

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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4 July 2021

Cllr Amanda Hopgood,  
Leader, Durham County Council  
County Hall  
Durham City  
County Durham DH1 5UL

Dear Amanda

## **Masterplan requirements for Sniperley Park and Bent House Lane: Appeal to Durham County Council from the City of Durham Trust**

The City of Durham Trust is submitting to you the following note in the hope that it will assist you and colleagues in dealing with the totally unsatisfactory partial schemes for Sniperley Park and for the Sheburn Road that Bellway and Banks respectively are promoting. What is actually needed and required by Policy 5 of the County Durham Plan are masterplans that meet the requirements of Policy 5 for the sites in their entirety.

The Trust was prompted to prepare this note as a result of a meeting held on 21 June that involved some members of Climate Action Durham including two of our trustees, Malcolm Reed and Matthew Phillips, and Councillors Mark Wilkes and Jonathan Elmer. We are copying this note to them and we would be delighted to discuss it with you and your colleagues if you wish.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe  
Chair, City of Durham Trust

cc. Cllr Mark Wilkes  
Cllr Jonathan Elmer

### **Preamble**

1. The City of Durham Trust makes this heartfelt plea to the new leadership of Durham County Council to uphold in full the policies of the County Durham Local Plan (CDP) in the face of attempts to promote development at Sniperley Park and the Sherburn Road that clearly fail to meet these policies.
2. We set out below our key points and in the attached tables in the hope that they will assist you in ensuring that the County Council makes it abundantly clear what is required on both sites.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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3. The bottom line is that the developers have to be challenged point by point as to how their proposals meet in full the requirements set out so clearly in Policy 5 of the CDP as well as in other relevant policies of the CDP.

4. The Council should now, faced with the failures of both Bellway and Banks, take the lead on producing masterplans.

## **Our case**

5. CDP Policy 5 (see appendix) designates two ‘sustainable urban extensions’ at Sniperley Park and at Sherburn Road. Development proposals have been prepared for only parts of both sites, by Bellway and by Banks respectively.

6. This is therefore a critical moment to develop a masterplan that establishes the true principles of sustainability, design and other key policies to ensure satisfactory development for the entirety of each site.

7. From what has been published by the two developers, the City of Durham Trust considers that a fundamental change of approach is needed. In essence, compliance with each and every one of the requirements set out in Policy 5 is mandatory; these are not optional or variable - every word was been most carefully deliberated and prescribed in the Inspector’s Report on his Examination of the submitted County Durham Plan.

8. Policy 5 was subject to his specific main modifications which were the subject of full public consultation before final adoption. It would make a mockery of that process to deviate from the precise tests prescribed by Policy 5.

## **Comprehensive Overall Masterplans**

9. The starting point must be that Policy 5 requires comprehensive masterplanning of the two sites:

***“Development is required to be comprehensively masterplanned and to demonstrate how the phasing of development on these sites will have regard to the provision and timing of the infrastructure and services necessary to support them.”***

Paragraph 4.99 explicitly says: ***“it is envisaged that the sites will be developed by a number of builders, providing different products across the sites working to overall masterplans.”***

10. Neither Bellway at Sniperley nor Banks at Sherburn Road has sought to promote a procedure for participation in and production of a comprehensive masterplan for the whole allocation that would enable the principles of sustainability and high quality design, together with phasing and possible timing to be incorporated into each future sub-division of the site. This was an approach we commended to Banks but it was ignored, as were our two requests to meet the County Council’s Head of Planning at the time for a partnership approach to the development of the two masterplans led by the County Council.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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11. The Council should now, faced with the failures of both Bellway and Banks, take the lead on producing masterplans, preferably through independent specialist advisors. All potential developers would be welcome to play a constructive and open part, and possibly also in funding the work. This would allow the essential democratic dimension to control a process intended to produce a sustainable and uniquely local design and its implementation, and the timetable for full consideration of all possibilities

12. Each of the two sites is a precious resource to be carefully released for development over a number of years rather than an opportunity to roll out a standard housing layout. The two masterplans must identify and deliver packages of land to meet the short, medium and long term demands as anticipated by the County Plan population and housing forecasts. This will ensure that development is phased in smaller and distinctive units avoiding a continuous building site appearance, and in a timely fashion where progressive improvements in housing style and function are possible.

