



Hartlepool Local Planning Framework Emerging Local Plan

Matter 8

High Tunstall and Quarry Farm



September 2017



Issue 1 – Site context

- Q1. **What is the chronology to the identification of this strategic site and the process by which the sites were selected as a preferred strategic direction for growth?**

In the Preferred Options Consultation in May 2016, High Tunstall was included as a housing site for approximately 1200 dwellings. At the Preferred Options stage Quarry Farm was not included as a housing site. Following the assessment of the consultation responses to the Preferred Options and the additional work on the SHMA Addendum, to take account of the 2014 Sub National Population Projections, the housing requirement for the Local Plan Publication document was reassessed. Following this reassessment there was a need to find an additional site which is the point at which Quarry Farm 2 was added into the plan. Paragraph 10.12 in the Publication plan explains that Quarry Farm 2 was assessed as a sustainable site and included as an allocation which would be beneficial in terms of paying towards the wider infrastructure needs in that locality such as a new primary school and to contribute towards the Elwick bypass and grade separated junction.

- Q2. **Should the Plan contain an indicative concept plan or require a masterplan (in addition to the phasing plan) to provide a sound basis for the strategic planning of the site and its sustained delivery during the Plan period?**

On consideration, the Council believes that an additional diagram, similar to the one included for the South West Extension on page 90 of the Publication Local Plan, would be beneficial for the High Tunstall allocation and would be based on the masterplan associated with the planning application (application number H/2014/0428 which can be viewed on the Council's planning portal). This would help to ensure that any reserved matters applications which came forward would be assessed against a diagram within the Local Plan.

- Q3. **Does the Sustainability Appraisal (including Addendums) adequately assess the likely effects of the High Tunstall Strategic Site and test it against reasonable alternatives?**

The Council believes that the original Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (HLP01/8) thoroughly assessed the economic, environmental and social impacts likely as a result of the High Tunstall development. It is considered that the assessment was fair and balanced. Reasonable alternatives to High Tunstall, including an alternative for a larger High Tunstall site, additional provision at the South West extension or the use of North Burn as an alternative to High Tunstall were investigated as part of the SA Addendum (EX/HBC/25) and all ruled out as less sustainable options. The Council therefore considers it has demonstrated in sustainability terms that growth of the town at High Tunstall is the most sustainable option for Hartlepool.

- Q4. **Are the boundaries and extent of the sites correctly defined? What is the extent of safeguarded land at Hart Quarry – does it affect land proposals at Quarry Farm?**

The Council believes the boundaries and extent of the sites at High Tunstall and Quarry Farm to be accurate and correctly defined.

Hart Quarry lies to the north of Throston Golf course which is itself to the north of the Quarry Farm. It is not considered that Hart Quarry affects proposals at Quarry Farm and is a significant distance away. As part of the planning application which is currently with the Council for determination no noise issues have been raised as part of the application. Naisberry Quarry which lies to the west of Quarry Farm is a disused quarry which now forms a locally designated site under Policy NE1(c).

Issue 2 – Site Delivery

The infrastructure requirements are identified in aggregated form at Appendix 1 of the LIP (pages 56-62). See also Question 6 under Matter 15 on Plan Viability.

Q5. Does the infrastructure evidence demonstrate that the proposal is soundly based and can be delivered in a timely and satisfactory manner?

The Council believes that the evidence regarding infrastructure linked to the High Tunstall and Quarry Farm sites demonstrates that the proposal is soundly based and can be delivered in a timely and satisfactory manner. Information in relation to the Grade Separated Junction and Elwick bypass is set out in the Local Infrastructure Plan (HLP05/1) at Table 2. The Publication Local Plan also provides justification for the need for the infrastructure and the Deliverability Risk Assessment (DRA) (EX/HBC/64) has illustrated the impact of the delivery on the viability of developments. The DRA shows that as a worst case scenario the developments, through s106 contributions, can repay the cost of the highways works (albeit with a knock-on effect on levels of affordable housing, education provision etc), however in scenarios where grant funding is secured through the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) or Housing Investment Fund (HIF) the deliverability and wider viability becomes significantly more favourable enhancing the sustainability of the sites.

