avoid vacancies and ensure the vitality of secondary frontages are protected and enhanced and has therefore opted to take more relaxed approach to the diversity of uses allowed within secondary frontages in order to achieve this.

Matter 7 – The Strategies and the Housing, Employment and Mixed-Use Allocations for the Sub-Areas

Paragraph 54

HGA1

The Council understand that the site promoter has a contract in place with Northumbrian Water (NWL) for a vehicular access to be created across this intervening land.

HGA3

There are no formal rights of way, public footpaths or cycle routes that cross the site. However, a permissive footpath does follow the western boundary of the site (formerly known as the Great North Forest Trail). This has been in existence since 1978, and is still used and signposted. It lies within the shelter belt of trees, alongside the A194(M) boundary fence. The Council is considering the possibility of additional wording to clarify this matter.

HGA6

The Council acknowledge that the proposed change would constitute a Main Modification.

With regard to the query regarding prematurity, it should be noted that the site in question is currently designated as Green Belt.

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF (2012) indicates that local planning authorities with Green Belt in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

Furthermore, Paragraph 85 of the NPPF indicates that when defining Green Belt boundaries, the Council must satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period.

As set out within the submitted Exceptional Circumstances Report (SD.33), the Council considers that there are exceptional circumstances present which justify amendments to the Green Belt boundary. The Council therefore undertook a detailed Green Belt Assessment and boundary review (SD.29-32 & SD.34) which informed the proposed new Green Belt

boundaries. In accordance with national policy, as part of this process, the Council has sought to ensure that the revised boundaries are capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

As the site in question is currently designated as Green Belt, if this was not released from the Green Belt as part of the current Green Belt Review at this point in time, it is unlikely that this could be revisited until well beyond the plan period ends in 2033. Bearing in mind the intended permanence of Green Belt boundaries, the intention to ensure that boundaries are capable of enduring beyond the plan period and requirement for the Council to satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period, the Council is concerned that if this site was not released from the Green Belt at this time, that the approach would be inconsistent with the NPPF.

The Council has received circa £12 million as part of an £18 million project from a number of funding partners including Sport England to develop three Community Football Hubs. As part of the funding requirements set out by the Football Foundation and Sport England the Council is required to undertake an updated Playing Pitch Assessment two years after the opening of the new Community Football Hubs (current build timeline suggests this assessment will commence at the end of 2021). The Council has a significant degree of confidence that the site will be deemed surplus to requirement at this point in time. This view has been informed by projected use studies prepared as part of the funding bid for the Community Football Hubs. As part of this programme, 4 football clubs from within Washington will relocate to the Football Hub at Northern Area.

The new Community Football Hubs are currently under construction and are anticipated to open within the in the 19/20 season and therefore it is anticipated that the updated Playing Pitch Assessment would commence in late 2021 and be completed in early 2022. Therefore the Council would be concerned if the site was not taken out of the Green Belt and allocated at this point in time, as due to national Green Belt policy it would be unlikely that another Green Belt review will be undertaken until well beyond the plan period.

The Council are continuing discussions with Sport England with a view to reaching a position of common ground on this matter prior to the Hearing sessions commencing.

HGA7

The Council understands that Hellens will submit a draft of the HRA to Natural England for comment by 15 March 2019, with a view to this being agreed by both parties for submission to the Inspector by 1 April 2019.

HGA8

The Council acknowledge that the proposed change would constitute a Main Modification.

With regard to the query regarding prematurity, it should be noted that the site in question is currently designated as Green Belt.

Paragraph 83 of the NPPF (2012) indicates that local planning authorities with Green Belt in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the

Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

Furthermore, Paragraph 85 of the NPPF indicates that when defining Green Belt boundaries, the Council must satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period.