13. The phasing of the development is required to have regard to the timing of the infrastructure and services necessary to support the developments, and this is particularly important in managing the transport impacts of the developments. The fundamental justification for releasing these two sites from the green belt, rather than identifying other sites beyond the green belt, was that of the potential for sustainable transport to existing amenities within Durham City. If the sustainable transport infrastructure and services are not in place by the time the first new residents move in, then car-dependent habits will be formed and will be hard to change. The masterplans must therefore demonstrate the timely provision of infrastructure to meet the need of the residents and to mitigate the impacts of development. The key question should be “is it reasonable for people to live here without needing a car?”

14. A properly phased masterplan would prioritise the provision of good walking and cycling links within the sites, available as soon as houses are occupied, and good quality connecting routes to employment opportunities, educational facilities, retail and leisure amenities. As required by Policy 5, the movement frameworks of each site should also incorporate any relevant schemes within the Durham City Sustainable Transport Delivery Plan. Off-site improvements are likely to be required to achieve these aims.

15. The masterplans should be able to demonstrate that as the development progresses residents will always have safe and attractive sustainable options for travel to key sites. For Sniperley Park these would include Aykley Heads, the city centre, Framwelgate Moor, local primary and secondary schools, and the Arnison Centre. For Bent House Lane connections to primary and secondary schools, towards the city centre, and to employment sites such as Belmont Industrial Estate should all be considered. The masterplans should identify and assess these key travel corridors and plan for the delivery of sustainable transport improvements in relation to the phasing of the development.

16. The infrastructure and services for Sniperley Park would also include the primary school and the local centre with its retail provision. To avoid the need for new occupants to depend on car transport, the school and retail facilities will need to be provided as early as possible in the phasing of the development. Before these facilities are available, subsidised bus services may be necessary to connect residents to the neighbouring schools and retail provision.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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17. The Inspector's report made some telling points about the nature of the development on the two major housing sites in respect of connectivity at Sniperley and the containment of the site at Sherburn Road. He said for Sniperley Park:

*“89. The site is well served by buses to and from the city centre and elsewhere. Part (j) of policy 5 requires an expansion to the adjoining park and ride site, along with the provision of attractive and safe links from the proposed housing. Part (i) requires the provision of suitable, convenient, safe and attractive cycleways and footpaths to the existing development to the east of the A167. These proposals, along with other policies in the Plan relating to sustainable transport, should **ensure that future residents are not dependent on the use of private motor vehicles.**” (Our emphasis).*

18. For Sherburn Road he said:

*“96. Because of the site’s location and relationship with heritage assets, development needs to be sensitively designed and landscaped. This can be ensured by the requirements of parts n, o, s and t of policy 5, although a number of modifications are required to the detailed wording and the reasoned justification to ensure that they are effective in preventing any harm to the setting of heritage assets and safeguarding the character and appearance of the area.”*

*“97. The motorway and its wooded embankment would represent a readily recognisable physical feature to provide a permanent Green Belt boundary to the east. The southern boundary is currently weakly defined by a fence and recent planting at the point where the land starts to fall more steeply. Part t of policy 5 (subject to MM53) refers to a 20 metre wide landscaped area which should be effective in creating a recognisable and permanent Green Belt boundary in this location. A hedge along the proposed Green Belt boundary and existing buildings at Bent House Farm would separate the development from the open countryside to the west, and part n of policy 5 should ensure that the character of the farm is protected.”*

*“98. Part s of policy 5 would ensure that the proposal delivers compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land in the Old Durham Beck valley.”*

19. The above quotes set an indisputable set of requirements that a masterplan needs to embody.

20. In addition, the relevant policies of the County Durham Local Plan such as those on affordable housing provision, and meeting the needs of older people will all be engaged. The notion of ‘lifetime housing’ should be ‘in the mix’.