In terms of timing, the aim is to provide the Grade Separated Junction and Elwick bypass highway works by the end of March 2020. Funding has been secured to fund the detailed design of the works and this work has been finalised by the Councils engineers who are in the process of submitting a planning application (including all of the relevant supporting material). Initial offers have been sent to the majority of landowners where land is required. These landowners have been involved from the outset of the discussions regarding the bypass and grade separated junction and their comments have been taken into account in the design to ensure any impacts on the day to day operation of their land is minimised (for example through the provision of tunnels under the bypass to allow livestock to be moved safely from one side of the road to the other). If the Council is successful in obtaining NPIF funding, this funding would be for the financial year 2018/19 and would help to ensure the scheme could be brought forward by the March 2020 date.

Q6. What is the mechanism to fund/deliver the Elwick bypass and grade separated junction on the A19? Table 2 of the LIP at pages 17-18 refer to LGF and other possible sources, including prudential borrowing. What is the latest situation? Is there agreement from affected parties as to how this infrastructure will be funded, possibly through claw-back arrangements? Is it an unduly complex process?

A number of funding options are being explored at the present time. £600k has already been secured from the Growing Places Fund to cover the costs design works and, hopefully, the purchase of the require land to deliver the project. A bid for £10 million has been submitted to the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) for 2018-19 and a decision on this is expected later in the year. The Council is in the process of submitting a further funding application to the Housing Investment Fund funded by DCLG via the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Any funding shortage will be prudentially borrowed by the Council to ensure that the works are completed as soon as possible, hopefully by 2020. All costs of the works will be recovered by way of Section 106 payments which have been accepted by the developers of High Tunstall and Quarry Farm 2 as being deliverable by them.

Q7. Is the £18million cost for grade separated junction and bypass accurate? Is the 2018 construction date and 2020 completion date at Table 2 of the LIP realistic?

Works on the design of the by-pass and GSJ are advanced but we are unable at this stage to be any more accurate in respect of the costs. It is anticipated that these will be within the £18 million initial estimate (based on works commissioned by Highways England for the GSJ and in-house estimates of the cost of the by-pass). We still anticipate that the timetable for delivery of these works can be met, initial discussions with the agent acting for the landowners has not led to doubts over land acquisition and design works are well advanced.

Q8. Does the transport assessment work and engagement with Highways England demonstrate that on transport grounds, the residual cumulative impact of development at this site would not be severe? (NPPF, paragraph 32) Has transport modelling work assessed alternative capacities for the High Tunstall site?

Transport assessment work undertaken to assess the cumulative impact of traffic as a result of the High Tunstall development has shown that this would not be severe if appropriate mitigation works are undertaken. These works include the provision of a by-pass around Elwick Village and a grade separated junction onto the A19 (to mitigate capacity and safety concerns raised by Highways England in respect of existing right turn manoeuvres from the A19 northbound at the existing at-grade junctions) and works to the Elwick Road/Wooler Road/Park Road junction within the town to enhance capacity issues which will have a severe impact on existing traffic movements during the build out period.

Separate modelling has been submitted jointly by the High Tunstall and Quarry Farm 2 developers to show that signalisation of the Sheraton Interchange (A19/A179 junction) by Highways England, together with the closure of at-grade junctions on the A19 at Elwick and Dalton Piercy (three in total) will allow the build out of 428 properties (220 at Quarry Farm 2 and 208 at High Tunstall) in advance of the provision of the By-pass and grade separated junction without causing a severe impact on either the strategic road network nor the local road network.

Additional modelling by the High Tunstall developer indicated that a further 200 properties (over and above the 428) could be built before a severe impact on traffic would be experienced at the Wooler Road/Elwick Road/Park Road junction, although this is yet to be independently verified for the Council.

