



# Stockton Borough Council

## Landscape Character Assessment: Policy Review

**Date (27/05/2009)**

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## 1.0 Relevant Policy

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to review the Council’s currently adopted policies and standards for landscape protection in the Development Plan and other material guidance to inform an assessment of the existing character of the landscape in the urban fringe around Stockton-on-Tees. This review will serve to inform the approach to amending the policy context through the Council’s emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

1.1.2 The policy appraisal recommends policies based on the work undertaken to identify the landscape character areas. The aim is to produce policies which:

- Enable assessment of development to be tailored to particular sensitivities;
- Support and enable sustainable and non-damaging development, rather than frustrate it;
- Reflect the national and regional framework and the vision for the area, and be rigorous enough to stand the test of the appeal process;
- Protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the varied landscape character within the Borough reflecting landscape sensitivity and promoting local distinctiveness;
- Promote a high quality of design taking account of the site context.



## 2.0 Policy Framework

### 2.1 Development Plan Position

2.1.1 The Development plan for Stockton comprises the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the saved policies of the Stockton Borough Council (SBC) Local Plan.

### 2.2 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

2.2.1 The RSS for the North East was adopted in July 2008 and sets out a long-term strategy for the spatial development of the North East Region of England.

2.2.2 The RSS sets out the spatial strategy and priorities for growth in the Tees Valley City Region, including a high priority to improving the environment. This has been reflected by policy 2 on sustainable development states:

2.2.3 "Planning proposals and Local Development Frameworks should support sustainable development and construction through the delivery of the following environmental, social and economic objectives [including]:

- To protect and enhance the region’s biodiversity, geodiversity and soil quality;
- To make better use of our resources, including the built fabric;
- To mitigate environmental and social costs of developments, and encourage efficient resource use;
- To promote the concept of green infrastructure, a network of linked, multifunctional green space in and around the Region's towns and cities."

2.2.4 Policy 8 focuses on protection and enhancement of the environment:

"Strategies, plans, programmes and planning proposals should seek to maintain and enhance the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the environment throughout the North East by (inter alia):



- Promoting a high quality of design in all development and redevelopment;
- Promoting development that is sympathetic to its surroundings;
- Seeking to conserve and enhance historic buildings and landscapes;
- Identifying and giving appropriate protection to the Region’s internationally and nationally important sites for biodiversity and geodiversity, including full assessment of the potential impact of development on Internationally Designated Conservation sites;
- Identifying and protecting existing woodland of amenity and nature conservation value, particularly ancient woodlands;
- Encouraging and facilitating the implementation of the Regional Forestry Strategy...Tees Forestry strategy, related biodiversity initiatives and other woodland planting;
- Encouraging and supporting the establishment of green infrastructure, including strategic wildlife corridors.

2.2.5 Policy 10 of the RSS addresses the Tees Valley City-Region. It states that strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals should support regeneration, economic prosperity, sustainable communities connectivity, maintain the strategic gaps between settlements and wider environmental aspirations.

2.2.6 In terms of sustainable communities, the policy mentions, inter alia,

“Developing housing to support economic growth strategies in sustainable locations, mainly on previously developed land in areas where it does not undermine existing housing markets...”  
and “insisting on high standards of new development and redevelopment, which improve the quality of the environment and promote sustainability.”

2.2.7 In terms of the environment, the policy advocates the need for:

- “Supporting the establishment of strategic networks of green infrastructure, including green wedges, that links existing and proposed greenspace with corridors running through urban, suburban and urban fringe areas to the countryside and coast.”
- “Subjecting development proposals in and likely affecting designated sites of nature conservation importance, Saltholme Nature reserve, the Heritage Coast and the Tees Estuary, to rigorous examination, taking account of the existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests.”  
and;
- “Encouraging the development of renewable energy while carefully considering the local impacts of proposals.”



2.2.8 Policy 16 on culture and tourism alludes to a variety of issues, including improving first impressions gained by visitors arriving and passing through the Region, including supporting environmental improvements to gateways and transport corridors; ensuring development of such facilities should safeguard the environment and attractiveness of place.

2.2.9 Policy 20 is about key employment locations and includes 200 hectares at Wynyard, for the prestige electronics and high technology sectors.

2.2.10 Policy 24 is very pertinent to landscape character, stating that:

“Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should assess the suitability of land for development and the contribution that can be made by design in relation to a number of criteria, to include:

- The nature of development and its location requirements;
- Concentrating the majority of the region’s development within defined urban areas;
- The need to use previously developed land, wherever possible;
- Linking development to appropriate provision of infrastructure, including green infrastructure, water supply and waste water treatment, energy supplies;
- The impact that the development of sites and its design will have on the region’s natural resources, biodiversity, landscapes, environmental and cultural assets and people’s health; and its potential to contribute to enhancement of these;
- Physical constraints on the development of land, including the level of contamination, flood risk and land stability, incorporating flood protection...;
- The potential to reduce health inequalities...including provision of play space and greenspaces with accessible woodland, with new development;
- The promotion of mixed use developments....and ensure that best use is made of land, transport infrastructure and services.”
- Ensuring that development has low consumption of natural resources both in construction and operation and incorporates embedded renewable energy where appropriate;
- The potential contribution of development to the enhancement and creation of habitats and species populations and to the promotion of biodiversity and geodiversity.

2.2.11 Policy 28 is about gross and net dwelling provision, whilst Policy 29 is about delivering and managing housing supply, although these policies have been affected by Government approval of additional housing numbers through ‘Growth Areas’ and subsequent events affecting the property market. Policy 29 makes reference to issues such as focussing development on a target percentage of previously developed land, densities, release of land, to be managed with the locational strategy



and sequential approach and consideration of planning proposals , including lapsed permissions and unimplemented development plan allocations and re-use of surplus employment land.

2.2.12 Landscape Character is primarily addressed in chapter 3 'Delivering an Urban and Rural renaissance', at paragraphs 3.118 – 3.123. This section provides detail on the valuable landscapes within the North East noting at paragraph 3.118 that "Strategies, plans and programmes should support suitably located and designed development necessary to facilitate the economic and social well-being of these designated areas and their communities.

2.2.13 Paragraph 3.120 alludes to countryside character areas as defined by the Countryside Agency (Natural England), which provide a framework for more detailed assessment at local level "which can be used to determine the ability of a landscape to accommodate change whilst protecting key characteristics that contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place....Where appropriate, these assessments can also be used to help target landscape restoration and environmental improvement schemes as part of wider area-based regeneration objectives.

2.2.14 Paragraph 3.121 seeks to address tranquillity, seen as an important asset in the diverse landscapes of the North East. It states:

"Tranquillity, freedom from noise and visual disturbance, is one of the less easily defined attributes of the countryside but is also important to quality of life. The Region has some of the most tranquil landscapes in the country and these are a major asset to the tourism economy. A pilot study has investigated ways of mapping tranquillity in more detail in the Northumberland National Park and the Durham Coalfield. As there is no comprehensive study of the Region, the RSS does not define tranquil areas as this is more appropriately considered at the local level."