21. In order to satisfy CDP policy 21, development should have regard to the policies of the Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan and contribute to the development of the cycling and walking network including routes set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The LCWIP for Durham City is due to be considered by the Council's cabinet this month, and masterplans for each site should therefore be informed by its contents.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

## Sniperley Park

22. The County Council issued a Draft Supplementary Planning Document on Sniperley Park in July 2012 but much has happened since and a genuinely comprehensive overall masterplan is needed to meet all of the requirements in the County Durham Plan, and the pressing factors of the climate change emergency, well-being post COVID, and the lessons of the behaviour of the local housing market in producing unimaginative high-end ‘executive housing’.

23. The Trust made objections to the inclusion of some of the specific highway changes around Sniperley listed in Policy 5k. In the light of the Sixth Carbon Budget, meeting which will entail an ongoing reduction in motor traffic, the Council should review these requirements and instead seek sustainable transport alternatives. The site would lend itself to good bus access, as demonstrated by County Durham Land in their submission to the Examination in Public, but the masterplan needs a movement framework across the whole site which actively prioritises sustainable modes and discourages short car journeys, especially for travel to the primary school. The mix of housing types should relate to the transport provision, with higher-density development with reduced parking provision centred on the public transport nodes. This level of co-ordination cannot be achieved through partial proposals such as those from Bellway.

24. The table below presents our analysis, briefly, of the level of achievement of Bellway’s proposals in meeting the requirements of County Local Plan policies, notably Policy 5, in respect of the Sniperley Park site development.

<b>The Bellway proposal for 400 dwellings on part of the Policy 5 site allocated for 1,700 dwellings at Sniperley Park</b>	<b>Level of achievement in meeting the requirements of County Durham Plan policies, notably Policy 5, in respect of the Sniperley Park development</b>
1. <i>As a context to the Sniperley Park Master Plan</i>	<b>It is not possible for this proposal to provide the context for a wider Master Plan that has not yet been prepared.</b> The undue haste to outrun the master plan makes this initiative speculative and incomplete. It also essential to have exemplary design guidance in line with the National Design Code and ‘Building Better, Building Beautiful’.
2. <i>As a first phase housing proposal delivering up to 400 high-quality new homes, including 25% affordable housing in line with Policy requirements delivering approximately 50-60 new homes per year. The proposals include a mix of detached, semi-detached, and terraced homes as well as apartments that vary in size from 1 to 5 bedrooms.</i>	<b>It is impossible to say if this proposal is satisfactory in relation to the overall development of the site.</b> A clear example is the County Council prime requirement for a new primary school “of a scale which will meet the expected requirement for school places generated by the new housing development. The primary school should be readily accessible to public transport, walking and cycling routes. The primary school will contain associated playing fields which will replace those lost at the southern end of the site and will be of an equivalent or better quality; equivalent quantity and available for use by both the school and by community teams via a community use agreement.” <b>This proposal seems to be exempt from contributing to the planning of the required school provision. Also the mix of housing selected prematurely by the developer could be a constraint on the rest of the Sniperley housing provision.</b>
3. <i>Although the site measures 20 hectares, only 11 hectares (approximately) will be developed for residential use with the remaining areas set aside for open space, landscaping, and other infrastructure. A linear park along the northern/eastern boundary ensuring significant levels of open space, opportunities for recreation and wildlife/biodiversity.</i>	The allocation of land for uses other than housing seems generous but quite arbitrary as it is unclear whether the proposals meet the County Council’s requirement that “a major benefit to new and existing residents, a linear park will be provided in perpetuity through the centre of the site.” <b>Only in a Master Plan for the whole site can this proposal for 11 hectares within this part of the site be assessed.</b>

