



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council



# Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023/2024

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## 1. Introduction

### **What is the Authority's Monitoring Report?**

The Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) is part of the Darlington Local Plan. Its key purpose is to assess the progress made in preparing the Local Plan, the effectiveness of the policies contained within the Local Plan and to make any recommendations on where policy changes should be made. These changes can then be factored into future reviews of the Local Plan. This AMR covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

### **Why do we need to monitor?**

Monitoring is a vital process of plan and policy making. It reports on what is happening now and what may happen in the future. These trends are assessed against existing policies and targets to determine whether or not current policies are performing as expected, ensuring that the Local Plan continues to contribute to the attractiveness and functionality of Darlington Borough as a place to live, work, invest and visit.

In February 2022 the Council adopted our new Local Plan. This replaced policies within the Local Development Framework (LDF), which was made up of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and Saved Policies of the 1997 Local Plan (as amended).

The Council is required to prepare an annual report to monitor the Council's progress in preparing its Local Development Plan and to review the performance of adopted policies. Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Council must make their monitoring report available to the public.

### **Nutrient Neutrality**

In March 2022 Natural England identified the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) as being in an unfavourable condition due to nutrient pollution, specifically nitrogen. The whole of the Darlington Borough is located within the identified catchment area of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA, which is the whole River Tees.

To comply with Habitats Regulations Local Planning authorities falling with the catchment area of the SPA must:

- carefully consider the nutrient impacts of any projects (including new development proposals), on the SPA;
- consider whether those impacts may have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site that requires mitigation;
- consider if the mitigation proposed ensures the development is nutrient neutral.

Nutrient Neutrality has continued to delay and impact on the Council's ability to grant planning permissions for developments that resulted in the creation of additional overnight stays (including all new residential and tourist accommodation) during the monitoring period.

In March 2023 Natural England launched a scheme where developers could purchase nutrient credits to mitigate any additional nutrient pollution which a development proposal will create. To date (August 2024) 57 planning applications for a total of up to 2,220 dwellings have secured credits through the scheme and have enabled planning permissions for overnight accommodation to begin being granted, and will continue to do so.

### **Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA)**

The previous government introduced some wide-ranging reforms to the planning system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) which received royal assent on 26 October 2023. Many of these reforms have yet to come into force as they require changes to secondary legislation and national planning policy.

One of the key reforms introduced by this act is to the Local Plan process to require the production of new style Local Plans which are simpler to both produce and use. This includes restricting the production, examination and adoption process to 30 months and the introduction of National Development Management Policies to achieve greater consistency in Local Plan policies across the country.

Whilst there remains some uncertainty regarding these reforms following the change in government, the new Labour government has indicated in their recent consultation on reforms to the NPPF and other changes to the planning system that it is currently their intention to implement the new plan-making system as set out in the Levelling- up and Regeneration Act from summer or autumn 2025. Further changes are proposed to the NPPF and the planning system with a Planning and Infrastructure Bill proposed.

## 2. The Settlement Hierarchy

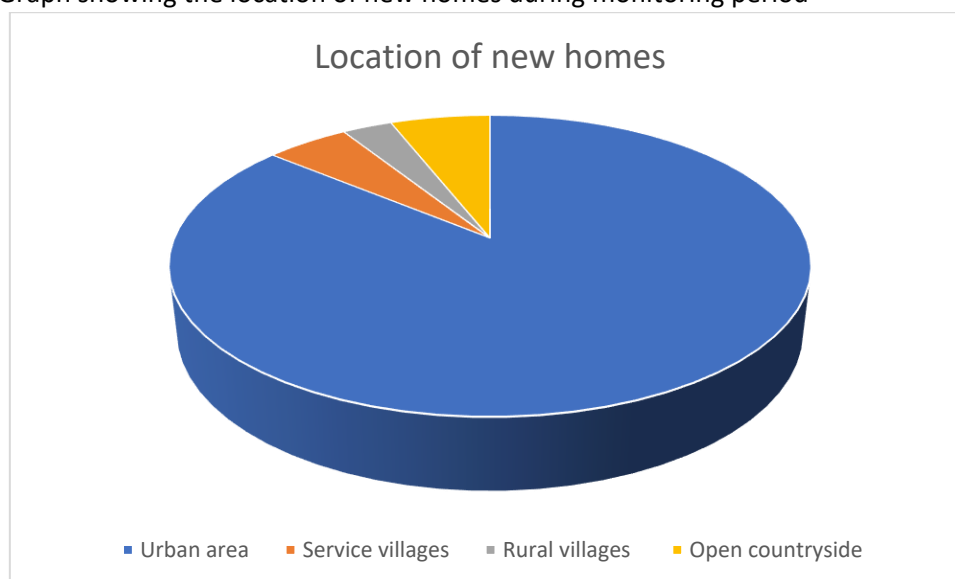
The distribution of development should be in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, which is Darlington urban area, service villages and rural villages. This approach will support the role and function of places, ensuring that inappropriate development does not occur in areas considered to be unsustainable. Development is also directed to sustainable locations via the development limits.

A breakdown of the location of the homes built during the monitoring period is provided in the table below. The figures show that development follows the settlement hierarchy as required by the development limits, with the majority of new homes focused within the main urban area.

Table 1: Location of homes built during monitoring period

Location	No of homes built	Percentage
Urban area	310	86%
Service villages	16	5%
Rural villages	10	3%
Open countryside	23	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>100%</b>

Graph 1: Graph showing the location of new homes during monitoring period



Economic development in this monitoring period has been distributed across the settlement hierarchy with additional floorspace created as follows:

### Darlington Urban Area

Use Class E(a) – Shop – 1,900 sqm.

Use Class B2/B8 – General Industry/Storage & Distribution - 200 sqm.

Use Class E/F1 – 2,791 sqm.

**Service Villages**

No development identified.

**Rural Villages**

No development identified.

**Open Countryside**

Stabling – 800 sqm.

This shows that economic development completed in this monitoring period has been distributed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy with much of it in the Darlington Urban Area. The completed development in the open countryside is of a scale and use class that one would expect.