2.2.15 Paragraph 3.122 states that:

"In addition to protection from inappropriate development, integrated management initiatives developed and implemented by effective partnerships are required to sustain, and in some cases enhance, the diversity of the Region's designated and non-designated valued landscapes. Management plans and strategies should be developed and kept updated...Urban fringe landscapes would also benefit from this approach."

2.2.16 Landscape Character is formally addressed through Policy 31 of the RSS, which states that strategies, plans and proposals should:

a. "promote development appropriate to the special qualities and statutory purposes of these areas in the Northumberland National Park, the Northumberland Coast and the North Pennines





AONBs, and the three areas of Heritage Coast: North Northumberland, Durham and North Yorkshire and Cleveland;

b. contribute to the implementation of the National Park and AONBs Management Plans whilst helping to achieve favourable condition status at European sites;

c. have regard to landscape character assessments and the content of AONB/National Park Management Plans to justify the retention or creation of any local landscape designations, guide policy formulation and development control decisions, and assist in targeting landscape restoration and environmental improvement schemes;

d. promote integrated management initiatives to sustain nationally, regionally and locally valued landscapes, including the Durham, North Northumberland and North Yorkshire and Cleveland

Heritage Coasts and urban fringe landscapes;

e. recognise the role that character-based planning tools such as Town Design Statements, Village Design Statements, Countryside Design Summaries and Concept Statements can play in promoting high quality development that respects local character and distinctiveness; and

f. Incorporate the findings of Shoreline Management Plans and Catchment Flood Management Plans.”

2.2.17 Policy 32 goes on to deal with the Historic Environment of the North East region, stating that “Strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment of the Region by [including]:

a. clearly identifying and assessing the significance of any heritage assets and their vulnerability to change;

b. using the process of characterisation to understand their contribution to the local environment and to identify options for their sensitive management;

c. encouraging the refurbishment and re-use of appropriate disused or under-used buildings and incorporating them into regeneration schemes;

d. seeking to preserve, in situ, archaeological sites of national importance and, where appropriate, other archaeological remains of regional and local importance;

e. recognising the opportunities for heritage led regeneration to be used in a constructive way to help bring about social and economic regeneration, and to encourage its potential for business, education and tourism; and

Local authorities should:



- a. prepare, and regularly maintain registers of Grade II listed buildings 'at risk'; for their areas, and pursue policies and measures which seek to repair and remove all grades of building from 'at risk' registers through repair;
- b. consider preparing, and regularly maintaining, lists of locally important buildings for their areas, and set out policies in LDFs, which seek, as far as possible, their protection against inappropriate change;
- c. consider preparing Conservation Area Appraisals for existing and proposed conservation areas, and proceed to the preparation of Management Plans for the delivery of improvements to those areas;
- d. consider preparing lists of locally important registered landscapes, Historic Landscape Assessments and Conservation Management Plans for historic designated landscapes; and
- e. consider preparing urban surveys of historic towns and other substantial settlements, to improve knowledge of their entire historic fabric as a guide to ensure future development maximises the potential for preservation, protection and enhancement."



2.2.18 Policy 33 refers to biodiversity and geodiversity, including their protection and enhancement, including promotion, protection and enhancement of internationally and nationally important sites and species, reversing habitat fragmentation, developing habitat creation/restoration projects, particularly in the priority Habitat Creation and Enhancement Areas, preparing audits, preparing and implementing Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Geodiversity Action Plans and proposals to limit the spread of invasive species and their elimination. Of particular importance is “Providing for the expansion and linking of existing habitats and species populations, including the creation of semi-natural green spaces in and around urban areas and for habitat restoration.”

2.2.19 Policy 35 alludes to flood risk, which is relevant to landscape character assessment, including any proposals for development, as a result of new development land releases. The policy refers to “...a strategic, integrated, sustainable and proactive approach to catchment management to reduce flood risk within the region.” A sequential, risk-based approach to development and flooding should be adopted, as stipulated by the guidance for development of Local Development Frameworks and liaison with the Environment Agency, where appropriate.

2.2.20 Policy 36 is about Trees, Woodlands and Forests and sets out the policy template related to relevant strategies to expand and protect tree cover in appropriate locations for delivery of multi-purpose benefits.

2.2.21 Policy 40 is about planning for renewables and is most relevant, in terms of landscape character, in terms of new wind energy developments and grid connection lines. The policy is supportive in terms of the wider environmental, economic and social benefits, but mentions, inter alia;

“Acceptability of the location and the scale of the proposal and its visual impact in relation to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape...effect on.....other national and internationally designated.....landscape areas.....effect of development on nature conservation sites and features, biodiversity and geodiversity, including internationally designated and other sites of nature conservation importance.....visual impact of new grid connection lines.....and cumulative impact of the development in relation to other similar developments.”

2.2.22 Policy 42 refers to overall mineral strategy and advocates that;

“Land is made available to provide an appropriate contribution to local, regional and national needs for minerals...and ensure the effective environmental management of mineral extraction in line with sustainable development objectives”



## 2.3 Local Plan

2.3.1 The SBC Local Plan was adopted in 1997 with Alteration Number 1 adopted in March 2006. As a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) the plan was reviewed and a number of policies were deleted in September 2007.

2.3.2 Policy GP1 is the overarching policy development must be compliant with. This states:

“Proposals for development will be assessed in relation to the policies of the Cleveland Structure Plan and the following criteria as appropriate:

- (i.) The external appearance of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area;
- (ii.) The effect on the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties;
- (iii.) The provision of satisfactory access and parking arrangements;
- (iv.) The contribution of existing trees and landscape features;
- (y.) The need for a high standard of landscaping;
- (vi.) the desire to reduce opportunities for crime;
- (vii.) The intention to make development as accessible as possible to everyone;
- (viii.) The quality, character and sensitivity of existing landscapes and buildings;
- (ix.) The effect upon wildlife habitats;
- (x.) The effect upon the public rights of way network.”

2.3.3 Section 2 of the Local Plan deals with the local environment in detail and it is apparent that a considerable number of the environmental policies in the Local Plan are relevant to Landscape Character Assessment.

2.3.4 Policies EN1 (a) and (b), (as well as policy EN12, which refers to the International Nature Reserve) are highly relevant to Landscape Character Assessment, since they refer to areas of the borough where there is nature conservation interest and where development should not ideally take place. Policy EN1(a) states “Proposals for development in or likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development may have a significant adverse effect, directly or indirectly on the SSSI, it will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the site itself and national policy to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the national network of such sites.” The policy also stipulates that planning obligations will be pursued where development is permitted. Policy EN1 (b) states that “Proposals for the development or land use which may affect a European site, proposed European site or a RAMSAR site will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Any proposal which is not directly connected with, or necessary for the management of the site for nature



conservation and which is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the site will only be permitted.....” The policy then makes caveats and advocates potential use of planning obligations as per policy EN1 (a). These related policies therefore indicate that development in areas where these designations are present should be avoided, if at all possible.