As set out within the submitted Exceptional Circumstances Report (SD.33), the Council considers that there are exceptional circumstances present which justify amendments to the Green Belt boundary. The Council therefore undertook a detailed Green Belt Assessment and boundary review (SD.29-32 & SD.34) which informed the proposed new Green Belt boundaries. In accordance with national policy, as part of this process, the Council has sought to ensure that the revised boundaries are capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

As the site in question is currently designated as Green Belt, if this was not released from the Green Belt as part of the current Green Belt Review at this point in time, it is unlikely that this could be revisited until well beyond the plan period ends in 2033. Bearing in mind the intended permanence of Green Belt boundaries, the intention to ensure that boundaries are capable of enduring beyond the plan period and requirement for the Council to satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period, the Council is concerned that if this site was not released from the Green Belt at this time, that the approach would be inconsistent with the NPPF.

Notwithstanding the Council's commitment to undertaking an updated Playing Pitch Assessment two years after the opening of the new Sports Hubs, as agreed with Sport England, the Council has a significant degree of confidence that the site will be deemed surplus to requirement at this point in time. As set out within the submitted Playing Pitch Plan (SD.44: pg.22), the site contains a disused playing pitch which was last used in 2015. Taking into consideration that the pitch has not been required for the last three seasons and that additional provision will be provided within this locality by the new Community Football Hub at Sunderland North, the Council is confident that the site will not be required in the future.

The new Community Football Hubs are currently under construction and are anticipated to open within the in the 19/20 season and therefore it is anticipated that the updated Playing Pitch Assessment would commence in in late 2021 and be completed in early 2022. Therefore the Council would be concerned if the site was not taken out of the Green Belt and allocated at this point in time, as due to national Green Belt policy it would be unlikely that another Green Belt review will be undertaken until well beyond the plan period.

The Council are continuing discussions with Sport England with a view to reaching a position of common ground on this matter prior to the Hearing sessions commencing.

SS6

The Council will give consideration to providing additional policy detail along the lines suggested and will respond within the relevant statements produced to answer the Inspector's MIQs.

Matter 8 – Minerals and Waste

Paragraph 56

The intention of Policy WWE8 is to safeguard the existing waste management sites from non-waste development, which could impact upon their operations. The Council therefore already considers that the policy is consistent with Paragraph 11.42 of the Plan.

It should be noted that Policy HS1 also seeks to ensure that development which would unacceptably impact upon existing uses should be resisted. An Additional Modification (M33) was proposed as part of the submitted Schedule of Minor Modifications (SD.3) to further clarify the link between the requirements of Policies HS1 and WWE8.

Paragraph 57

The purpose of Section 2 of Policy SP11 was intended to offer sufficient flexibility should the benefits of the scheme outweigh any likely harm. This is consistent with the approach adopted by the NPPF in a number of regards.

However, for the purposes of minerals development, the Council acknowledge that other than Paragraph 144 of the Framework requiring great weight to be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, the Framework does not indicate that proposals should be supported where that weight outweighs any likely harm. On this basis, the Council would be satisfied to remove Section 2 of the policy.

Paragraph 58

The safeguarded facilities are identified within the submitted Mineral Safeguarding Areas Topic Paper (SD.54: Table 2; pg.7) and are shown in Appendix 3 of the submitted Plan (SD.1). The Council has proposed an Additional Modification (M84) through the submitted Schedule of Minor Modifications (SD.3) which proposes to include a list of the safeguarded facilities.

As these facilities may change over time, the Council does not intend to publish these on the Policies Map at adoption, however is willing to do so if the Inspector considers this to be necessary.

With regard to the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, as these cover large parts of the city these have not been shown in the printed version of the Policies Map as this would make it more difficult to read the other designations and allocations on the map. The Council however do agree that it would be beneficial to amend the interactive version of the Policies Map online to include the Mineral Safeguarding Areas and will commit to making this amendment at adoption.

Paragraph 59

The modification proposed in relation to Policy M3 is proposed Additional Modification M33 as set out within the submitted Schedule of Minor Modifications (SD.3). This modification will be placed within the supporting text to Policy HS1 to demonstrate the linkages to Policy M3.