### 3. Design, Climate Change and Construction

#### Policy DC1 - Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change

The NPPF states that 'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people'. One of the overarching aims of the Local Plan is to 'create great places'. Policy DC 1 and The Design of New Development SPD are the key tools for delivering this quality of design and all applications are assessed reflecting on its content. It is acknowledged that the Design SPD requires an update and work is currently underway to do this. Whilst some of the references are now out of date, the principles and local characterisation elements of the SPD remain valid good practice and all applications granted should adhere to these principles. The Council aims to adopt an updated version of the SPD by the end of 2025.

#### Policy DC 2 - Flood Risk and Water Management

The NPPF outlines that the planning system plays a key role in mitigation and adaption to climate change, including the management of water and flood risk. It goes on to state that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at high risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

During the monitoring period no applications were granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood risk.

#### Policy DC 3 - Health and Wellbeing

Helping to reduce health inequalities is a key local policy objective and providing accessible local healthcare facilities can improve the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the Borough. Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy has two key aims directly relating to health and wellbeing. Firstly, to encourage people to be more physically active to improve health and encouraging people to feel part of their community. Secondly, there is an aim to help older people to stay independent and in their own homes for as long as possible.

The key methods of delivering these objectives through the planning process are through good design and support for new facilities and infrastructure.

To aid these considerations the requirement for Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) has been introduced in the plan for all residential development of 150 homes or more and all other 'major' non-residential development. Early and meaningful engagement in the HIA process will help shape developments into more healthy and attractive places to live and work.

During the monitoring period we received a total of 8 applications with HIAs (made up of 7 for Commercial Development and 1 for housing). This ensured full compliance with the policy requirement.

#### Policy DC 4 - Safeguarding Amenity

A core function of planning is to ensure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of all types of land and buildings, particularly residential properties. Without appropriate controls, new development could result in unacceptable living environments for its occupants, reduce the quality of life for the occupants of neighbouring buildings, and result in poor quality

neighbourhoods overall. It is also an overarching aim of the Local Plan to improve the quality of life for those living in the Borough, and to ensure that employment sites remain attractive by not being unduly constrained by neighbouring uses.

During this monitoring period a total of 6 planning applications were refused permission when amenity grounds and conflict with the requirements of Policy DC4 of the Local Plan was a reason for refusal. This included:

- 2 applications for advert displays
- 1 application for householder developments such as extensions, garages and garden fences
- 1 application for variation of opening hours of a commercial premises
- 1 application for two new residential dwelling
- 1 application for retrospective engineering works

#### Policy DC 5 – Skills and Training

Policy DC 5 encourages developers to participate in skills and employment training initiatives to increase access to employment for those who live within the borough.



## 4. Housing

Providing the right homes in the right places is one of the most important issues within the Local Plan. We need to provide a high-quality residential offer to meet a variety of needs and aspirations. This section of the AMR reports on the progress of housing delivery against the Council’s housing requirement. This includes housing completions, location of new housing, delivery of affordable housing, types of housing built, and development of gypsy and traveller pitches. Updates are also provided on the garden village sites of Skertingham and Greater Faverdale (Burtree).

### H 1- Housing Requirement

Policy H1 of the Local Plan sets a minimum requirement of 492 net additional dwellings per annum over the plan period from 2016 to 2036. This results in a total net minimum requirement of 9,840 dwellings. The evidence to support this housing target is set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update (2017). The assessment took into account national and local data on population growth and considered other related information on factors such as increases in employment levels. This enabled a more reliable and appropriate demographic projection to be derived.

For the financial year 2023/24 the Council recorded 359 gross dwelling completions. 5 housing losses were recorded resulting in a net figure of 354 dwellings. This is below the housing requirement figure of 492 and a reduction on the gross figure in the previous year. Since the beginning of the plan period, 3,692 net additional dwellings have been built which is an average rate of 462 dwellings per annum.

Table 2: Housing completions from 2016-2024

Year	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24
Gross Completions	176	495	598	538	546	516	518	359
Demolitions/losses	6	9	7	2	9	11	5	5
Net completions	170	486	591	536	537	505	513	354

Housing delivery performance is also assessed against the government’s annual Housing Delivery Test which covers the previous three years. The most recent measurement released in 2023 is against delivery in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The score is assessed against the number of homes required which is the lower of either the latest adopted housing requirement or the annual local housing need figure. For Darlington the local housing need figure is generally much lower and is usually used in the calculation. The latest result for Darlington was 381% and therefore no action was required by the Council. This is a similar figure to the previous year (382%). When delivery does fall below the required level, certain policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework will apply.

The situation with nutrient neutrality (also discussed in section 1) appears to have affected completion figures in the latest monitoring period with net completions dropping by 159 units. This is due to a period of granting a limited number of housing applications over the last two years. It was anticipated that this would begin to reflect in completions in the previous authorities monitoring report. It is hoped that reduced levels of delivery only occurs for a short period as the Council has been able to grant more permissions over the last year. This has been due to mitigation solutions coming forward and the Natural England credit scheme becoming available.

### Policy H 2 - Housing Allocations (Supply)

National policy states that local planning authorities should monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, set out in strategic policies. The monitoring framework of the Local Plan sets out a target of maintaining a 5 year rolling land supply. This is assessed by comparing the five-year housing requirement and the estimated five year supply in order to calculate the estimated supply expressed in years.

Delivery from the start of the plan period is also factored into the calculation. Over the first 8 years of the plan period, from 1st April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, there has been 3,692 net additional housing completions. The minimum Local Plan requirement for this period is 3,936 dwellings (8 x 492). This leaves a shortfall of 244 dwellings which will be added onto the current five-year requirement in the calculations below. The requirement for the following five-year period is 2,460 dwellings (492 x 5). The calculation of the five-year requirement is set out in the table below and results in a figure of 568 dwellings per annum which includes a 5% buffer required by national policy.