2.3.5 Policy EN2 seeks to resist development in Local Nature Reserves; specifically Basselton Woods and the Holmes, Thornaby, Billingham Beck Valley and Thorpe Wood, Grindon and policy EN3 declares further LNR’s at Bowsfield Pond, Stockton, Charlton’s Pond, Billingham and Quarry Wood, Eaglescliffe, such that they become subject to policy EN2.

2.3.6 Policy EN4 states that “Development which is likely to have an adverse effect upon sites of nature conservation importance will only be permitted if (i) there is no alternative site or practicable approach; and (ii) any impacts on the sites nature conservation value is kept to a minimum.” Policy EN5 makes the same kind of provisions for land adjoining the North Tees works, including two adjacent SNCI’s at Dorman’s Pools and Reclamation Pond. Again, these policies make provision for Planning Obligations in appropriate circumstances. Policy EN6 similarly seeks to safeguard protected plant or animal species and their habitats from development unless satisfactory provisions for these species have been made.

2.3.7 The three ‘Special Landscape Areas’ of the Borough are detailed in Policy EN7 which protects these areas as follows:

“Development which harms the landscape value of the following special landscape area will not be permitted:-

- (a.) Leven Valley
- (b.) Tees Valley
- (c.) Wynyard Park”

2.3.8 Paragraph 2.28 goes on to note that parts of the Wynyard Park Special Landscape Area are allocated for both residential and industrial development. Any planning permission will be subject to conditions seeking to protect landscape quality and on site landscaping of a suitable quality to be incorporated into proposals.

2.3.9 Wynyard Park is the only nationally recognised park in the Borough of special historic interest. As such, Policy EN9 seeks to protect the historic layout of the landscaped parkland and formal gardens, including their architectural features, stating:

“Development which is likely to be detrimental to the special historic interest of Wynyard Park will not be permitted.”



- 2.3.10 Policy EN8 addresses development likely to impact upon numerous Ancient Woodlands in the Borough. They have strong historic value to the landscape and this policy therefore states that “Development within ancient woodland which detracts from its conservation value will not be permitted.”
- 2.3.11 Policy EN10 seeks to protect higher grade agricultural land from development and agricultural land often contributes positively towards landscape character.
- 2.3.12 Policy EN11 seeks encouragement of tree planting, within the Community Forest (see The Tees Forest Plan, 2001), which has made a significant contribution to landscape character in the countryside in and around Stockton.
- 2.3.13 Paragraph 2.40 refers to the objective of controlling the expansion of the built up area to protect the countryside for its own sake and to encourage the recycling of derelict and underused sites within the urban area.
- 2.3.14 The Local Plan proposals map defines the ‘Limits to development’ within the Borough, which are addressed at paragraph 2.41 which states:

“Where possible, limits have been drawn where there is a clear break between urban and rural uses and landscapes. In the countryside beyond these limits, development will be strictly controlled. It will be confined to activities necessary for the continuation of farming or forestry, contribute to rural diversification, or cater for tourism, sport or recreation.”
- 2.3.15 Policy EN13 provides the policy backing to this text and states:

“Development outside the limits to development may be permitted where:

  - (i.) It is necessary for a farming or forestry operation; or
  - (ii.) It falls within policies EN 20 (reuse of buildings) or TOUR 4 (hotel conversions); or in all the remaining cases and provided that it does not harm the character or appearance of the countryside; where:
  - (iii) it contributes to the diversification of the rural economy; or
  - (iv.) It is for sport or recreation; or
  - (v.) It is a small-scale facility for tourism.”



2.3.16 Six Green wedges are identified within the settlement limits, as detailed above. These are detailed in Policy EN14 which states:

“Within the following green wedges, development will not be permitted which detracts from the open nature of the landscape so as to threaten, by itself or cumulatively; the local identity of the areas separated by the green wedge.

- (a.) River Tees floodplain from Surtees Bridge, Stockton, to Yarm;
- (b.) Leven Valley between Yarm and Ingleby Barwick;
- (c.) Bassleton Beck Valley between Ingleby Barwick and Thornaby;
- (d.) Stainsby Beck Valley, Thornaby;
- (e.) Billingham Beck Valley;
- (f.) Between North Billingham and Cowpen Lane Industrial Estate.”

2.3.17 Paragraph 2.44 of the text addresses the importance Urban Open Space has in terms of the local landscape character. It is noted that “Such spaces should generally be protected from development unless this would achieve a genuine enhancement of the site to the benefit of residents of the Borough.” This is given policy backing at Policy EN15, which states:

“Development will not be permitted on urban open space unless:

- (i.) It would enhance the sporting, recreational, or nature conservation value of the land and the space would still retain its open character; or
- (ii.) The development of a small area of open space would result in the enhancement of the remainder to the overall benefit of the local community.”



2.3.18 Certain policies seek to safeguard landscape character by permitting reclamation and use of derelict land in the countryside (policy EN19) and the conversion, adaptation and reuse of rural buildings for commercial, industrial, tourism, sport and recreational uses (policy EN20), but not for residential purposes (policy EN21).

2.3.19 When considering the landscape character important consideration will have to be given to extant Conservation Areas. These are listed at Policy EN 22 as Billingham Green; Egglecliffe; Hartburn; Stockton Town Centre; Thornaby Green; Wolviston. Policy EN22 gives SBC the scope to review the boundaries of these areas where appropriate. Policy EN23 goes on to state that schemes for the preservation and environmental enhancement of all existing conservation areas were to be progressed through the course of the plan.

2.3.20 Development proposals within Conservation Areas are to be assessed against policies EN24 and EN 25. Policy EN24 details the criteria which new development proposals within Conservation Areas should accord with. These are as follows:

- (i) "The siting and design of the proposal does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
- (ii) The scale, mass, detailing and materials are appropriate to the character and appearance of the area."

2.3.21 Policy EN25 addresses proposals to demolish structures within Conservation Areas stating such proposals will not be permitted unless:

- (i) "It can be shown that the loss is not detrimental to the character or appearance of the conservation area; or
- (ii) The structural condition renders it unsafe; or
- (iii) The structure is beyond reasonable economic repair.

Conditions will normally be imposed to secure the satisfactory redevelopment of the site.

2.3.22 There are over 400 Listed Buildings within the Borough which are protected from demolition and alteration and are important in terms of landscape character. These are protected by the following policies:

"EN 26 - Alterations, extensions and changes of use to listed buildings will be permitted where the proposals are in keeping with the character and appearance of the original building, and its architectural or historic interest is not adversely affected.





EN27 - The total demolition of a listed building will not be permitted unless the building is beyond economic repair.

EN28 - Development which is likely to detract from the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.”