This gap closure is the first phase and a precursor to the strategic infrastructure improvements in this location as such these dwellings are still required to make the per dwelling contribution to the bypass and grade separated junction as without those the first phase would be unacceptable as a stand-alone proposal.

Q9. There is some local concern about impacts on the highway network in Hartlepool as a consequence of an improved third route from the A19. The LIP refers to junction improvements at Elwick Road/Park Road/Wooler Road. Is a scheme being investigated and is it necessary to accommodate the impact arising from these developments?

Improvement works on the local road network will be required to mitigate an identified severe impact at the completion of the 600th dwelling out of the total of 1420 at High Tunstall and Quarry Farm phase 2 (based on the most recent transport modelling assessment provided by the developer). This assessment of a trigger point is still to be confirmed by an independent consultant working on behalf of the Council, which is currently being worked through as part of the planning application for High Tunstall. This could include physical mitigation works at the Elwick Road/Park Road/Wooler Road junction and potentially other junctions and routes, such as a western bypass, in the local area.

Q10. Would there be capacity in infrastructure and services to serve the planned housing growth?

(i) School provision

Without the provision of a new primary school on the High Tunstall development there would not be sufficient capacity within existing primary schools in the area to serve the planned housing growth at High Tunstall and Quarry Farm. Work with colleagues in the education department has highlighted that the housing growth would generate 305 primary aged pupils. When capacity in existing schools was taken into account the view from education was that a one form entry primary school was required on site.

In terms of secondary education the view was taken that the growth at High Tunstall and Quarry Farm did not require the construction of a new secondary school. A calculation illustrated that the developments would generate 264 secondary aged pupils. Contributions would be secured from developers towards increasing the capacity in existing schools in the locality.

(ii) Health facilities

Section 10 in the Local Infrastructure Plan (LIP) (HLP05/1) provides information in terms of health facilities in the borough at present. Whilst the LIP does not identify High Tunstall specifically it does suggest that in areas of high housing growth additional health facilities may be required. There is a local centre proposed as part of High Tunstall and it is likely that this may provide an element of health facilities, such as a doctors or a dentist when developed.

(iii) Leisure, public open space, allotments

Whilst the developments will provide open space and green infrastructure on site which will help to cater for the need generated from the housing development, the provision of leisure is likely to be split between some on site and some off site provision; for example the developer is expected to provide on site play and there will also be an element of playing fields provided as part of the primary school site on High Tunstall which the local authority will seek to secure a community use agreement on. However contributions are also sought for the improvement of playing fields off site to ensure the need generated is catered for. In terms of allotments the open space assessment identifies that in the western sub-area (which covers High Tunstall and Quarry Farm) there is a significant deficiency in terms of allotment provision at present which would worsen with the development of the two schemes. As illustrated in the Deliverability Risk Assessment to require further contributions could impact on viability, however, if grant for the roads is secured this could free up developer contributions which could be used towards providing additional allotment space in the western sub area as a part of the green spaces on site.

Q11. Having regard to the Habitat Regulations Assessment 2016 (Document NT01/8) would suitable mitigation need to be secured to ensure no significant adverse effect on the Coastal SPAs and SAC?

The mitigation needed to ensure no significant adverse effect relates to the provision of suitable alternative natural green space (SANGS) on site. The High Tunstall scheme has been adjusted to include additional areas of SANGS to meet the requirements of Natural England. Quarry Farm has been assessed against the outline plan for the development submitted as part of H/2015/0528 which is reflected on the Proposals Map in terms of greenspace; Natural England were satisfied that the level of green space was sufficient to ensure no significant adverse effect. There is a requirement for both developments to make a financial contribution towards a coastal warden with High Tunstall expected to pay £245,000 (£250x1200 homes) and Quarry Farm expected to pay £55,000 (£250x220 homes) in line with the mitigation strategy. These costs have been factored into the Deliverability Risk Assessment. These contributions which will be secured through the mitigation strategy were sufficient to ensure that Natural England have now found the plan sound and legally compliant and have withdrawn their objection to it.