Table 3: Five year housing land supply calculations

Local Plan Housing Requirement	9,840 (492 dwellings per annum over 20 years)
Requirement 2024/25 – 2028/29	2,460 (492 x 5)
Net completions 2016/17 – 2023/24	3,692
Shortfall 2016/17 – 2023/24	244 (3,936 – 3,692)
Requirement 2024/25 – 2028/29 plus shortfall	2,704 (2,460 +244)
Requirement 2024/25 – 2028/29 plus shortfall plus 5% buffer	2,839 (2,704 x 1.05)
Annual requirement plus shortfall plus 5% buffer	568

The estimated deliverable five-year housing land supply for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2029 is 3,050 dwellings which equates to a 5.4 year housing land supply (3,050/568 = 5.4 ). The sites included consist of a mix of extant planning permissions, sites currently under construction and Local Plan housing allocations. It is considered that these sites meet the definition of deliverable as set out in the NPPF and PPG. Full details of sites included within the supply and evidence to support their deliverability can be found in Appendix 1. The housing trajectory for the remainder of the full plan period can also be found in Appendix 2.

### Policy H 3 - Development Limits

Sustainable development is a key principle of planning and underpins the policies and proposals in the Local Plan. Development limits are a planning policy tool which help to achieve the locational strategy for new development, directing development to locations which are considered to be more sustainable whilst also protecting the open countryside.

For Darlington the limits largely focus on development to the main urban area and service villages which are well provided for in terms of services, facilities and modes of sustainable transport. The limits also ensure that sufficient land is available (within) to meet the borough’s housing and employment needs in the future. It is therefore expected that there will only be low levels of appropriate development outside of these limits each year.

## Delivery

During the monitoring period 2023/24, 94% of housing development was within development limits. This is a similar high percentage as the previous period. 23 dwellings were constructed in the open countryside outside of development limits (listed below). 21 of these dwellings delivered were on a housing commitment determined prior to the adoption of the Local Plan and 1 was a conversion of two farm buildings. Conversions in the open countryside can be acceptable in principle providing criteria within Policy H7 are met.

- Lakeside, The Old Brickworks, Neasham Road – 21 dwellings completed.
- Lovesome Hill Farm – 2 dwellings completed.

## Permissions

During the last monitoring period (2022/23) a limited number of housing applications were permitted due to issues around nutrient neutrality (51 dwellings permitted). As discussed above, the Council has been able to grant more applications over the last year as solutions have been coming forward for nutrient mitigation. This is reflected in the figures with 246 homes granted over the period 2023/24. The majority of these permissions are within the urban area at 97% (238 dwellings) with 1% (2 dwellings) in a rural village and 2% (6 dwellings) in the open countryside.

The application granted in the rural village (land at former 25 Gate Lane, Low Coniscliffe) is acceptable in principle as it is located within the development limits of the village and is also a housing allocation in the Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan. The dwellings permitted in the open countryside would also be acceptable in policy terms as they involved a prior notification for the change of use of agricultural buildings to dwellings at Little Acres, Ketton Lane and a full application for the conversion of existing outbuildings at Halliwell Farm, Heighington. Policy H7 Residential Development in the Countryside allows for the conversion of buildings in the countryside to residential use providing certain criteria is met.

Only one major application was approved in the previous monitoring period (27 dwellings at Land off John Williams Boulevard). For the 2023/24 monitoring period three major applications have been approved which again shows an improvement. Details of which are set out below.

- 23/00570/PA – Dr Piper House - Prior approval for the proposed change of use of a building from offices (Use Class E) to 22 no. residential apartments (Use Class C3) on first and second floors.
- 23/00782/FUL - Site of Former Blackwell Grange Golf Club (East) Carmel Road South - Residential development consisting 44 No. dwellings.
- 23/00098/FUL - Land at Neasham Road - Erection of a residential development consisting of 144 no. market dwellings with associated infrastructure, access, layout and landscaping works (as a substitution of 144 no affordable dwellings within Cell C of housing development).

The above figures on the location of housing delivery (including those set out under the Settlement Hierarchy section) and new permissions indicates that the majority of housing development is being focused in the main urban area and following the settlement hierarchy. This pattern has been

continued from the previous monitoring period. The development limits policy is therefore achieving its main objective of directing development to the most sustainable locations and protecting the countryside.

#### Policy H 4 - Housing Mix

Government policy is focused on supporting older people and those with a disability to live independently at home. Providing more accessible and easily adaptable homes will help people to maintain independence for longer. The building regulations standards set out in policy H4 Housing Mix aim to help to achieve this (M4, 2 & 3). They are part of the optional technical requirements which exceed the minimum standards in respect of access.

It is expected that all new housing schemes built in the borough will meet the accessibility and adaptability requirements of Policy H4 Housing Mix. However, the sites that are currently being developed were granted planning permission prior to the adoption of the Local Plan and therefore were not subject to the new requirements. Consequently, no new homes are currently being developed which meet the standards but over time this will change as the Council grant more planning permissions.

In terms of permissions granted, in the previous monitoring period (2022/23) none of the dwellings granted met the requirements but for justified reasons. During the current period two new permissions have been conditioned to meet the policy requirements. Details are set out below:

- 22/00797/OUT - Pierremont Methodist Church Vancouver Street - Outline application with matters reserved except access, appearance, layout and scale for the demolition of former chapel and the erection of 8 no. dwellings:
  - 4 dwellings category M4(1) and 1 dwelling category M4(2)
- 23/00782/FUL - Site Of Former Blackwell Grange Golf Club (East) Carmel Road South - Residential development consisting 44 No. dwellings:
  - Conditioned to meet the policy requirements of 45% M4(2) and 9% M4(3).

The major permission granted at Neasham Road (23/00098/FUL) did not secure the requirements as the policy sets out that the standards will be applied to outline or full applications. They will not be applied retrospectively to previous permissions. Although the application is in full, the site does have an extant permission for housing (which did not meet the requirements). Given this context it was considered that it would be unreasonable to seek the standards for adaptable and accessible dwellings.

It is also important to note that prior approval permissions would not be subject to the requirements and policy H4 does also allow for consideration of site suitability and viability. The above information does show an improvement on the previous years monitoring.

#### Policy H 5 – Affordable Housing

House prices in Darlington are lower than other parts of the UK. According to the Land Registry House Price Index the average price of a home in the UK was £287,924 in June 2024, whereas for Darlington

the average was substantially lower at £161,208. When looking at local lower quartile earnings and house prices, affordability in the borough is also ‘better’ in Darlington than across England as a whole. Despite the above, evidence within the SHMA (2020) indicates that there is still a substantial need for affordable homes in the borough. Affordable housing provides opportunities for people who are unable to access the housing market. They can meet the housing needs of those on lower incomes and first time buyers.