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

<p>4. A detailed Transport Assessment (for this small part of the Sniperley site) will be submitted with the planning application which will consider traffic generation and any impact on the local network. A new roundabout will be built to access the site from the A691. Land will be set aside for the future expansion of the existing Park and Ride facility (subject to separate proposals) and there will be public transport enhancements.</p>	<p><b>The proposed Transport Assessment will fall far short of the explicit requirements of DCC for a comprehensive Master Plan</b> “to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts on the wider road network (in terms of capacity and congestion)”. Policy 5 is absolutely firm on the need for all necessary on and off-site highway works and improvements, together with a timetable for their implementation, be agreed with the council as part of the comprehensive masterplan and any future planning applications for the Sniperley Park site. <b>There is no question that the Transport Assessment in this proposal, should it come to DCC as a planning proposal, could not satisfy these traffic and other transport requirements such as the extension and necessary connections to the Park and Ride site, and contribution towards the provision of sustainable transport links.</b></p>
<p>5. Parking spaces are to be provided in accordance with the County Council’s adopted policy requirements. Cycle parking will be provided throughout the development. Again, this will be provided at levels in accordance with the Council’s adopted policy requirements.</p>	<p>DCC requires a contribution to delivering sustainable transport in accordance with policies 21 (Delivering Sustainable Travel) and 22 (Durham City Transport). <b>There is absolutely no evidence that this requirement has been treated as a prime determinant of the nature of the development and its relationship to the rest of the site and beyond but rather as a consequential matter from later negotiations.</b></p>
<p>6. The delivery of a sustainable urban drainage system.</p>	<p><b>SUDS is a key requirement of DCC in the Master Plan.</b> Policy 5 states that “In addition to the surface and foul water drainage management plan, incorporating SUDS will be requirement that no further water should drain into the Blackdene Burn. Also need for possible wider opportunities for improvement of local water quality should be explored.” <b>It would seem that SUDS and water improvement are key determinants that cannot be delivered on a piecemeal basis outside their consideration in the full Master Plan for the site.</b></p>
<p>7. The development of the site will ensure that there is a net gain in biodiversity and where possible trees and hedgerows will be retained; The Public Right of Way will be retained; The development design will deliver new and enhanced places for biodiversity to use and live in over the long term.</p>	<p>This is a rather limited objective set by the developers and easily met since the existing site is rather poor in biodiversity. <b>An overall biodiversity plan for Sniperley is needed to ensure that wildlife thrives not only on newly provided and improved sites but over the whole site in a network of interlinked green spaces for wildlife including gardens, roofs and civic spaces.</b></p>
<p>8. All of the units will meet the nationally Described Space Standards, whilst two-thirds of the homes will also meet the Building Regulation Standards Part M4(2) and the Lifetime Homes Standards, meaning that they will be accessible and adaptable for changing lifestyles and suitable for families or elderly occupants.</p>	<p><b>This fails entirely to meet the climate emergency challenge as the whole issue of sustainable development in response to climate change needs careful consideration in the Master Plan. The ability of housing units to generate power, to conserve heat and to achieve cooling through technical and ecological applications will be a crucial test of the adaptability of the housing for future needs.</b></p>
<p>9. The development will have regard to their character and setting of Sniperley Hall and Farm.</p>	<p><b>It may be that this requirement can be met in accordance with DCC’s requirement, but it is impossible to place reliance on the currently available statements.</b></p>
<p>10. The proposed application will include extensive details such as the exact number of homes proposed, the layout, size, tenure, and type of</p>	<p><b>The key determinants of the success of the development have been reduced to details of the planning application.</b></p>