Q12. Are there any known ecological constraints? Has there been any preliminary ecological survey work? Does the scale of the site enable mitigation for farmland bird species and the establishment of green/wildlife corridors?

The potential developers of the High Tunstall and Quarry Farm housing areas have already engaged with the Council regarding pre-application advice and in some cases outline and full planning applications. Consequently, the Council has received Preliminary Ecological Assessments (PEA reports) which cover Phase 1 habitat surveys and assessment of the likelihood of protected species being present, for these areas. Biological data has been sourced from the ERIC Local Record Centre and factored in. The PEA reports describe the ecology present, highlight constraints and recommend avoidance measures, mitigation, compensation and biodiversity enhancement (as per NPPF) as appropriate. The ecological constraints identified are mostly assessed as being of low significance/ at a 'local' scale (based on standard assessment practice). These include habitats such as hedgerows which can easily be dealt with by planning conditions. Bats (all species of which are European Protected Species covered by the EU Habitat and Species Regulations) have been identified as constraint, but in all cases acceptable avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures have been recommended. These can be conditioned or covered in Section 106 agreements. Green Infrastructure and wildlife corridors (including retaining and enhancing bat commuting corridors of woodland and beck valleys) have been drawn onto submitted site plans and The Council is confident that these will be delivered. The Council also has biological data for designated Local Wildlife Sites, including Naisberry Quarry LWS which is in this area. The issue of the loss of farmland birds is more difficult to compensate as these are species that require arable and/or pasture with associated hedges and field edges. These are lost (other than hedges) in developments and it has not been possible to ascertain to what extent displaced farmland species (such as skylark and brown hare) are able to integrate on to other farmland which already has these species present (and are possibly at capacity). In most cases the loss of species has been at the level of one or two pairs (e.g. skylark, yellowhammer) and assessed as being of low significance, but 'in-combination' this could potentially exacerbate the on-going decline of some farmland species (though it is interesting to note that tree sparrows have recovered recently, thought to be due to some long-term aspect of their life cycle). To date, the Council has accepted this loss as long as enhancements have been made for other species, e.g. the building of swift nesting bricks into new houses. This has been deemed as reasonable given the economic and social benefits provided by development.

Q13. Does the Plan's proposal for housing at this location take account of the proximity of the gas pipeline? [see HSE letter dated 15 July 2016 – Annex1]

Yes, the Local Plan proposal map was amended following the Preferred Options Consultation to take account of the proximity of the gas pipeline following the HSE's letter to respond to the Preferred Options consultation. Officers met with the gas line providers to understand the up-to-date position in relation to as pipelines and recognising the value in identifying major hazard establishments and major accident hazard pipelines and, as such, maps identifying these have been prepared in consultation with the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit and are included in appendices 11b, 11c and 11d of the Local Plan Publication Draft (HLP01/1).

Q14. Is the extent site consistent with the evidence on landscape (including the additional evidence on the strategic gap (EX/HBC/22&23)? Would the rural setting of Dalton Piercy be preserved?

The Council acknowledges that the High Tunstall strategic housing allocation partly conflicts with the landscape capacity evidence provided through the Strategic Gap Assessment (EX/HBC/22&23) however the Council considers that the Strategic Gap Assessment itself demonstrates why this quantum of development could not be accommodated in other areas of the Borough.

The Council considers the approach taken in allocating large strategic sites is beneficial in that it makes delivery of infrastructure and services more viable and, given the geographical constraints of the existing urban area (with the Borough boundary immediately north, the sea to the north/east and heavy industry to the south), large scale urban extensions are restricted to the western edge of the town.