During 2023/24, 71 affordable homes were delivered in the borough which is approximately 19.8% of gross completions. This is slightly up on the previous year when the figure was 61 affordable homes delivered. The affordable homes developed at Berrymead Farm are through a market led scheme which included a proportion of affordable provision secured in the planning application process. The development at John Williams Boulevard was originally by Keepmoat for market homes. However, the Council became aware that the site had been transferred to Karbon Homes and the properties sold under a rent to buy scheme (a type of affordable home ownership tenure). A similar situation occurred at West Park where plots being developed by Barratt Homes for market housing were transferred to a Housing Association and the new tenure is now social rent. Details are set out in table 5.

Table 4: Affordable housing delivered

Local Plan site ref no	Site Name	Tenure	Application Details	Number of Affordable Delivered
8	Berrymead Farm (phase 1 Persimmon)	DMS (10) & Affordable rent (9)	15/00804/OUT, 21/00205/RM1	19
8	Berrymead Farm (phase 3 Taylor Wimpey)	Rent to buy	21/00346/RM1	6
428	John Williams Boulevard	Rent to buy	22/00582/FUL	27
68	West Park Garden Village	Social Rent	15/00450/OUT 19/00182/RM1	19
<b>Total</b>				<b>71</b>

#### Policy H 6 Exception Sites

There are currently no rural or entry level exception schemes delivering housing in the borough. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, national planning policy has introduced a First Homes exception sites policy which has replaced entry level sites. There are also no First Homes exception sites building out in Darlington at this time.

#### Policy H 7 Residential Development in the Countryside

There are circumstances where new homes in the countryside are acceptable in planning terms. For example, where they are required for rural workers or where they meet one of the criteria set out in para 80 of the NPPF. Replacement and conversion can also be acceptable under policy H7 Residential Development in the Countryside providing certain criteria is met.

As mentioned earlier in this section, 23 dwellings were delivered outside of development limits during the monitoring period. A large proportion of the homes constructed were not for rural workers and did not fall under the other criteria referenced, but they were permitted on different planning grounds prior to the adoption of the Local Plan. Two of the homes were a conversion which can be permitted by policy H7.

### Policy H 8 Housing Intensification

HMOs can form an important part of the housing mix in terms of providing affordable, low-cost housing. However, they can also cause amenity issues when concentrations of these properties are created (e.g. parking, noise, bin storage). As such it is important to monitor the granting of planning permissions for this type of use.

The table below sets out permissions granted for some small (C4) and large (sui generis) homes in multiple occupation during the monitoring period. The data will not capture all small HMOs as there are permitted development rights for the conversion of a dwelling house to a HMO of three to six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities. Overall, 9 applications have been granted which would generate 68 bedroom spaces. This is an increase on last year's data where 5 applications resulted in 26 new HMO bedrooms created. One planning permission did result in the loss of a HMO which provided ten bedrooms (22/00971/FUL, 16 Station Rd, Conversion of building from large HMO to 3 flats). This was reported last year in error but was granted during the 2023/24 monitoring period.

Table 5: Permissions granted for HMO's during the monitoring period

DM Reference	Site Name	Application description
23/00137/FUL	45 Victoria Embankment	Change of use to 6 bed HMO
22/01341/FUL	Signal House, Whessoe Road	Conversion of offices to 22 person HMO
23/00959/PLU	17 Leafield Road	Certificate of lawful use for change of use from dwelling to 5 person HMO
22/0148/CU	13 Victoria Road	Change of use from office to 7 person large HMO
23/01196/PLU	1 Oakland Gardens	Change of use from dwelling to HMO (up to 6 person)
23/00967/PLU	69 Welbeck Avenue	Certificate of lawfulness for proposed use - change of dwelling to 5 bed HMO
22/00911/FUL	43 Corporation Road	Change of use from dwelling to 7 bed HMO
24/00155/LU	44 Helmsley Moor Way	Certificate of lawfulness - existing use of property as 4 bed HMO
24/00078/FUL	The Albion, 16 Yarm Road	Conversion of pub to 6 bed HMO
<b>Total bedrooms created</b>		<b>68</b>

### Policy H 9 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

There is a long history of gypsies and travellers living within Darlington. There are numerous gypsy and traveller families residing in the borough and it is important that their accommodation needs are

met. The Government’s Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) outlines that local planning authorities should identify the need for travelling sites, pitches and plots, then allocate sites to meet this identified need.

The Council undertook a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment in 2017. This study identified a need of 5 residential pitches between 2017 – 2022 (1 per annum). Evidence showed a further need arising in the period 2022-37 which was calculated at 46 pitches (3 per annum).

The above needs are reflected in the adopted Local Plan Policy H9 and supporting text. To meet these needs two allocations are set out in the policy which are extensions to existing sites; Honeypot Lane (8 pitches) and Rowan West/East complex (25 pitches). The Local Plan also sets out that evidence over the last 18 years supports making an allowance for 4 pitches per year coming forward as windfalls.

Over the monitoring period there have been no traveller pitches permitted through the planning application process. Two pitches have however been allowed via an enforcement appeal, in January 2024, on land on the Northeast side of Neasham Road, Hurworth. Details are set out in table 6 below.

In May 2024, the Council recently granted an application for 7 permanent pitches at Honeypot Lane. However, this will fall into the next monitoring period (2024/25). An application is currently being considered at Rowan East (extension) which is also a Local Plan allocation. Details of these applications are set out below. Both sites would assist in meeting needs for gypsy pitches.