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

<p>homes proposed, the location and amount of car and cycle parking spaces, the details of the design, planting, and maintenance of landscaped areas.</p>	
<p>11. The potential for energy generation, conservation on the site</p>	<p><b>This is a key determinant of sustainability in respect of both the land and the building proposals in relation to the DCC requirement that “opportunities for a district heating network will be explored given the site's proximity to Lanchester Road Hospital and Aykley Heads”.</b></p>
<p>12. Submitting a full planning application in this way will enable Bellway to deliver the housing at pace, assisting the Council in meeting its housing targets. Our application follows lengthy Pre-Application discussions with Durham County Council and the development will be guided by the Council's planning policies and other relevant design guidelines.</p>	<p><b>There is no suggestion by DCC that the future development of Sniperley should be done ‘at pace’ This is a preference of the developers and not of either the local authorities or the people they represent. There can be no conclusion to this consultation other than the proposal is premature and would seriously jeopardise the long term sustainability of the site.</b></p>
<p>13. Contribution of compensatory improvements</p>	<p><b>The proposal as it currently stands simply demarcates an area west of the A691 for compensatory improvements without any evidence of the adequacy of the compensating land or commitment to its provision, thus setting in train a process that would enable future developments at Sniperley to be exempt.</b></p> <p>Policy 5 requires “Schemes of compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility to the remaining Green Belt will be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on land north and south of the A691 to the south of the site to include, the planting of new hedgerows, woodland, parkland trees and hedgerow trees, habitat creation to buffer existing features and new public rights of way linking to the wider footpath network in the Browney Valley to the south:</li> <li>• on land north of Potterhouse Lane and south of Little Gill, to the north of the site, to include the planting of new hedgerows and gapping up of existing hedgerows, the planting of new hedgerow trees, the planting of new woodland along Little Gill and on steeper slopes to connect existing woodland with woods to the east, habitat creation to buffer existing features, and new public rights of way providing opportunities for circular walks and linking to the wider footpath network to the north; and in order to achieve sustainable and cohesive communities,</li> <li>• the development must be connected to the existing development to the east of the A167 through suitable, convenient, safe and attractive cycleways and footpaths.”</li> </ul>

## Sherburn Road

25. The City of Durham Trust’s response to the consultation leaflet issued by Banks included the following points:

- The consultation leaflet promises “*housing with a good sustainability rating*”. This is a case when good is not good enough. York is an example of a Council with a project for 600 zero-carbon homes in “*car-free cycling paradises full of fruit trees and allotments.*” The highest levels are clearly not achievable with a traditional medium density layout with road access dominating despite green flourishes.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

- The main failure in the layout is that there is a nearly complete spine road where a pedestrian, cycle, ecological, social and play environment should be. It is a layout that looks dated and compromised.
- “A contribution towards affordable housing” seems to be less than a full commitment to the provision for local people. Does this imply the affordable housing is to elsewhere in possibly less satisfactory locations? If that is the case then claims to be providing a sustainable product fall on the grounds of social equity.
- There is no mention at all of the sources of energy and indeed how much energy can be generated from the site by studying the applicability of a district heating scheme from for example a small heat and power plant, the provision of solar power, air or ground source heating. It is a key metric for the sustainability of the housing to avoid the provision of housing that in a few years will suffer an energy deficit as gas is phased out.
- The use of public transport is dismissed in a line. This is clearly a car dependent development and almost completely unsustainable without some accommodation of greatly enhanced public transport within the site remembering that a generation of electric buses is close now. As a minimum, greatly improved bus stands with traffic calming and comfortable waiting facilities should be provided.

26. The table below presents a brief summary of the formal objection made by the Trust to Banks’ outline planning application for the Sherburn Road site development.