2.3.23 Sites of Archaeological Interest are addressed at paragraph 2.73 – 2.76 which notes that these are an irreplaceable part of the heritage of the borough. There are several Scheduled Ancient Monuments which are listed as:

- Castle Hill, Castleleavington;
- Grindon Church, Grindon;
- Round Hill Castle, Ingleby Barwick;
- Larberry Pasture Settlement Site, Longnewton;
- Newsham Deserted Medieval Village;
- Market Cross, Stockton;
- The Market Hall, Yarm;
- Yarm Bridge, Yarm.

2.3.24 These are protected at a local level by Policy E29 which states:

“Development which will adversely affect the site, fabric or setting of a scheduled ancient monument will not be permitted.”

2.3.25 Sites of archaeological interest are considered important to the Borough also, although the redevelopment of these sites is not precluded by the Local Plan. These are addressed through Policy EN30 which states:

“Development which affects sites of archaeological interest will not be permitted unless:

- (i.) An investigation of the site has been undertaken; and
- (ii.) An assessment has been made of the impact of the development upon the remains; and where appropriate;
- (iii.) Provision has been made for preservation 'in situ'.

Where preservation is not appropriate, the local planning authority will require the applicant to make proper provision for the investigation and recording of the site before and during development.”

2.3.26 Policy EN41 refers to development which is required to enable the release and transmission of energy from renewable sources, including “the proposal does not impinge on any of the Borough’s



natural assets.....and that buildings are sited, designed and landscaped to secure the integration of the facility into the landscape.”

2.3.27 It is acknowledged at paragraph 2,96 that whilst the average windspeed across Stockton Borough is too low for viable harnessing the exception to this may be at Seal Sands/Teemouth due to the sustained onshore breezes, though this area is constrained through lack of sites and importance to birds. Policy EN42 addresses proposals for wind turbines, stating:

“Single wind turbines and associated plant in the countryside will normally be permitted unless:

- (i.) It is detrimental to the character of a special landscape area; or
- (ii.) It causes unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring residents.”



- 2.3.28 Within the Local Plan, there is a plethora of other policy which has a potential impact upon landscape character. For example, policies related to the economy can have impacts. For example, policy IN16 states that “proposed telecommunications development should be sited and designed to cause the least practicable adverse visual impact...”
- 2.3.29 In the section on ‘Development’, there are various issues which could have a bearing on landscape character e.g. policy REC10 regarding the effect of development on public rights of way; policy REC15 on overnight moorings and policy REC21 on sites identified as suitable locations for bridges for combined pedestrian and cycle use.
- 2.3.30 The ‘Transport’ section of the Local Plan also includes policies which could have a bearing on landscape character, such as policy TR4 on a network of cycle routes across the Borough and policy TR21 regarding development at Durham Tees Valley airport, where it is intended to safeguard the nature conservation interest of the area; ensure substantial landscaping to mitigate, screen and integrate the effects of any new development.

## **2.4 Supplementary Planning Documents**

- 2.4.1 The Conservation and Historic Environment Folder (CHE) was adopted in January 2006 and fulfils the requirements of Local Plan Policies EN22 and EN23 for reviewing the existing Conservation Areas. Other Policies in the Local Plan set the framework for development affecting each of the sites and buildings that are subject to protection.
- 2.4.2 The document contains detailed appraisals of all Conservation Areas and other designated landscape features and provides a useful evidence base for the LCA.

## **Other Material Considerations**

## **2.5 National Planning Policy**

- 2.5.1 Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) ‘Delivering Sustainable Development’ sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. In its objectives, PPS1 refers to ‘conserving the countryside’ and that open spaces are a vital resource for everyone. Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive



patterns of urban and rural development by protecting the natural environment and 'the quality of the countryside'.

2.5.2 Plan policies and planning decisions should be based on:

- Up to date information on the environmental characteristics of an area;
- The potential impacts upon the environment of development proposals;
- Recognition of the limits of the environment to accept further development without irreversible damage.

2.5.3 Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' details the Government's objectives for rural areas, which include raising the quality of life and the environment through the promotion of:

- Good quality, sustainable development;
- Confirmed protection of the open countryside.

2.5.4 A key principle is to apply strict control to development in the open countryside, whilst contributing to a sense of local identity and rural diversity. Landscape Character Assessment, along with Village or Town Design Statements and Village or Parish Plans, is recommended as a tool to assist Local Authorities in the preparation of policies and guidance that encourage good quality design throughout rural areas (Para 13).

2.5.5 At paragraph 24 of PPS7, the Government recognises and accepts that there are areas of landscape outside nationally designated areas that are highly valued locally. They recommend carefully drafted criteria-based policies in Local Development Documents, utilising landscape character assessments, without the need for rigid local designations that may restrict sustainable development and economic activity.

2.5.6 As such PPS7 has altered the balance from policies for locally designated areas towards an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing the distinctive character. Such policies reflecting character not quality should relate well to the landscape character assessments undertaken, and should, therefore assist in accommodating necessary change without sacrificing local character and ensure that development respects and enhances local distinctiveness and the natural processes of its location.

2.5.7 It is worthy of mention that the Government released a Briefing Note on the new 'Planning Policy Statement 4' in May 2009, with the objective of bringing together policies relating to the economy, in an attempt to simplify national planning policy, with a focus upon encouraging economic growth



in a sustainable manner. It is intended that this will replace other Government planning policy guidance, including parts of PPS7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.' In terms of rural areas, the paper advocates that Local Authorities should support small scale economic development, albeit with a preference for re-using sites within settlements. It also offers support for the conversion or re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development and it offers support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure that benefit rural businesses, communities and visitors. This new statement could have an effect upon landscape character that is subtly different to the objectives of the existing PPS7 in due course. The consultation will run for twelve weeks until 28th July 2008 and has an accompanying 'Best Practice Guide'.

2.5.8 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: 'Local Development Frameworks' advocates streamlining the planning process but still providing the opportunity for issues, including landscape, to be integrated at various levels.

2.5.9 PPS12 advocates the production of policies based upon a thorough understanding of the needs and opportunities in an area, through an up-to-date evidence base. Criteria based policies should act as a framework for assessing proposals. It could then be that the policies may need to be referenced in a Supplementary Planning Document for greater detail.

## **2.6 Local Development Framework**

2.6.1 Stockton Borough Council is currently in the process of replacing the extant Local Plan with the Local Development Framework. A number of documents are at varying stages of production and whilst they do not for adopted guidance the proposals details have been considered when undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment of the Borough.

2.6.2 The SBC Core Strategy final draft document was released in October 2008 for a consultation period ending 22nd December 2008. When adopted the document will set out the vision and Spatial Strategy for meeting development requirements to 2021.

2.6.3 Section 5 of the Core Strategy details the differing spatial options for growth, four of which were considered during the 'Issues and Options' stage. Draft Core Strategy Policy 1 (CS1) details the Council's preferred choice for new housing development. To briefly summarise this states that the Council's Preferred Option is to support the regeneration of the urban core by:

1. Ensuring that the majority of development takes place within the Core Area of the Borough.
2. Priority is to be given to previously developed land, with particular emphasis given to regeneration schemes.