Table 6: Gypsy and traveller accommodation applications

23/00535/FUL (approved May 2024)	Caravan Site Honeypot Lane Darlington	Erection of boundary wall, gates and fence to facilitate the provision of 7 No. permanent residential pitches to north of site, erection of gym to east of site and stable block and store to north of site (part retrospective) <b>(7 pitches)</b>
21/00625/DC (under consideration)	Rowan East (extension) Neasham Rd	Outline application with all matters reserved except access for 25 No gypsy and traveller pitches with amenity blocks and associated works. <b>(25 pitches)</b>  (Expected to be considered at Planning Committee during the 2024/25 monitoring period)

Some accommodation need has been addressed by granting planning permissions for new pitches since the 2017 GTAA Update was undertaken. We currently understand there to be extant permissions for 5 pitches in the Borough (3 have been implemented through enforcement appeals and the permission at Snipe Lane has also been implemented). These permissions have addressed 5 pitches of the 5 required in the first 5 years of the plan period.

Table 7: Extant permissions

20/00686/FUL	Existing Caravan Site Snipe Lane Hurworth Moor DARLINGTON	Formation of hardstanding for the siting of 1 no. mobile home, creation of 2 no. touring plots, erection of 1 no. utility building with paved area and 1 no. toilet block <b>(1 pitch)</b>
21/01253/FUL	Land to the East Of A66, South Burden DARLINGTON	Change of use of land for the siting of 1 no. residential mobile home with associated parking for 2 no. vehicles <b>(1 pitch)</b>
21/00003/APPENF	Burma Road, Hurworth Moor, DARLINGTON	Appeal against Enforcement Notice relating to breach of Planning Permission (10/00059/FUL) change to the Private Gypsy Site, additional touring caravans, are not in accordance with approved plans, approved site details <b>(1 Pitch)</b>

The Council is currently commissioning a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. This is expected to be completed during 2025.

#### Policy H 10 Skerningham Site Allocation

The Skerningham Garden Village Design Code SPD was adopted by the Council on 28 September 2023. The Design Code SPD sets out the design approach and principles for the Skerningham Site Allocation. Producing and adopting the Design Code SPD required considerably longer time than the timeframe envisaged in the Local Plan, which aimed for the Design Code SPD to be developed within around six months of the adoption of the Local Plan.

The Council commissioned an independent organisation called Designe Ltd who carried out extensive public engagement to produce the Design Code. The Design Code SPD was also developed as part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' (DLUHC) Design Code Pathfinder Programme. Skerningham was one of twenty-five areas in England selected, with the ambition of producing exemplar design codes from which others can learn best practice. The Design Code was therefore produced with expert input from DLUHC, the Office for Place, and the Design Council. Following the adoption of the SPD, during the monitoring period for this AMR, the site developers have undertaken consultation on a masterplan for Skerningham Garden Village. Currently, the site developer's masterplan is based on Figure 6.2 of the Darlington Local Plan, which envisages Darlington Golf Club remaining in-situ. The masterplan will still require agreement by the Council prior to the determination of applications on the site.

To ensure a cohesive development is delivered at Skerningham, the Council will only approve planning applications at the site which adhere with the Design Code SPD, the agreed masterplan and the other requirements of Policy H10.

#### Policy H 11 Greater Faverdale (Burtree) Site Allocation

The Greater Faverdale (Burtree Garden Village) Design Code SPD was adopted by the Council on 14 July 2022, within six months of the adoption of the Local Plan. The Design Code SPD sets out the design approach and principles for the Greater Faverdale Site Allocation. The approach aims to create a distinctive, attractive and successful Garden Community in which to live and work, which is sustainable for the future.



The first planning application for the site (22/01342/FULE) was submitted on 21 December 2022. A hybrid application, it sought outline permission for up to 750 dwellings and full permission for the Burtree Garden Village Strategic Access Road, from Rotary Way to Burtree Lane, and for various landscaping elements of the scheme. This application has now been approved subject to a Section 106 agreement being signed. The latest assumptions on build out are included in the updated housing trajectory of this document (Appendix 2).

## 5. Employment for Economic Growth

The Local Plan suggests where and how a continuous and diverse supply of employment land will be provided within the Borough to meet existing and future needs. This section will consider the amount of land available, the applications that have been submitted and employment land options for the future.

### Policy E 1 Safeguarding Existing Employment Opportunities

Policy E 1 of the Local Plan (2016-2036) identifies the existing employment areas in the Borough which it promotes and safeguards for existing and ongoing economic investment. This includes suggested uses within each of the areas, although other employment uses are not precluded subject to satisfying certain criteria.

The following information sets out the development that the Councils monitoring procedures have identified as having been completed in the existing employment areas in this monitoring period. A range of planning applications have been granted or are under consideration in a number of these existing employment areas which will be reported on in future years monitoring reports as they are completed. However, the following list just provides an indication of some of the permissions that were granted in this monitoring year.

- **Site 342- Faverdale East Business Park** 22/009044/FUL , approval for 1 Industrial Unit B8 at west Land off Samian Way
- **Site 367 – Link 66 / Symmetry Park** 23/00216/RM1, approval for 1 new Industrial Unit 12843 sqm of B2 / B8 on 7.5ha land
- **Site 404 – Teesside International Airport North** 23/00694/FUL, approval of two new hangars in the north eastern area of the Airport.

The main completed activity in this monitoring year (Table 8) has been at Site 343 - Faverdale Industrial Estate, which has seen a further industrial unit being completed at Ward Court and the completion of the Home Bargains store. Whilst the Home Bargains store falls outside the suggested uses and traditional employment uses it does still generate employment opportunities.

Table 8: Completed employment development in existing employment areas

Site Ref	Name	Total Site	Gross Available	Net Available	Suggested Use	Comments
342	Faverdale East Business Park	65.87 ha	6.08 ha	4.26 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
343	Faverdale Industrial Estate	60.32 ha	11.19 ha	7.83 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	Home Bargain Use Class E(a) completed 1,900 sqm floorspace part of development of 1.89

						hectares. 1 B2/B8 unit at Ward Court part of development of 0.82 hectares floorspace to date of circa 800 sqm (200 sqm this year).
346	Meynell Road West	8.5 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
347	Cleveland Industrial Estate	14.6 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
348	Red Barnes Way	3.03 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
351	SW Town Centre Fringe	0.62 ha	0.16 ha	0.11 ha	E(g)	No change
352	Barton Street/Haughton Road	1.24 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g), Sui Generis	No change
353	Haughton Road/Blackett Road	11.58 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
354	McMullen Road East	2.72 ha	0 ha	0 ha	Sui Generis	No change
355	Lingfield Point	33.6 ha	2.74 ha	1.92 ha	Mixed Use	No change
357	Morton Park	18.28 ha	5.79 ha	4.05 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
358	Yarm Road Industrial Estate	63.86 ha	1.87 ha	1.31 ha	B2, B8, E(g), Sui Generis	No change
359	Morton Palms Business Park	11.90 ha	6.08 ha	4.26 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
363	Aycliffe	15.33 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2	No change
364	Yarm Road South	34.69 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
366	Meynell Road East	10.28 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
367	Link 66 / Symmetry Park	36.03 ha	13.10 ha	9.17 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
376	Whessoe Road	4.88 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
378	Longfield Road	2.41 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2	No change
379	Banks Road	9.70 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g), Sui Generis	No change

