

# Darlington Local Development Framework

## Core Strategy: Issues and Options



## Take Part in Planning in Darlington

Darlington Borough Council January 2008



## Introduction

The Core Strategy will be the key, central document in the Local Development Framework. It will provide broad, spatial planning guidance on the scale and distribution of new development, the use of land and buildings and the provision of infrastructure in the Borough over the next 20 years. Once adopted, it will guide the Council's decisions on planning applications.

It will set out 'higher level' planning policies for delivering the Regional Spatial Strategy and the new Sustainable Community Strategy vision for Darlington at a local level, guiding broad patterns of development and areas of restraint, focussing on the principles of sustainable development.

## How We Got Here

In June-July 2005 we consulted a variety of stakeholders and the local community on a wide range of issues for the original Core Strategy: Issues and Options. We fed the results into the Core Strategy: Preferred Options which we consulted upon in October-December 2005.

We are now consulting on a new Core Strategy alongside the new Sustainable Community Strategy. It takes account of these changes as well as comments made following the Core Strategy consultations in 2005.

## Vision

**The Core Strategy aims to help provide a more sustainable community for people who live and work in or visit Darlington:**

'By 2026 Darlington will be a more sustainable community providing those who wish to live, work in or visit the Borough with the opportunities, ambition and vibrant life of a city whilst promoting the distinctive atmosphere generated by a friendly, historic market town. There will be a wide range of decent homes, businesses, service and recreational facilities linked by a comprehensive network of sustainable transport routes and green infrastructure, helping to ensure the community benefits from equal opportunities for all and a high quality of life in an attractive, healthy, safe and sustainable environment.'



## Issues

The Core Strategy identifies several key issues which can help us achieve our vision. Each issue is followed by a question(s) with several possible options that could help resolve the question.

The approach and amount of detail varies between issues as a result of the difference in the issues and the degree and importance of choice as well as work already undertaken.

## Achieving a more sustainable community

A sustainable Darlington will be a place where people want to live, work and visit now and in the future. It will meet the different needs of existing and future residents offering equality of opportunity for the Borough's community. Issues include:

- generating a strong economy;
- providing a range of housing to meet the needs of the community;
- promoting good accessibility for all;
- improving poor landscapes in the Borough;
- promoting well designed, safe and inclusive developments;
- reducing the impact of climate change and Darlington's carbon footprint; and
- identifying where new development should go - sets out four options for the broad location of new development.

## Quality housing for all

The right type and mix of good quality housing can make an important contribution to the creation of a sustainable community. Issues include:

- providing the right amount of housing - either low, medium or high levels of housing;
- providing housing in the right locations to meet the needs and support the aspirations of the people who wish to live in the Borough - including limited, moderate and substantial growth options;
- improving small areas of former Council housing; and
- providing accommodation for gypsy and travellers needs.



## Prosperous Darlington

Service sector employment dominates in the Borough and economic growth needs to continue to be developed if the Borough is to widen its economic base and provide a range of job opportunities across all sectors for its residents. It is also important that growth is sustainable and can be maintained in the longer term. Issues include:

- providing for long term sustainable employment growth - either through balanced, modest or high growth options
- ensuring that there are the right kind of employment sites in sustainable locations - either restricted, managed or market led employment land supply options;
- use of existing employment land;
- promoting tourism; and
- employment in the countryside.

## A distinctive, greener, cleaner environment

There is a variety of natural and built landscapes and features in the Borough that should be protected and enhanced to provide a high quality environment and contribute to Darlington's history, culture and character. This will help provide a more sustainable future for the Borough. Issues include:

- protecting and enhancing local heritage;
- managing the urban fringe;
- promoting biodiversity;
- enhancing trees and woodland;
- reducing the impact of flood risk; and
- reducing the impact of pollution.

## A healthy and safe Darlington

Across the Borough there are a range of spaces and places that help the community live a healthy life. Darlington has a high proportion of open space within its main built up areas and the open spaces network contributes to the special character of the Borough. The availability of public open space is high although there are a few areas with poor access. The quality of open space varies greatly. Issues include:

- protecting the open spaces network;
- providing more playing pitches;
- providing accessible, good quality areas for children and young people;
- improving the quality and safety of open spaces; and
- improving the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces in the rural areas.



## A vibrant town centre and accessible local shops and services

Darlington town centre is a major sub-regional centre providing a diverse range of shops, services, leisure and cultural facilities. It serves the whole community as well as south Durham and North Yorkshire. There are also other smaller district and local centres in the Borough that provide a range of everyday shopping facilities and local services. There are also many local 'corner' shops and village shops, sometimes found in small groups. Together this forms a hierarchy of centres. An important part of a sustainable community is making sure everyone has good access to a range of shops and services whether or not they have a car. Issues include:

- safeguarding and promoting the viability and vitality of the town centre;
- assessing the different range of shops and services that make the current hierarchy of centres;
- providing good access to local shops and services.

## Efficient and effective transport infrastructure

Focuses on the Cross Town Route which was proposed in the 1970s to reduce congestion by carrying cross-town traffic, particularly business traffic, between the A66 bypass south of Great Burdon and the A1(M)/A68 at Faverdale. It was to run alongside the trackbed of the former Stockton & Darlington Railway line and along the Bishop Auckland branch-line. In the 1990s a short section was constructed to link to Faverdale and the eastern section to Houghton Road is being implemented as the Eastern Transport Corridor. The issue is:

- considering the need to continue to provide land for the remaining section of the Cross Town Route.



## Making Your Views Known

You can look at the **Core Strategy: Issues & Options** and related documents at:

- Customer Services Centre, Town Hall
- Crown Street, Cockerton and mobile libraries
- Neighbourhood Housing Offices
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Village Halls and Community Centres

Or you can view and download all the documents from the Council's website

[www.darlington.gov.uk](http://www.darlington.gov.uk)

## Follow the link **A-Z Services/P/Planning Policy/Core Strategy**

A comments form can be found at the back of the Core Strategy or you can download a comments form and return it FREEPOST. Alternatively you can complete an interactive form on the website.

We will be consulting you on this document from

**Monday 7 January - Friday 15 February 2008.**

Consultation events will be advertised in the local media.

## Contact Us

If you would like any more information about the Core Strategy, the consultation events, or would like copies of the document, response form or this leaflet please contact:

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If you require this leaflet in another format or language please contact us.