3. Seeking to ensure remaining housing growth/ development takes place in the remaining urban area, particularly in locations which support the district centres of Billingham, Thornaby and Yarm.

4. Continuing to implement neighbourhood regeneration projects and work to be undertaken to identify further areas in need of housing market restructuring.

5. Priority given to affordable rural housing in sustainable locations.

6. Provision of a range of employment sites throughout the Borough, both to support existing industries and to encourage new enterprises. Development is to be concentrated in the conurbation, with emphasis on completing the development of existing industrial estates. The main exception is the safeguarding of land at Seal Sands and Billingham for expansion of chemical processing industries. Initiatives which support the rural economy are to be encouraged.

2.6.4 Proposed Policy CS3 addresses Sustainable Living and SBC’s preferred options for addressing climate change through planning policy. Item 8 of this policy seeks to ensure that:

“Make a positive contribution to the local area, by protecting and enhancing important environmental assets, biodiversity and geodiversity, responding positively to existing features of natural, historic archaeological or local character, including hedges and trees, and including the provision of high quality public open space;”

2.6.5 Core Strategy Policy CS10 sets out the overarching policy for the environment of the Borough stating that:

1.” Proposals will need to demonstrate that that there will be no adverse impact from development on the integrity of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site, and other European sites.

2. Development throughout the Borough and particularly in the Billingham and Seal Sands area, will be integrated with the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape.

3. The separation between settlements, together with the quality of the urban environment, will be maintained through the protection and enhancement of the openness and amenity value of:

- i) Strategic gaps between the conurbation and the surrounding towns and villages, and between Eaglescliffe and Middleton St George
- ii) Green wedges within the conurbation, including
  - River Tees Valley from Surtees Bridge, Stockton to Yarm



- Leven Valley between Yarm and Ingleby Barwick
- Bassleton Beck Valley between Ingleby Barwick and Thornaby
- Stainsby Beck Valley, Thornaby
- Billingham Beck Valley
- Between North Billingham and Cowpen Lane Industrial Estate

iii) Urban open space and play space.

4. The integrity of designated sites will be protected and enhanced, and the biodiversity and geodiversity of sites of local interest improved.

5. Habitats will be created in line with objectives of the Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan as part of development, and linked to existing wildlife corridors wherever possible.

6. Joint working with partners and developers will ensure the successful creation of an integrated network of green infrastructure.

7. Initiatives to improve the quality of the environment in key areas where this may contribute towards the tourism offer will be supported, including:

i) Haverton Hill and Seal Sands corridor, as an important gateway to the Teesmouth National Nature Reserve and Saltholme RSPB Nature Reserve;

ii) River Tees Park.

8. The delivery of the Tees Forest Plan will be supported.

9. New development will be directed towards areas of low flood risk, that is Flood Zone 1, as identified by the Borough's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). In considering sites elsewhere, the sequential and exceptions tests will be applied, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, and applicants will be expected to carry out a flood risk assessment.

10. When redevelopment of previously developed land is proposed, assessments will be required to establish:

- the risks associated with previous contaminative uses; and
- the biodiversity and geological conservation value."

2.6.6 The Regeneration DPD will detail policies for the regeneration of the urban core of Stockton as part of the Stockton-Middlesbrough initiative. The document is currently at Issues and Options stage, with the Preferred Options due to be available in the near future.

2.6.7 A number of issues pertinent to the Landscape Character of Stockton will be addressed in this document. WYG notes that SBC are currently reviewing options in relation to:

1. Whether existing development limits to villages should be retained;



2. Whether Green Wedges should be included within development limits;
3. Location of new economic, community and residential development; and
4. The regeneration of a number of key sites including the 'Green Blue Heart' which is an environmental and landscape led regeneration of an area of contaminated sites along the River Tees.

2.6.8 The SBC Infrastructure Strategy was prepared as part of the evidence base to the Core Strategy, and considers five key areas of infrastructure provision, one of which is 'Green infrastructure and other community facilities'.

2.6.9 Paragraph 7.10 of the document give the key green infrastructure and community facility proposals to be reflected in the Core Strategy as:

1. Development of the River Tees Park;
2. Pedestrian/cycle routes linking communities in south of Borough;
3. Expansion of the Tees Forest;
4. Environmental improvements to Haverton Hill/Seal Sands;
5. Provision of additional open space to meet standards;
6. Improvements to Preston Park and its Hall;
7. Development of the Green Blue Heart; and
8. Facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities.

2.6.10 Further detail on these is provided in the paragraphs of the document which follow.

2.6.11 SBC submitted a bid for 'Housing Growth Point Status' as part of a wider bid through the Tees Valley bid. On 24th July 2008 CLG announced that the Tees Valley had been successful. The key sites for Stockton Borough Council are:

- North Shore;
- Green Blue Heart;
- Stockton Riverside;
- Northern Gateway;
- Parkfield;
- Bowesfield Riverside;
- South Stockton; and
- Allens West.





## 2.7 LDF Evidence Base

- 2.7.1 SBC produced an Urban Capacity Study (UCS) in March 2004 to assess the amount of residential development that might be provided in the urban areas, as a response to the requirements of PPG3 (now replaced by PPS3). This concluded that in order of 3000 dwellings might eventually arise from the sources identified within the urban area. The UCS is in the process of being superseded by work within the Strategic Housing Land availability Assessment (SHLAA) which will seek to address revised regional targets in the future.
- 2.7.2 The SHLAA is part of the evidence base for the Stockton-on-Tees Local Development Framework. It does not allocate sites for housing, but uses a methodology to assess sites to provide evidence for future LDF documents.
- 2.7.3 In particular the SHLAA is relevant to the Core Strategy and the Regeneration DPD's. The Core Strategy DPD will set out how the Council proposes to distribute and phase new housing provision in general. The Regeneration DPD will allocate specific sites that are consistent with this approach.
- 2.7.4 The first Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was published on 20 October 2008. The 2009 SHLAA update is subject to consultation (period ending 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2009) which provides the public opportunity to comment on the proposed sites, which include a number of extensions to the urban area. The sites promoted through this are included as a list at [Appendix 1](#) to this document.

## 2.8 Other Non-Statutory Documentation

- 2.8.1 The 'Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy' was developed with CABE and the final document was adopted in 2008. It sets the vision for green infrastructure in the Tees Valley up to 2021. This is given as:

"To develop by 2021 a network of green corridors and green spaces in the Tees Valley that:

- Enhances the quality of place and environment for existing and future communities and potential investors;
- Provides an enhanced environmental setting and context for new development, regeneration projects, and housing market renewal initiatives and produces schemes of high quality design;
- Creates and extends opportunities for access, recreation and enhancement of biodiversity, and
- Provides a buffer against the effects of climate change.