380	Albert Hill Industrial Estate	16.02 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, B8, E(g)	No change
404	Teesside International Airport North	53.96 ha	6.73 ha	4.71 ha	B2, E(g) and Airport related uses	No change
409	Drinkfield Industrial Estate	13.51 ha	0 ha	0 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>507.16 ha</b>	<b>53.74 ha</b>	<b>37.62 ha</b>		

### Policy E 2 Employment Allocations

Policy E 2 of the Local Plan (2016-2036) identifies the sites which are allocated for new employment development and the suggested uses which permissions will be granted in line with, although it does not preclude other employment uses subject to satisfying certain criteria.

Table 9 sets out the development that the Councils monitoring procedures have identified as having been completed in the employment allocation sites this monitoring year. Planning applications have been granted or are under consideration in a number of these allocated sites which will be reported on in future years monitoring reports as they are completed.

There has been no completed development on the allocated employment development sites in this monitoring year, although a planning permission is currently being implemented on Site 80 – East of Lingfield Point to construct 3 Industrial Units (B2/B8 Use Class) which will cover the total site area of 10.30 hectares when complete.

Table 9: Completed employment development in the allocated areas

Site Ref	Site Name	Total Site	Gross Available	Net Available	Suggested Use	Comments
80	East of Lingfield Point	10.30 ha	10.30 ha	7.21 ha	B2, B8, E (g)	No change
185	Greater Faverdale	70.0 ha of gross 177.8ha site	70.00 ha for employment	49.00 ha for employment	B2, B8, E (g)	No change
356	Ingenium Parc	40.80 ha	40.80 ha	28.56 ha	B2, E (g)	No change
360	Heighington Lane North	5.70 ha	5.70 ha	3.99 ha	B2, B8, E (g)	No change
362	Teesside International Airport South	39.3 ha	39.3 ha	27.51 ha	B2, B8, E (g) & Airport related uses	No change

368	Central Park South	9.8 ha	6.01 ha	4.21 ha	B2, E(g)	No change
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>175.9 ha</b>	<b>172.11 ha</b>	<b>120.48 ha</b>		

### Policy E 3 Darlington Farmers Auction Mart Relocation

The Darlington Farmers Auction Mart relocated to the identified site on the Policies Map - Humbleton Farm (adjacent to the A68 on the North-western edge of Darlington) in 2020 with the first auction held in September 2020. No planning permissions for extension of the mart or other associated uses were granted in this 2023/2024 monitoring period.

### Policy E 4 Economic Development in the Open Countryside

In this monitoring period a range of appropriate economic development proposals in the countryside were approved, this included:

- Proposed Aviation Village including 5 aircraft hangars for aircraft maintenance, repair, overhaul and painting operations - Land to West of Teesside International Airport (22/01182/FUL) – Land classified as Open Countryside but will be partly integrated into the curtilage of the operational airport.
- Change of Use of agricultural building to 16 storage units (Use Class B8) – Whessoe Ville Farm, Burtree Lane Darlington (23/00047/FUL)
- Conversion of Boarding Kennels to dog day care facility including 3 new buildings – Farncombe Boarding Kennels, Staindrop Road, Darlington (23/00363/FUL)
- Change of use of agricultural building to café (Use Class E) – Manor Farm, Low Dinsdale (23/00969/PA)
- Erection of new storage building (Use Class B8) and hardstanding – Blackwell Grange Golf Club (23/00955/FUL)