<b>The Banks outline planning application for up to 440 dwellings on part of the Policy 5 site allocated for 420 dwellings at Sherburn Road.</b>	<b>Level of achievement in meeting the requirements of County Durham Plan policies, notably Policy 5, in respect of the Sherburn Road development</b>
<p>1. <i>An illustrative development framework indicating possibilities.</i></p>	<p><b>Despite being a planning application, there is no comprehensive masterplan, merely an illustrative development framework indicating possibilities.</b> Banks do not own the whole of the allocated site H6 and have failed to collaborate with the other owner to develop an overall masterplan.</p>
<p>2. <i>The application only seeks detailed approval for two points of access which are proposed to be taken from the A181 and Bent House Lane. All other matters (scale, layout, built form and landscape) are reserved to be determined through future Reserved Matters applications.</i></p>	<p>The outline application leaves everything other than access to the A181 to being dealt with through Reserved Matters which are apparently intended for individual submission by various developers of the site. <b>The only satisfactory way in which different developers can produce a coherent realisation of CDP Policy 5 and other relevant policies of the County Durham Plan is to provide a fully worked-up masterplan for the whole of H6 together with a Design Code that secures such matters as the location of the affordable housing.</b> The most obvious access point onto the A181 would have been at the new signalised junction for Damson Way, which would have required working with the owners of that part of the site. Banks has not justified the proposed location of the junction, and neither has there been any consultation with public transport operators on alternative layouts which might allow bus services through the site to bring down the walking distance to bus stops. Proposals which are devoid of collaborative working do not satisfy the requirement for a masterplan.</p>
<p>3. <i>Para 5.35 of the Planning Statement says: “Due to the inclusion of the southern landscaping belt which now forms part of the red line boundary, the gross site area has increased from the Policy 4 figure which would result in an estimated yield of 440 dwellings across the H6 (Sherburn Road) housing allocation.”</i></p>	<p>This is simply wrong: CDP Policy 4 covers the whole of H6 and is for 420 dwellings in total whereas Banks’ planning statement suggests 500 dwellings across the whole of H6. Banks are seeking a significant increase in the quantity of development here. There is also no indication that there has been consideration of the impact of increasing the density on heritage and landscape. <b>It is impossible to say if this proposal is satisfactory in relation to the overall development of the site.</b></p>

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

<p>4. <i>Through a sensitively designed scheme, proposals will provide the optimal solution for the site and surrounding area - according fully with Government objectives for sustainable development and the promotion of inclusive, sustainable and vibrant communities.</i></p>	<p>Policy 5 requires that the site “will deliver attractive, well designed places, incorporating sustainable development principles, adopting sustainable construction methods, and using appropriate densities across the sites in accordance with Policy 29 (Sustainable Design in the Built Environment).” The submitted Design Code is generic and weak. <b>This outline application is incapable of ensuring compliance with these basic requirements of Policy 5.</b></p>
<p>5. <i>CDP Policy 15 requirements on affordable housing etc. will be addressed at reserved matters stage.</i></p>	<p>Policy 15 lays down very important requirements on housing need: 25% to be affordable and 66% to be accessible and adaptable, and 10% to be suitable for older people. <b>This is clearly unworkable via separate developers each pursuing their own reserved matters</b> without an approved comprehensive masterplan. The same is true for compliance with Policy 19 - Type and Mix of Housing.</p>
<p>6. <i>The Framework Travel Plan provides an overarching framework for all future housebuilders to use to formulate their own Subsidiary Travel Plans (STPs) for the site. Each STP will identify opportunities for the effective promotion and delivery of sustainable travel initiatives in connection with the respective element of the proposed development and, through this, to reduce the demand for non-sustainable modes of travel.</i></p>	<p><b>This piecemeal approach passes to others the onus for securing the sustainable travel aspects of CDP Policies 5, 21 and 22.</b> Specifically, Policy 5 says for the Sherburn Road site that “.In order to reduce the dominance of car traffic and improve the permeability, both sites will incorporate convenient, safe and high quality bus, pedestrian and cycle routes within, and connecting to, adjoining facilities.” No provision for bus routes within the site is offered. . The Framework Travel Plan is unambitious and lacking in effective proposals. While a contribution towards improved walking and cycling links has been offered, in order to mitigate the impacts on the A181/Sunderland Road junction, the only detailed plans provided in the application are for capacity enhancements to three major road junctions. Any mitigation should prioritise sustainable transport measures to avoid the need to increase motor traffic capacity, because UK climate change commitments cannot be met without a net reduction in motor traffic use.</p>
<p>7. <i>Identification of key outward views to the surrounding countryside.</i></p>	<p>This ignores the requirements of CDP Policy 45. Part of the Banks site is the Inner Setting of the World Heritage Site, which they do not realise. <b>This fails to provide assurance that the setting and important views across, into and out of the WHS are protected and to uphold the fundamental requirement that “development that would result in harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site or its setting will not be permitted other than in wholly exceptional circumstances”.</b></p>

## APPENDIX

### County Durham Plan Policy 5: Durham City's Sustainable Urban Extensions

In order to meet housing need and to promote sustainable patterns of development, land at Sniperley Park and Sherburn Road, as shown on the policies map, are allocated for planned urban extensions and will be removed from the Green Belt. Development is required to be comprehensively masterplanned and to demonstrate how the phasing of development on these sites will have regard to the provision and timing of the infrastructure and services necessary to support them.