Whilst section 03 of the Strategic Gap Assessment sets out the landscape capacity of all land between the western edge of the town and the A19, the spatial planning assessment in section 04 sets out the contribution of each sub-area of the Strategic Gap to achieving the objectives of the allocation, with section 05 bringing together the findings of the two assessments to assess the soundness of the allocation and form the basis of recommended adjustments to the strategic gap. It is therefore important to note that, whilst there may be some correlation between the two assessments, landscape capacity is not the only determining factor in allocating (or not allocating) strategic gap areas and, as such, there are areas within the strategic gap that contain high capacity landscapes and vice versa. For instance, the areas of the strategic gap separating Hart village (sub-area 01), Greatham (sub-area 05) and Newton Bewley (sub-area 06) from the main urban area of the town (and from Billingham in the case of Newton Bewley) all perform strongly against the assessment criteria and as such are not considered appropriate for development, despite encompassing areas of higher landscape capacity.

The three sub-areas between the A179 and A689 all perform moderately against the purposes of the strategic gap allocation and as such this would suggest this area generally is less sensitive to development than the aforementioned sub-areas. Within this area, sub-area 04 (to the immediate north of the A689) includes areas of medium/high capacity landscape, however this is immediately adjacent to the South West Extension strategic housing site and as such it is not considered this would be appropriate for further housing development as this would concentrate the vast majority of new housing in the same area, increasing risk and putting disproportionate pressure on local infrastructure and services. Sub-area 02, to the immediate south of the A179 also includes areas of medium/high capacity however again this is located close to the existing Upper Warren housing site and would contribute to greater coalescence with Hart village.

Sub-area 03 sits adjacent to the High Tunstall site and, whilst the area of very low/low capacity expands beyond the strategic gap boundary and across a significant part of the High Tunstall site, for the reasons mentioned above, it is considered this remains the most appropriate place for a large strategic housing site on the western edge of the town, when compared against other parts of the western fringe of the town.

Furthermore, the area of medium/high capacity landscape shown between the West Park and Rift House areas of the town contributes towards the Burn Valley Green Wedge (emerging policy NE3) and is immediately adjacent Summerhill Country Park, a protected park (emerging policy NE2b) and local wildlife site (emerging policy NE1c) and is therefore not considered suitable for housing development.

The Council considers that given the significant distance between the High Tunstall site and Dalton Piercy, the rural setting of Dalton Piercy would be preserved, with the strategic gap allocation in sub-area 04 ensuring that no further development westward towards the village will be permitted over the plan period. It is considered that the proposed westward extension to the strategic gap sub-area set out in the Strategic Gap Assessment Report (EX/HBC/22) will strengthen the policy and further ensure the rural setting of Dalton Piercy is preserved and as such this shall be adopted as an amendment to the Proposals Map and will be set out in a forthcoming update to the Amendments to Proposals Map Document and Proposals Map Modifications document.

Issue 3 – Site Capacity

- Q15. Is the SHLAA assessment realistic? How will early and appreciable delivery be secured? Is the Council's assessment of timeframe for delivery aligned to that of the site developer?**

The SHLAA assessments of all sites were undertaken in 2014 and the work was endorsed in early 2015. Table 5, on page 16 of the SHLAA, sets out delivery trajectories which were agreed by the working group. At that point in time the planning applications for the two sites had not been received by the planning authority. Development trajectories on the sites would now be different to what was projected within the SHLAA and are more accurately estimated in the most recent 5 Year Housing Land Supply document (EX/HBC/57) which was produced in consultation with the developers of sites. Discussions have been taking place between the applicants, the local authority (planning and highways teams), Highways England and Durham and Hartlepool police authorities in regard to if a quantum of housing could be allowed to progress as a first phase, prior to the implementation of the grade separated junction and bypass, but delivering improvements to the A179 Sheraton junction and involving the closure of the central reservations at Elwick and Dalton Piercy (these works would purely be a first phase and would not be acceptable as a stand along scheme). This work has now concluded and is considered acceptable and will enable the Quarry Farm development to come forward (still required to make contributions to the overall grade separated junction and bypass scheme) and a first phase of High Tunstall for 208 dwellings (which is a hybrid application for 158 Story Homes and 50 self build plots) which gives confidence in terms of early and appreciable delivery.