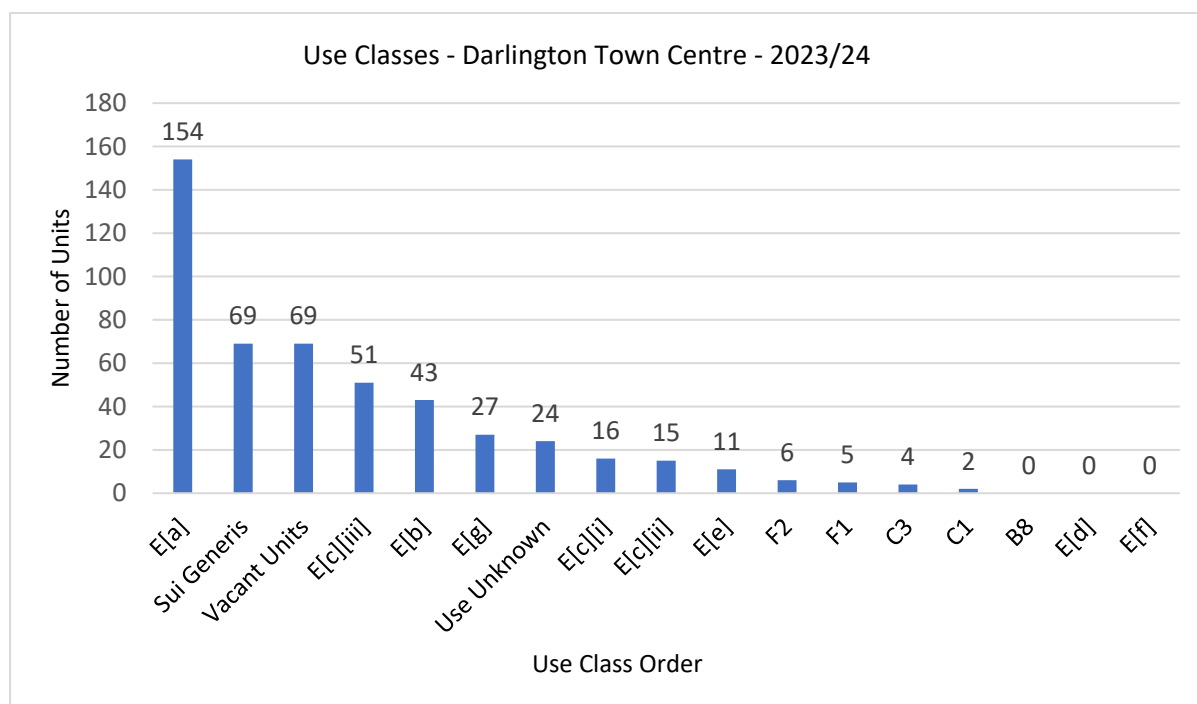
## 6. Town Centres and Retail

### Darlington Town Centre Survey – 2023/24

The Local Plan sets out the overall approach to the town centre and retailing, to ensure the vitality and viability of the Town Centre is maintained. As stated in the AMR 2022/23, the Council is now undertaking in-house monitoring of Darlington Town Centre. The Planning Policy Team has surveyed the area within the Town Centre Boundary identified on the Policies Map of the Darlington Local Plan 2016 – 2036. This is a larger area than was surveyed by Experian Goad in October 2022 and reported on in the AMR 2022/23. As such, the results of the two surveys are not directly comparable. It should also be noted that the Market Hall has been excluded from both surveys due to the ongoing work on the building.

The results of the 2023/24 survey are presented using the Use Class Order (as amended September 2020). The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. Planning permission may then be required for the use of buildings to change, e.g. from shops to residential accommodation. For monitoring purposes, using the use classes can present a breakdown of the quantity and diversity of uses in the Town Centre. The data presented below is accompanied by an abridged version of the Use Classes Order to aid interpretation.

Graph 2: Use Classes Mix in Darlington Town Centre 2023/24



Summary of the Use Classes Order		
Use Class	Sub-category	Description
B8	-	Use for storage or as a distribution centre.
C1	-	Use as a hotel or as a boarding or guest house where, in each case, no significant element of care is provided.
C3	-	Use as a dwellinghouse.
E	a)	For the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public.
	b)	for the sale of food and drink principally to visiting members of the public where consumption of that food and drink is mostly undertaken on the premises.
	c)(i)	Provision of Financial Services principally to visiting members of the public.
	c)(ii)	Provision of Professional Services (other than health or medical services) principally to visiting members of the public.
	c)(iii)	Any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business, or service locality, principally to visiting members of the public.
	d)	Indoor sport, recreation or fitness, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, principally to visiting members of the public.
	e)	For the provision of medical or health services, principally to visiting members of the public, except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner
	f)	For a crèche, day nursery or day centre, not including a residential use, principally to visiting members of the public,
	g)	An office to carry out any operational or administrative functions
F1	-	Learning and non-residential institutions
F2	-	Local community uses.
Sui Generis	-	No class specified, but includes such uses as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre</li> <li>• Amusement Arcade</li> <li>• Launderette</li> <li>• Night-club</li> <li>• Casino</li> <li>• Betting Office</li> <li>• Public House</li> <li>• Hot Food Takeaway</li> </ul>

The current data records that the Town Centre contains 496 units. E(a) Uses, for the display or retail sale of goods, are the most common and comprise 31% of town centre uses. Sui Generis is the joint second most common use class and comprises 13.9% of town centre uses.

### Vacancy Rates

The vacancy rate for Darlington Town Centre 2023/24 is 13.9%, with 69 of 496 units being vacant. This is lower than the national average vacancy rate of around 15.3% for 2022/23 and, although based on different survey boundaries, broadly aligns with a 14.2% vacancy rate reported for 2022/23.

In addition, to a whole town centre vacancy rate, the 2023/24 survey reported vacancy rates for set areas of Darlington Centre, based on the urban block structure. These areas and the associated data can be viewed on the map and table below.

