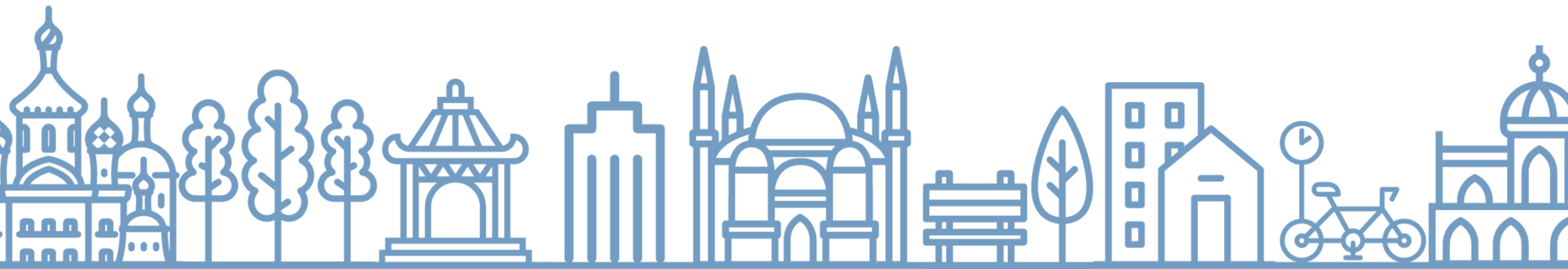


Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the
Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape

Neighbourhood Plans: supporting a World Heritage Site

Durham Castle and Cathedral, United Kingdom

21st June 2021



The City of Durham

- In the north-east of England.
- 440 km from London.
- 200 km from Edinburgh.
- 54.774° N, 1.576° W.
- Full City 32 km sq.
- World Heritage Site 8.79 ha.
- Population 43,000 (urban area).
- A small University City.
- Administrative centre for the County, population 500,000.



Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site

- **(ii)** Largest, most perfect 'Norman' architectural monument in England.
- **(iv)** Vaulting an experimental model far ahead of its time.
- **(vi)** Relics and material culture of three saints, (Cuthbert, Bede, and Oswald) buried at the site.
- **(vi)** Memory of the evangelising of Northumbria and of primitive Benedictine monastic life.
- Visual drama of the Cathedral and Castle on the peninsula: 'romantic' landscape.
- Listed in 1968.