- Q16. Does 'approximately' in Policies HSG5 & 5a readily translate as 'at least' or is 1,200 and 220 dwellings effectively the sum capacity of this area? Have alternative capacity options been appraised?**

The figures in policies Hsg5 and 5a translate into "at least" 1,200 and 220 dwellings as they are reflective of planning applications which are currently submitted with the planning authority. The applications are in outline and will secure the permission for "at least" that number of dwellings, with often more proposed as reserved matters applications are submitted which have further detail on design and layout.

A lower capacity option was effectively proposed by the Preferred Options consultation which only included the 1,200 homes at High Tunstall. The SA Addendum (EX/HBC/25) has also considered a range of other reasonable alternatives which allocated the housing numbers to alternative sites, however it was concluded that the Publication Local Plan proposals were considered the most sustainable.

- Q17. Does the viability of the infrastructure and affordable housing provision render the sites undeliverable or justify an enlarged allocation? Has the submitted Plan struck the right balance?**

The evidence presented as part of the Deliverability Risk Assessment (EX/HBC/64) considers the impact of the road infrastructure improvements and the consequential impact on the levels of affordable housing that can be achieved on site. It is considered that the Local Plan has struck the right balance given the various constraints on growth that have been identified in the Local Plan and the supporting evidence. The road improvements at Elwick will not only be beneficial in this plan period, but into the next plan period and beyond. It is considered a crucial piece of infrastructure which is of strategic importance and it has been illustrated that the scale of development proposed at High Tunstall and Quarry Farm are capable of funding on a worst case scenario that no grant funding is secured towards the highway works. If grant funding is secured, which the Council is receiving positive feedback on, then this frees up revenue within the developments to help deliver affordable housing and education contributions amongst other social and community infrastructure.

- Q18. Should additional land be allocated at Quarry Farm 3 for 450 dwellings (Cecil M Yuill Ltd) in lieu of development at Wynyard Park? Has Quarry Farm 3 been appraised by the Council as part of the SHLAA, SA or strategic gap analyses?**

The Council is of the opinion that Quarry Farm 3 should only be included if the Inspector determines that the OAN or housing requirement is low and additional housing is needed to make the plan sound. The Council is not of the opinion that the additional housing should be included if the housing numbers are taken from another allocation in the Local Plan, such as Wynyard, as it is considered the SA Addendum (EX/HBC/25) has illustrated that this would not be the most sustainable option.

Quarry Farm was submitted as one large site within the SHLAA which covered Quarry Farm 1 which is currently under construction, Quarry Farm 2 which is covered by the proposed allocation HSG5a within the Publication Local Plan and the area of Quarry Farm 3. The assessment within the SHLAA suggested that an appropriate yield for the site would be 300 which reflects the permitted site for 81 and the proposed allocation for 220.

Quarry Farm 3 was not assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (HLP01/8) which formed part of the suite of consultation documents, however within the SA Addendum (EX/HBC/25) the site was considered as part of assessment of reasonable alternatives but found to be less sustainable than the options put forward within the Publication Local Plan.

The area of land covered by Quarry Farm 3 falls under the designation Undulating semi-rural farmland within the Strategic Gap assessment (EX/HBC/22) with landscape capacity deemed as very low / low. The spatial planning assessment on page 37 of the Strategic Gap Assessment provides detail on how the strategic gap in the area of Quarry Farm 3 performs.

- Q19. Would additional development at the Quarry Farm location ensure the viable delivery of highway improvement works?**

The work undertaken on the Deliverability Risk Assessment (EX/HBC/64) has illustrated that the two developments at the scales currently proposed can, as a minimum, fund the highway improvement works if no grant funding was to be secured. It is noted that this does however impact on the delivery of other elements such as education and affordable housing. The scenario is illustrated to improve significantly if grant funding through NPIF, HIF or both is achieved. If the Council was unsuccessful in securing grant funding, additional housing at Quarry Farm would improve the sustainability within that area of the plan in terms of increasing the numbers of affordable homes etc, however, as illustrated within the SA Addendum (EX/HBC/25) this could be at the detriment of the creation of a sustainable community at Wynyard.