- 2.8.2 The document provides detail in section 5 as to the Natural England's Natural Area boundaries, and notes that these largely coincide with those of the Countryside Character areas. The document goes into detail about the Tees Lowland Natural Area and Tees Estuary and Cleveland Coast, parts of which are within the control of SBC.
- 2.8.3 Landscape issues and opportunities are addressed at paragraph 6.6 of this document where it is noted the transformation to area of Stockton has undergone since the 19th Century, and how urban development has become the dominant landscape feature.
- 2.8.4 It is noted at paragraph 6.8 that there are “features within the urban fabric of the Tees Valley that offer opportunities for integration within a green infrastructure network. These include landmarks such as the Transporter Bridge and Newport Bridge, features associated with the area's industrial past such as chemical and steel structures and railway artefacts as well as large urban parks and gardens.”
- 2.8.5 Paragraph 6.32 of the document highlights the importance of taking forward and developing the green infrastructure concept through building on existing strategies and plans.
- 2.8.6 Section 7 of the document identifies a way forward for the Tees Valley to move towards a Strategic Green Infrastructure Network, with paragraph 7.1 identifying the two overarching priorities that the strategic Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Tees Valley is seeking to achieve:
  - The first is the protection and, where appropriate, enhancement of the critical elements of the existing green infrastructure resource within the conurbation and main towns and settlements.
  - The second is developing and extending where necessary the existing elements of green infrastructure into a multi-functional network that links existing and proposed green spaces. This would also address the issue of gaps in the network.
- 2.8.7 The strategic priorities for green infrastructure are detailed at paragraph 7.2. Of relevance to this appraisal are the flagship regeneration project at North Shore, the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative, areas at Stockton Town Centre and North Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick and the Green Blue Heart.
- 2.8.8 The document provides guidance on green space standards with paragraph 7.7 considering England's Green Space standard to be a useful guideline for LPA's to consider as achievable through planning policy. These are as follows:



“No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 hectares in size;

- There is provision of at least 2 hectares of natural green space per 1,000 population;
- That there should be at least one accessible 20 hectare site within 2km from home;
- That there should be one accessible 100 hectare site within 5km;
- That there should be one accessible 500 hectare site within 10km; and
- That adjacent green spaces are interconnected, the priority and extent being determined by local decision making informed by stakeholder involvement.”



2.8.9 A number of guidelines have been provided on the promotion of green infrastructure through the landscape and historic environment at paragraph 7.8. This states:

- Green infrastructure should contribute to the management, conservation and improvement of the local landscape and townscape and reflect the landscape character approach;
- Local landscape and townscape character assessments should be undertaken when appropriate;
- Green infrastructure should contribute to the protection and enhancement of historic assets;
- Where possible derelict, vacant and unused land should be restored/reclaimed for uses that contribute to the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. Land identified for specific uses but where development is only likely in the long term (for example some employment land) should be considered for temporary 'greening' such as timber production for local renewable energy schemes, although the biodiversity value of such land should also be taken into account
- A mosaic pattern of woodlands should form a core component of the green infrastructure network and should be planned and created in line with the Regional Forestry Strategy and the Tees Forest Plan
- Where appropriate woodland management and creation should include opportunities to produce sustainable supplies for local renewable energy projects.

2.8.10 Strategic aims of the site specific proposals previously detailed are given in section 8 of this document. As previously stated a number of these are relevant to the local landscape character of SBC, including:

- The River Tees Corridor – which provides a setting for a number of key regeneration projects, and employment and industrial centres. The whole of the Corridor forms a strategic wildlife corridor providing a major route through the urban area and into the surrounding countryside.
- Darlington Middleton St. George, A66/67 Corridor to Stockton - of particular relevance is the strategic gap between Darlington and Stockton, and the green wedge and River Tees Corridor in the vicinity of Preston Farm and Bowesfield.
- Hartburn to Lustrum Beck to River Tees – which runs through a largely urban part of Stockton.



- Stainsby Beck Valley – a major green corridor from Tees Barrage/Green Blue Heart eventually linking to open countryside. A major new park is proposed along the A66/Whinney Banks site.
- Billingham Beck Valley – this strategic wildlife corridor forms an important part of the green network, linking the River Tees with open countryside.
- River Leven Corridor – which runs in a steeply sided valley from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough boundary near Crathorne and Hilton. The woodland has both amenity and wildlife benefits.

2.8.11 The Countryside Agency and Groundwork document 'The Countryside in and around Towns' was produced in January 2005 to highlight the potential opportunities that exist within the 'rural urban fringes' of our towns and cities.

2.8.12 The document highlights the challenges and drivers of change impacting upon the countryside and these areas in particular. The document highlights the potential for "exciting new landscapes for the 21st Century" to be created through regenerating land, and developing sustainable communities where appropriate in these locations.

2.8.13 With regard to Green Belts the document highlights the need to place greater emphasis on the positive use of land within these areas. It requests that future reviews of Green Belt policy consider how to achieve economic, social and environmental benefits within this land.

2.8.14 The vision presented within this document follows ten key functions for the countryside in and around towns. These are as follows:

- 1) A bridge to the country – Encouraging the use of footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways to link to networks of new and improved parks, woodlands and green spaces.
- 2) A gateway to the town – Highlights the importance of managing and maintaining land adjacent to major transport routes.
- 3) A health centre – This promotes accessibility to these areas and the importance this can play in a healthy, active lifestyle.
- 4) A classroom – Promotes learning opportunities within the countryside.
- 5) A recycling and renewable energy centre – The importance of the sustainable management of waste, water and pollution generated in urban areas is noted, including positive environmental gains that can arise from opportunities for mineral extraction or waste management.
- 6) A productive landscape – The advantages of agricultural opportunities located close to urban areas is highlighted.



- 7) A cultural legacy – The importance of protecting our cultural heritage which can be apparent in many forms in such locations is highlighted.
- 8) A place for sustainable living – This deals with locations deemed to be sustainable urban extension opportunities, highlighting the importance for such schemes to create “genuinely balanced communities”.
- 9) An engine for regeneration – States that strategies for local regeneration can help develop skills, confidence and prospects for residents in these areas where they are fully involved in regeneration strategies.
- 10) A nature reserve – The potential for these areas to develop existing, or establish new, woodlands, wetlands, meadows and other habitats is encouraged.

2.8.15 The Tees Forest Partnership produced ‘The Tees Forest Plan’ in November 2000 which outlined the vision of the forest and strategy to implement this.

2.8.16 The countryside areas in and around the urban area of Stockton all fall within the remit of the Partnership, and the plan.