The sites will deliver attractive, well designed places, incorporating sustainable development principles, adopting sustainable construction methods, and using appropriate densities across the sites in accordance with Policy 30 (Sustainable Design in the Built Environment). *(NB should be Policy 29)*. Design codes will be utilised to ensure distinctive, high quality design outcomes for the sites.

The sites will incorporate an appropriate mix of house types and tenures to reflect housing need including housing for older people and affordable housing in accordance with Policy 15 (Addressing Housing Need). Development will comprise of:

1. 1,700 houses at Sniperley Park; and
2. 420 houses at Sherburn Road.

#### Sniperley Park

- a. Sniperley Park will be a sustainable urban extension incorporating a centrally located local centre which will act as the focus for community activity, including convenience retail provision for A1 floorspace and an allowance for A2, A3 and A4 units to facilitate a viable and vibrant community. The local centre will also include a building suitable to be used as a health centre;
- b. a new primary school will be provided of a scale which will meet the expected requirement for school places generated by the new housing development. The primary school should be readily accessible to public transport, walking and cycling routes. The primary school will contain associated playing fields which will replace those lost at the southern end of the site and will be of an equivalent or better quality; equivalent quantity and available for use by both the school and by community teams via a community use agreement;
- c. structural landscaping will be required along the A167 and the southern edge of the new road from the A691 to the Pity Me Roundabout to ensure suitable screening and that the perception of an extension to Durham City is minimised;
- d. a surface and foul water drainage management plan incorporating SuDS will be required with no further water draining into the Blackdene Burn. Where possible wider opportunities for improvement of local water quality should be explored;

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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- e. the design of development in the vicinity of Sniperley Hall and Farm will have regard to their character and setting, and the recognition of the area as an Historic Park and Garden of Local Interest, including through the provision of public open space and the use of reduced housing densities. The woodlands in that area will be retained;
- f. any visual association with the Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site will be given special regard to reflect its significance;
- g. as a major benefit to new and existing residents, a linear park will be provided in perpetuity through the centre of the site. It will run from Folly Plantation in the north, through the former Cater House Pit to the parklands of Sniperley Hall in the south. The park will comprise of approximately 25 hectares of public open space, wildlife habitats, playing fields and community woodlands connected by a network of footpaths and cycleways linking housing areas with the local centre, the wider countryside and the urban areas to the east. It will incorporate the mature woodlands and tree groups of Sniperley Park, maintaining the relationship of the Hall with land to the north and with Sniperley Farm, having regard to their setting. It will incorporate the habitats of the former Cater House Pit and Folly Plantation, providing new linkages between them and the wider countryside;
- h. schemes of compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility to the remaining Green Belt will be provided on land north and south of the A691 to the south of the site to include, the planting of new hedgerows, woodland, parkland trees and hedgerow trees, habitat creation to buffer existing features and new public rights of way linking to the wider footpath network in the Browney Valley to the south:
  - 1. on land north of Potterhouse Lane and south of Little Gill, to the north of the site, to include the planting of new hedgerows and gapping up of existing hedgerows, the planting of new hedgerow trees, the planting of new woodland along Little Gill and on steeper slopes to connect existing woodland with woods to the east, habitat creation to buffer existing features, and new public rights of way providing opportunities for circular walks and linking to the wider footpath network to the north; and
  - 2. opportunities for a district heating network will be explored given the site's proximity to Lanchester Road Hospital and Aykley Heads.
- i. in order to achieve sustainable and cohesive communities, the development must be connected to the existing development to the east of the A167 through suitable, convenient, safe and attractive cycleways and footpaths;
- j. the expansion of the Sniperley Park and Ride facility will be required. Attractive and safe links between the housing and the existing Park and Ride facility will be created to maximise its use by residents;
- k. to ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts on the wider road network (in terms of capacity and congestion), details of all necessary on and off-site highway works and improvements,