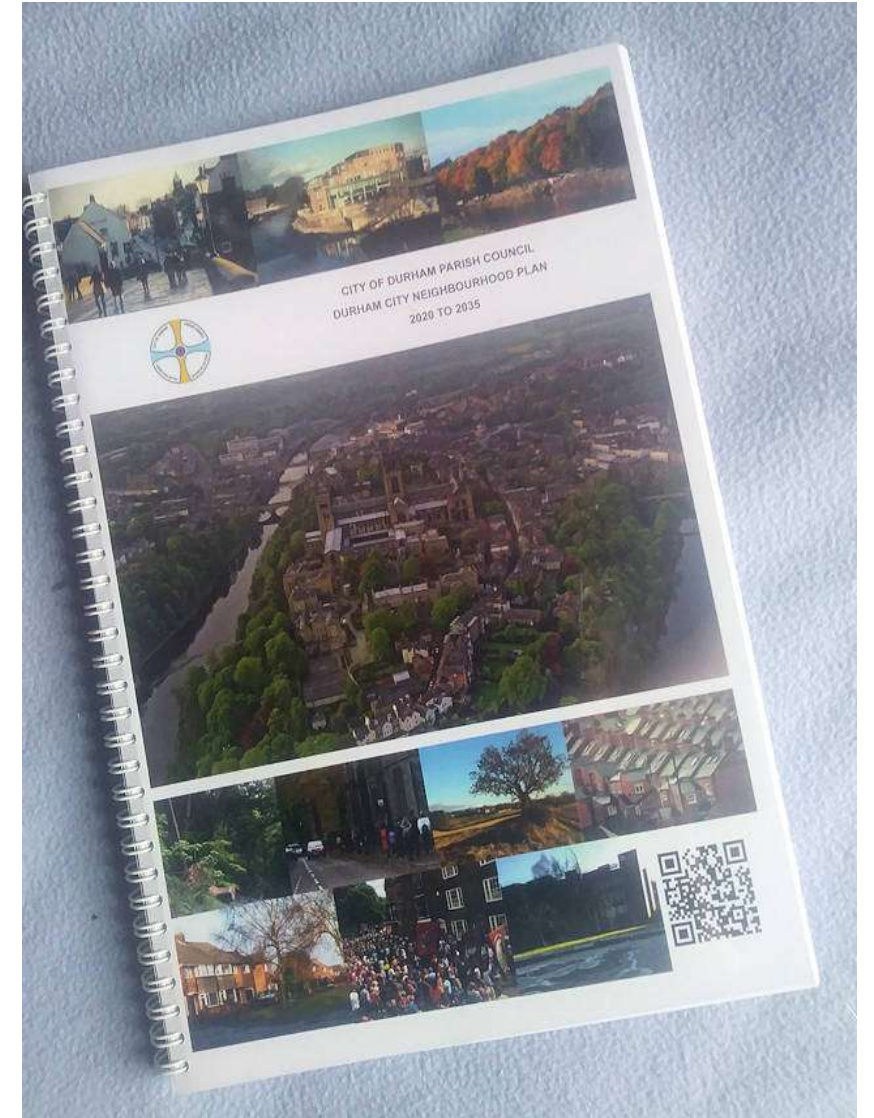
Challenges and opportunities

- Physical sustainability.
- Continuous occupation / use for over 1000 years right up to 21st century.
- Balancing conservation / preservation with the need to be part of a living, modern, evolving city.
- Pace and quantity of recent development within the city.
- The effective management of a living WHS will always require balancing interests.



The City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan

- Development of a Neighbourhood Plan - Localism Act 2011. Give more say to local people in planning matters.
- Neighbourhood Plans have to be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and the local development plan - *County Durham Plan*.
- Plan covers same area as City of Durham Parish Council. 2014 to 2021.
- Individual citizens, Community groups, Residents' Associations, WHS team, Durham University, Durham County Council, City of Durham Parish Council (from 2018).



Context and drivers

- Motivation came from local people who were concerned that they did not have enough control over planning decisions in their area.
- The plan provides a vision for the City.
- With effective planning policies to bring it to fruition.
- The plan covers most aspects of local life covering the following themes:
- Sustainability / Built and Natural Heritage / Economy / Housing / Transport / Community.

Durham City's potential as a beautiful historic City will be realised through policy and action to improve and protect its qualities and by creating a diverse and resilient economy with attractive, healthy and affordable places to live. It will be supported by modern infrastructure, protected by adaptation to climate change and enriched by community engagement in its future.

Key elements/components/actions of the initiative

- Bring together a group of volunteers prepared to work on developing the plan.
- Gain approval for formally constituting these volunteers as the Neighbourhood Planning Forum for the City of Durham area.
- Establish a Working Group reporting to the Forum.
- An iterative process of consultation with the local community as the plan took shape; it grew from the ground upwards.
- Key themes identified and individual planning policies developed.



Community and stakeholder engagement

- Process of development depended upon extensive consultation with the local community at every key stage.
- Consultation – multiple approaches: leaflets to every household; drop in sessions; discussions with focus groups; responses to paper and online questionnaires.
- All meeting minutes, consultation responses and documents produced published on our website npf.durhamcity.org.uk: a really transparent process.



Direct outcomes

- Existence of a Neighbourhood Plan, part of statutory local development framework alongside the *County Durham Plan*.
- Responsibility of Parish Council; covers period to 2035; subject to 5-yearly reviews; a living document.
- Policies protect site and setting.
- H1: Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site; H2: The Conservation Areas.
- G1: Protecting and Enhancing Green and Blue Infrastructure; G2: Designation of Local Green Spaces.



Indirect outcomes

- Companion document, *Looking Forwards*.
- 22 initiatives from the consultations not amenable to formulation as planning policies.
- Adopted by the Parish Council.
- Identification, Protection and Enhancement of Heritage Assets, Green Assets and Views in Durham City.
- Setting up the Emerald Network.
- Identifying, Conserving and Improving Footpaths in and around Durham City.
- The Durham Design Guide.



Challenges faced

- Negotiation and collaboration with official bodies: Durham County Council, Historic England, Durham University.
- Took long time to receive effective DCC and University support.
- DCC developing own *Durham County Plan* at same time.
- Historic England insisted on a full Strategic Environmental Assessment because of significance of WHS.
- Parish Council set up in 2018; changed responsibility and area covered.
- Sustaining the efforts of a group of volunteers over a **long** period of time.



Contribution to Sustainable Development and implementation of HUL Approach

- Local, national and regional attention.
- Legislative framework.
- Policies related to sustainable urban development.
- Relationship between historic urban areas and the natural environment.
- Partnerships with stakeholders of urban heritage.
- Importance of knowledge and planning tools.
- Participatory processes and community engagement.



Thank you

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