2.8.17 The area to the immediate west and south of the built up area of Stockton is defined as being within ‘Local Management Zone 5: West Stockton Rural Fringe’. The main focus for woodland extension within this area is land to the south of the A66, and on urban boundaries. The strategy notes the scope for a high yield potential for commercial timber production, which can provide a focus for recreation and, has high biodiversity potential. The importance of new planting on the western edges of Stockton to soften views of the built up area is highlighted. A new greenway linking Stockton and Darlington is encouraged, and has the potential to act as a corridor for recreation and sustainable, non car modes, of travel. There are a number of proposals to be considered, which are as follows:

“LMZ 5.1 Extend the influence of Coatham Stob by securing further major afforestation areas to create a significant woodland core between Stockton and Darlington.

LMZ 5.2 Recognise and realise the potential for both commercial forestry and recreation in this zone.

LMZ 5.3 Promote agri-environmental measures to enable connectivity between larger woodlands to aid bio-diversity.

LMZ 5.4 Provide screen planting on urban-industrial boundaries to soften the appearance of the built up area.

LMZ 5.5 Develop a new Greenway between Stockton and Darlington for recreation and travel by non motorised means of transport.



LMZ 5.6 Develop the Admiralty Ecology Site as an educational facility.”



- 2.8.18 Parts of the area to the south of Stockton which abuts the River Tees are included within 'Local Management Zone 6: River Tees Corridor'. The supporting text to this notes the area has "a distinctive rural character". The importance of recreational opportunities located within the area as a result of the River Tees barrage creating a stable water level is highlighted. It is also noted that Preston Park is an important gateway on the western side of the Tees. There are a number of proposals to be considered, which are as follows:
- 2.8.19 "LMZ 6.1 Protect and facilitate expansion of native, broad leaved woodlands in appropriate locations throughout the zone.
- 2.8.20 LMZ 6.2 Exploit opportunities for the development of both formal and informal recreation, including water based pursuits on the River Tees.
- 2.8.21 LMZ 6.3 Assist other organisations to develop further open access areas, new and improved linkages, including paths and trails and a proposed bridge across the River Tees.
- 2.8.22 LMZ 6.4 Retain the Leven Valley as a haven for wildlife and biodiversity, by focussing on informal access only."
- 2.8.23 2.71 'Local Management Zone 8: South Tees Green Wedges' contains a green wedge to the south of Thornaby, within land controlled by Stockton. To retain the character of this area it has been subject to the following proposals:
- 2.8.24 "LMZ 8.1 Ensure green wedges form the basis for woodland extension.
- 2.8.25 LMZ 8.2 Promote good forest management for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and the environment.
- 2.8.26 LMZ 8.3 Encourage community based recreation within green wedges, in association with new woodland planting and new and improved access routes in order to promote healthier living and foster the development of more sustainable communities."
- 2.8.27 2.72 The final zone where parts of the land come under the influence of Stockton is 'Local Management Zone 13: Tees Urban Green Corridor'. This land is located to the east of Stockton and runs alongside the A19 corridor, following the River Tees and its tributaries. The importance of areas of salt marsh around The Old River Tees and Stainsby Beck, and wetland areas around Billingham Beck are highlighted. The opportunity that exists to utilise large amounts of land formerly used for industry to complement regeneration proposals is highlighted. The potential for additional woodland and recreational facilities are detailed, and the following proposals made:





“LMZ 13.1 Woodland extension should be complimentary with regeneration initiatives and cater variously for permanent woodland creation, advance planting and to provide landscaping in association with new development.

LMZ 13.2 Develop techniques of woodland establishment, particularly those that are based on sustainable environmental principles.

LMZ 13.3 Develop selected woodlands and the Tees Barrage as recreational foci and provide opportunities for healthy living and for tackling social exclusion in nearby communities.

LMZ 13.4 Promote the potential of the Teesdale Way as a recreational route and enhance links between it and other recreational and green commuter routes.

LMZ 13.5 Safeguard environmentally sensitive areas, such as Billingham Beck wetlands.”

2.8.28 ‘The Cleveland Community Forest Landscape Assessment’ was undertaken by Woolerton Truscott on behalf of the Countryside Commission in 1994. This research was undertaken, excluding the main urban centres to assess the character and qualities of the existing landscapes of the Cleveland Area, which includes the borough of Stockton-On-Tees.

2.8.29 It is noted that there was numerous classifications of character detailed within the rural areas of Stockton, ranging from flat open farmland to valley landscape. Various character classifications and strategies to maintain and improve the landscape character of the area are detailed throughout the document.

2.8.30 There are a number of key themes which run throughout the document, relevant to the assessment of the Landscape Character of Stockton. These are:

- Softening the urban edge;
- Improving the view;
- Providing an attractive setting for development;
- Woodland links;
- Extending and improving landscape pattern

2.8.31 It is noted that the locational policies and proposals follow that of the later ‘Tees Forrest Plan’ (though they are condensed in the Tees Forrest Plan somewhat). These are not therefore reiterated in this review.



### 3.0 Policy Appraisal

#### 3.1 Summary

3.1.1 The landscape character assessment (LCA) has identified the following 5 landscape 'sensitivities' which have been applied to the landscape of Stockton:

- Very high
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very low

3.1.2 These sensitivities have been assessed using the initial responses to landscape conditions, which include landscape character sensitivity, sensitivity of individual elements, sensitivity of aesthetic aspects and visual sensitivity.

3.1.3 The current policies contained within the Local Plan should be replaced by a suite of policies, to reflect current Government guidance and the broad range of character identified within the LCA in the LDF.

#### 3.2 Key Issues

3.2.1 It is considered that these policies can be addressed in terms of vision and core objectives and should be reflective of the key issues that have arisen from the LCA. Clearly the landscape policies can address some of these key issues and supplement other development control policies in the plan. The matters that can be addressed through policy are as detailed below:

##### **Landscape Development**

- Woodland links;
- Maintaining and extending landscape pattern;
- Retention and enhancement of green wedges.

##### **Built Development**

- Use of inappropriate building materials and design;
- Expansion of commercial, residential and leisure development on the edges of settlements which erode rural character.



**Infrastructure**

- Loss of tranquillity through development or widespread lighting;
- Increase in powerlines, telecommunication masts and buildings on the skyline.

**Recreation and Tourism**

- Activities such as mountain biking, watersports etc particularly along the Tees;
- Some horse related development (e.g. post and rail paddocks, horse jumps);
- Golf courses.

**Small Scale Change**

- Urban fencing and lighting, extension of domestic gardens etc;
- Loss of locally distinctive planting;
- Obstructive signage, traffic calming measures
- Decline in use of traditional building methods.

**Agriculture**

- Erosion of traditional landscape patterns, loss of hedgerows, trees, removal or traditional ridge furrows/ historic landscape etc;
- Decline in traditional land management;
- Some rural diversification schemes, e.g. inappropriate conversions



### 3.3 Key Objectives

3.3.1 In relation to landscape policy, the following key objectives are recommended:

- Sustainable development objectives, including conservation of natural resources;
- Landscape character objective to protect, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the varied landscape character within the Borough, promoting local distinctiveness;
- Countryside/ rural strategy objective to protect the countryside, particularly that at the rural urban fringes of settlements, whilst encouraging sustainable development;
- Settlement character objective to protect the countryside whilst encouraging sustainable development;
- Settlement character objective to protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance local distinctiveness and retain separation between settlements;
- Design objectives to promote high quality embodying sustainable development techniques taking full account of site and context.