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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together with a timetable for their implementation, shall be agreed with the council as part of the comprehensive masterplan and any future planning applications for the Sniperley Park site. These works and improvements shall include, but not be limited to:

- improvements at the junctions of Trout's Lane, Potterhouse Lane and the B6532;
- a new link between the B6532 and the A167 park and ride roundabout; and
- capacity improvements along the A167 corridor from Neville's Cross to Sniperley, including improvements to Sniperley Roundabout.

A contribution to delivering sustainable transport in accordance with policies 21 (Delivering Sustainable Travel) and 22 (Durham City Transport) will also be required.

## Sherburn Road

- l. Sherburn Road will be developed to help support regeneration efforts in the adjoining estate by offering a greater diversity of housing offer within the area;
- m. the design of Sherburn Road will provide a positive gateway for Durham City particularly from the A1(M) and protect the character and integrity of Bent House Farm. Development should protect the character of Old Durham Beck and Old Durham;
- n. outward views to the Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site will be retained and framed with any effects on the inner setting of the World Heritage Site minimised and harmful impacts avoided;
- o. a community building will be incorporated on site or the development will deliver the improvement of an existing community building on the Sherburn Road Estate;
- p. developer contributions will fund the necessary additional school places that are generated by the new housing development;
- q. there is an opportunity for Sherburn Road to deliver a combined Sustainable Drainage attenuation scheme in order to manage surface water drainage into the Old Durham Beck which will deal with surface water from the development as well as exploring the potential to deal with drainage from the A1(M) with Highways England;
- r. compensatory improvements to the remaining Green Belt will be provided, to maintain and enhance the rural character of the valley side and to provide improved public access and ecological value. The planting of new hedgerows along with the gapping up of existing hedgerows will enhance and strengthen field patterns. Structural landscaping to the south of the existing Sherburn Road Estate will improve the character of the wider area. Ecological enhancements will be provided in the area leading down to Old Durham Beck to provide better linkages to existing footpaths through to Pelaw Woods and the city centre and provide benefits to the setting of the buildings at Old Durham;
- s. the woodland on the boundary with the A1(M) will be enhanced to ensure appropriate screening and noise attenuation where required. The planting on the southern boundary should be sufficient and at least 20 metres wide, to ensure that the perception of the extension of Durham City is minimised in views from the A1(M). This area will remain in the Green Belt; and

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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- t. the development must be integrated with existing development to the north of the A181 and west of Bent House Lane, including facilitating safe and convenient crossing points for all users to ensure sustainable and cohesive communities. A network of multi user paths must be created with a number of circular routes of varying lengths ensuring the network is functional for local users, as well as providing connections to existing well used footpaths. An enhanced recreational route attractive to all users linking Sherburn Road to Durham City centre must also be provided.

In order to reduce the dominance of car traffic and improve the permeability, both sites will incorporate convenient, safe and high quality bus, pedestrian and cycle routes within, and connecting to, adjoining facilities. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan for each site will also be required to ensure that reliance on the private car is reduced and to mitigate the impact of increased traffic in accordance with Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Travel) and Policy 22 (Durham City Transport). The movement frameworks of each site should also incorporate any relevant schemes within the Durham City Sustainable Transport Delivery Plan.

The sites will incorporate an interconnected network of good-quality, multi functional green infrastructure including an adequate supply of different types of open space, in accordance with Policy 26 (Green Infrastructure). An appropriate and enhanced landscape structure with clearly defined boundaries will also be developed to ensure permanent Green Belt boundaries which are capable of enduring beyond the Plan period.

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