Matter 9 – Generic Policies of the Plan (not covered by other Matters)

Paragraph 61

The Council has given consideration to defining 'large-scale development' within the supporting text of the policy. A modification is therefore proposed to paragraph 9.5, as follows:

"Masterplans or development frameworks should be prepared for large scale development, in particular those which will be phased. For clarity, large-scale development within the context of this policy is considered to be that which exceeds 250 dwellings for residential schemes or 5 hectares in all other cases. This will ensure that development creates high quality sustainable places based on sound urban design principles..."

Paragraph 62

The Council note this comment and agree that a greater distinction is necessary with regard to SSSI's. The Council therefore propose the following policy modification to Policy NE2:

"3. Development that would adversely affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest, either directly or indirectly, will be required to demonstrate that the reasons for the development, including the lack of an alternative solution, clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites."

In addition to the proposed modification to the policy, it is also suggested that an additional paragraph is inserted before Paragraph 10.10. The proposed modification would be as follows:

"Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are of national significance and receive statutory protection. Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are of regional or sub regional importance, and are designated by a Local Wildlife Sites Partnership. They are non-statutory and rely on the planning system for their protection. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are designated by the Council and receive statutory protection."

Paragraph 63

The Council believe that Criterion 1 of the policy is clear when read in conjunction with the opening sentence of the policy (i.e "To conserve significant trees, woodlands and hedgerows, development should only be permitted where it can clearly demonstrate that development cannot reasonably be located elsewhere").

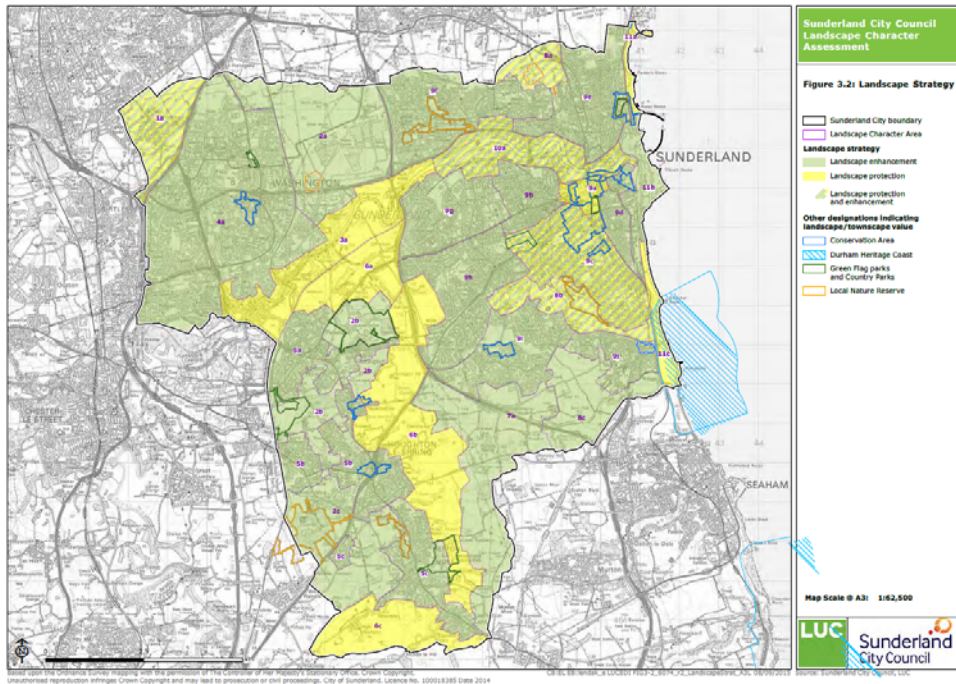
Within this context, it is clear that the policy only relates to proposals that would impact upon significant trees, woodlands or hedgerows.

Paragraph 64

Paragraph 1.15 of the 2015 Sunderland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (SP.47) states that "all landscapes are valued, and all landscapes have the potential to be enhanced". Sunderland's approach is to identify whether the landscape in question needs to be "protected" or "enhanced" or a combination of both. Nevertheless, the Core Strategy and LCA does recognise areas of "higher landscape value". Paragraph 1.14 of the LCA states that "The areas where the strategy is aimed at *landscape protection* equate to the areas of higher landscape value within the City of Sunderland, and these are identified in Figure 3.2.