3.3.2 A district-wide audit of all landscape areas within the defined Green Belt, and a selection of inset settlements has been undertaken to assess their landscape character and sensitivity. The findings of the assessment are provided in the LCA, providing full details of all individual landscape areas and a district-wide map, which provides sensitivity classifications on an individual landscape area basis and broad landscape character areas. The protection and enhancement of these should be encouraged through LDF Policy.

3.3.3 The positive aspects of landscape character should be identified for the landscape area covering the site of a particular development proposal by reference to the Study and regard had to the broader character area within which it falls and to the possible impact on adjoining landscape areas. The sensitivity levels have been defined as very high, high, medium, low and very low. These should be identified using the Study in order to assess the tolerances of the site and its ability to accommodate change. The higher the sensitivity, the lower the tolerance.

3.3.4 In order to ensure that any new development does not create harm to the existing landscape sensitivity and character of the surrounding area, it is important that development proposals conserve, protect and where possible enhance the character of the landscape area and local distinctiveness. Policy Framework should reflect this.

3.3.5 It is understood that SBC will review the LCA and formulate planning policy based on the recommendations included within this document.



## Appendix 1: Sites promoted through SHLAA

### **Billingham East**

SHLAA 63 St Michael's School (buildings and hardstanding only)  
SHLAA 84 Site of Derwent House, Low Grange Ave, Billingham

### **Billingham South**

SHLAA 51 Billingham House  
SHLAA 83 Land at Roscoe Road, Billingham

### **Eaglescliffe**

SHLAA 10 Land to the West of Preston Farm, Preston Lane  
SHLAA 16 Land at Allens West, Eaglescliffe  
SHLAA 46 Low Crook Farm, Eaglescliffe  
SHLAA 53 Land North of Preston Lane  
SHLAA 61 Eaglescliffe School (buildings and hardstanding only), Eaglescliffe  
SHLAA 69 Land bound by Urray Nook Road  
SHLAA 82 Land at Durham Lane, Eaglescliffe

### **Hardwick**

SHLAA 14 University Hospital of North Tees

### **Ingleby Barwick East**

SHLAA 15 Land at Little Maltby Farm, Ingleby Barwick  
SHLAA 70 Land adjacent to Teeside Industrial Estate

### **Ingleby Barwick West**

SHLAA 72 Sandhill, Ingleby Barwick

### **Mandale & Victoria**

SHLAA 1 Tees Marshalling Yard (West)  
SHLAA 2 Tees Marshalling Yard (East)  
SHLAA 8 Supreme Knitwear Building, Mandale Triangle, Thornaby  
SHLAA 9 Land to the South of Teesdale Park, Thornaby  
60 SHLAA Land behind Old Autoparts, Thornaby

### **Newtown**

SHLAA 4 Land off Grangefield (Millfield)

### **Norton South**

SHLAA 13 Land at Chesham Road, Norton  
SHLAA64 Norton School (buildings and hardstanding only), Norton



**Parkfield & Oxbridge**

- SHLAA 6 Bowesfield Riverside Phase 2
- SHLAA 55 Former Cable Ski Site, Bowesfield Farm
- SHLAA 57 Land at Smith's Farm
- SHLAA 66 Land and buildings adjoining the
- SHLAA 87 Bowesfield Riverside Phase 1

**Roseworth**

- SHLAA 65 Blakeston School, Stockton

**Stockton Town Centre**

- SHLAA 3 Chandler's Wharf
- SHLAA 5 Speedy Hire, Boathouse Lane
- SHLAA 7 The Barrage
- SHLAA 52 Arriva Bus Depot, Boat House Lane
- SHLAA 54 Municipal Buildings, Stockton Library and Police Station

**Village**

- SHLAA 11 Land South of Thornaby (between Middleton Avenue and Bassleton Lane)
- SHLAA 12 Land to the rear of Holly Bush Farm, Thornaby Road, Thornaby

**Bishopgarth & Elm Tree**

- SHLAA 35 Land West of Harrowgate Lane
- SHLAA 36 Land South of Bishopgarth School
- SHLAA 42 Land at rear of Bishopgarth Cottages, Darlington Back Lane
- SHLAA 43 Land at Two Mile House Farm 4.9 110 121

**Hartburn**

- SHLAA 23 Hartburn Grange land between Yarm Back Lane and West Stockton built up area.
- SHLAA 24 Land at Yarm Back Lane, Hartburn
- SHLAA 29 Land adjoining Bungalow, Netherleigh
- SHLAA 44 Elton Lane Farm, Yarm Back Lane
- SHLAA 80 Land to north of Southlands, Yarm Back Lane

**Northern Parishes**

- SHLAA 30 Land to the North East of White House Farm, Billingham
- SHLAA 56 Land at Wolviston
- SHLAA 62 Land adjoining Blakeston Lane, Norton

**Yarm**



SHLAA 47 Land of Green Lane, Yarm

SHLAA 88 Land to West of Yarm Station, Green Lane

**Billingham East**

SHLAA 79 Land at Manor House Farm, Cowpen Bewley

**Eaglescliffe**

SHLAA 33 Land on the North Western boundary of Aislaby Village

**Ingleby Barwick East**

SHLAA 48 Land North of Maltby

SHLAA 49 Land adjacent to Maltby

**Northern Parishes**

SHLAA 17 Land to the South of Wynyard Village (Masterplan site 4)

SHLAA 18 Land at Wynyard (Masterplan site 3)

SHLAA 20 Land at Wolviston

SHLAA 21 Land at Wolviston

22 SHLAA Land at Wolviston

SHLAA 32 Land at Durham Lane to the South East of Thorpe Thewles

SHLAA 40 Land North of St James Close Thorpe Thewles

SHLAA 74 Land East of Wolviston Road, Wolviston

SHLAA 75 Land at Wynyard (Masterplan site 5)

SHLAA 76 Land at Wynyard Golf Course

SHLAA 81 Wynyard Park

SHLAA 86 Land at Durham Lane to the south west of Thorpe Thewles

**Western Parishes**

SHLAA 25 Land at Hall Farm to the North and West of the Village of Carlton

SHLAA 31 Land at Mount Pleasant, Long Newton

SHLAA 38 Land adjacent to Stillington

SHLAA 39 Townend Farm, Whitton

SHLAA 41 Hill House Farm Redmarshall

SHLAA 58 Land at West End Farm, Longnewton (Parcel 2)

SHLAA 59 Land at West End Farm, Longnewton (Parcel 1)

SHLAA 67 Land to the rear of Londonderry Arms, Long Newton Yarm

SHLAA 26 Land to the South of Knowles Close, Kirklevington

SHLAA 27 Land at St Martin's Way, Kirklevington