Other features and designations indicating locally valued landscapes include key open spaces and parks, nature reserves and conservation areas. These are shown alongside the landscape strategies in Figure 3.2.”

For greater clarity in the Plan, we propose to add Figure 3.2 as an Appendix map in the Core Strategy (see below).



Paragraph 65

It is only intended that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is submitted when necessary and not in support of all planning applications. The Council therefore proposed to amend Paragraph 10.45 as follows:

“Where appropriate, applicants will be expected to submit a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to demonstrate that they have met the requirements of Policy NE9.”

Paragraph 66

When read as a whole, it is considered that Policy WWE3 already seeks to prioritise the use of disposal by sustainable methods, including limiting run-off to greenfield rates.

Criterion 3 of the policy requires development to discharge at greenfield runoff rates, including an allowance for climate change. Criterion 4 of the policy indicates that development must incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs) to manage surface water drainage and finally Criterion 5 of the policy sets the hierarchy that must be followed when managing surface water run-off.

On this basis, it is not considered necessary to amend the policy.

Paragraph 67

The Council will include the agreed change within the schedule of proposed Main Modifications.

Matter 10 – Infrastructure and Delivery

Paragraph 69

The Council note this comment. It is proposed to insert the following text into the glossary within the definition of Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

“It is a live document that the council will monitor and review on a regular basis to reflect the current circumstances and to inform the development management process.”

Paragraph 70

It is not considered that the pooling limitations on developer contributions will prevent the delivery of necessary infrastructure, as this has been taken into consideration when preparing the Plan. With regards the Education Planning Report (SD.62), careful consideration has been given to the location of sites put forward for allocation through the Plan and the location of sites within the current SHLAA, in relation to statutory school walking distances to ensure that where additional school places are needed the pooling limitations are not exceeded.

Should the pooling restrictions not be removed as a result of the Government’s consultation on reforming developer contributions, consideration will be given to incorporating additional text into the Planning Obligations SPD to set out measures to ensure that contributions do not fall foul of the restrictions.

Paragraph 71

Paragraph 10.26 already provides clarity on what is considered to constitute ‘major development’ within the context of Policy NE4.

Paragraph 72

The calculation for the amount of greenspace required is set out within Part 3i of Policy NE4. The Council do recognise however that the policy wording would benefit from an amendment that would make it clearer that this calculation is for all forms types of greenspace and not just ‘amenity greenspace’. It is therefore proposed that the following amendment to the policy is made:

“a minimum of 0.9ha per 1000 bedspaces of ~~amenity~~ useable greenspace on site, unless”

This modification enables further clarity when the policy is read in conjunction with supporting paragraphs 10.23-10.25.

Matter 11 – Monitoring and Implementation

Paragraph 75

The Monitoring Framework was published alongside the Plan and was made available for comment. No representations were made in relation to the Framework.

Paragraph 76

Consideration has been given to including the Monitoring Framework within the Plan; however it was decided that a standalone document could provide more comprehensive detail whilst maintaining a concise Plan. The Plan includes the implementation table in Appendix 6 and references the Monitoring Framework where appropriate. It is not considered necessary to include the entire framework in the Plan itself. The Council is happy however to make a modification to cross reference to the Monitoring Framework within this section.

Paragraph 77

The Council note this comment and will give consideration to including some commentary on key triggers that could lead to a review of the Plan within the monitoring section. It is proposed to include this as an Appendix to the Plan alongside the Implementation Table.

Paragraph 78

The Council notes this comment. A list of current and proposed SPD's will be prepared to set out their status. This will be included within the implementation section of the Plan.

Paragraph 79

The Council agrees that a list of UDP Policies proposed for deletion would help complete Appendix 1 and will propose this modification to the Plan. The Council has prepared a Saved Policies Review which sets out the Council's justification for either saving or deleting each Policy of the UDP and Alteration No. 2. The Council is in the process of finalising this document, and intend to submit this to the Inspector as part of the response to any MIQs where appropriate.