Figure 1: Survey Areas of Darlington Town Centre

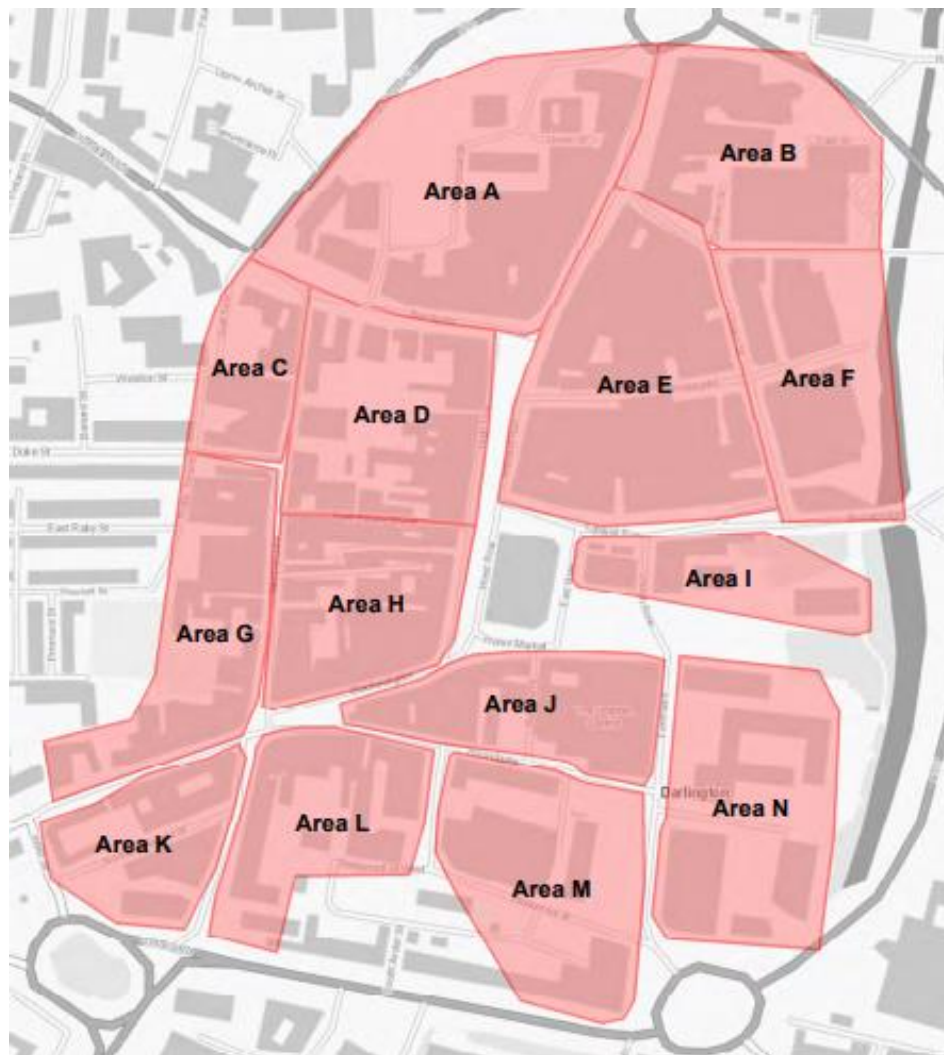


Table 10: Number of Vacant Units in Darlington Town Centre

Town Centre Area	No. Vacant Units	Total No. of Units	Vacancy Rate
A	9	58	16%
B	4	17	24%
C	1	15	7%
D	8	60	13%
E	6	41	15%
F	0	9	0%



<b>G</b>	6	33	18%
<b>H</b>	10	66	15%
<b>I</b>	1	17	6%
<b>J</b>	4	33	12%
<b>K</b>	3	35	9%
<b>L</b>	5	39	13%
<b>M</b>	13	2	15%
<b>N</b>	12	2	17%
<b>P</b>	8	48	17%
<b>Town Centre (Whole)</b>	69	496	13.9%

Once future surveys have been undertaken, this data will allow analysis of the relative health of different sectors of the Town Centre.

### Policy TC 1 Darlington Town Centre

Darlington Borough Council received 15 applications during the period of 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 for town centre uses located outside the Town Centre Boundary identified on the Policies Map. One of these applications was located in Cockerton District Centre, while the remainder were edge of centre or out of centre locations. None of these applications were required to undertake a sequential assessment.

### Policy TC 2 Primary Shopping Area

The Primary Shopping Area (PSA) is defined as the area within the Town Centre where retail development, the main contributor to vitality and viability, is concentrated and should be densely focused. One application for prior approval for a partial change of use was received within the monitoring period within the Primary Shopping Area.

Table 11: Applications received in Primary Shopping Area

Reference	Address	Description	Decision
23/00801/PA	First Floor, 38 Blackwellgate, Darlington	Prior Approval Notification under Class MA for the partial change of use on first floor from Office (Use Class E) to 1 no. self-contained apartment (Use Class C3)	Prior Approval Granted

### Policy TC 3 Additional Site for Town Centre Uses

One application was received within the boundaries of the Commercial/Kendrew Street Site Policy within the monitoring period.

Table 12: Applications received in Commercial/Kendrew Street Site Policy area

Reference	Address	Description	Decision
23/00415/FUL	Regent House, 10 Commercial Street, Darlington	Installation of rooftop telecommunications equipment and associated ancillary works	Granted with Conditions (29.06.2023)

The application in question, being for roof-top telecommunications equipment, was outside the aims and requirements of Policy TC3 and was principally determined using Policies ENV1 & IN7. For future applications, the Council will continue to support the regeneration of the Commercial/Kendrew Street site provided the criteria set out in Policy TC3 are addressed.

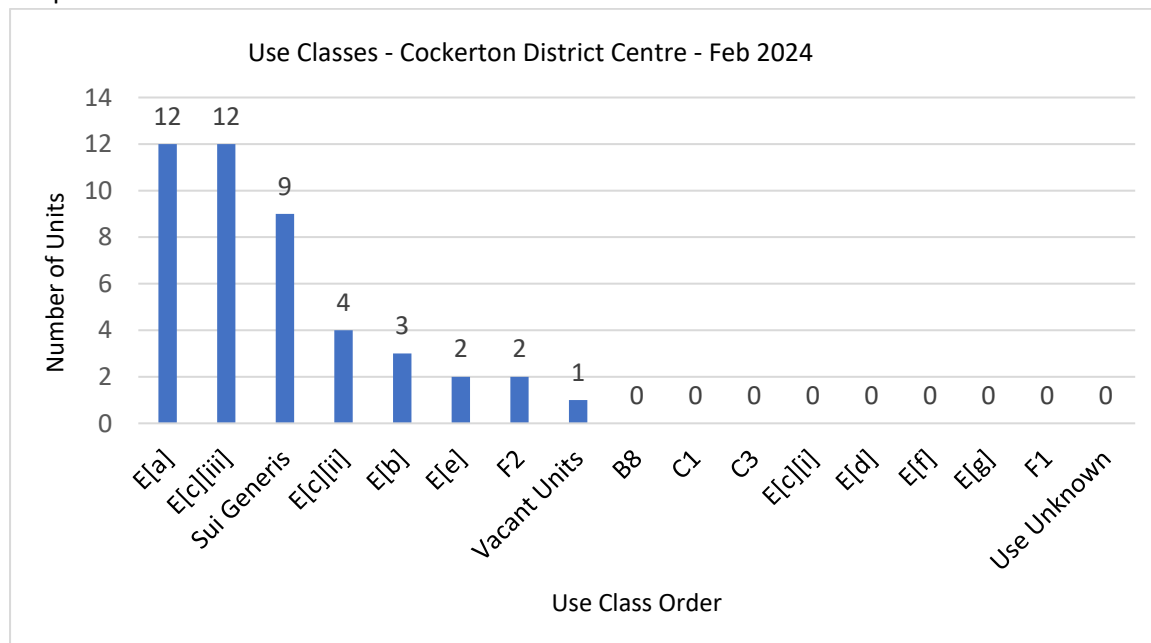
### Policy TC 4 District and Local Centres

Policy TC4 aims to ensure the vitality and viability of District and Local Centres. The District and Local Centres are important in meeting local needs, providing food shopping and a range of other local shops, services, and leisure uses. The Local Plan designates two centres:

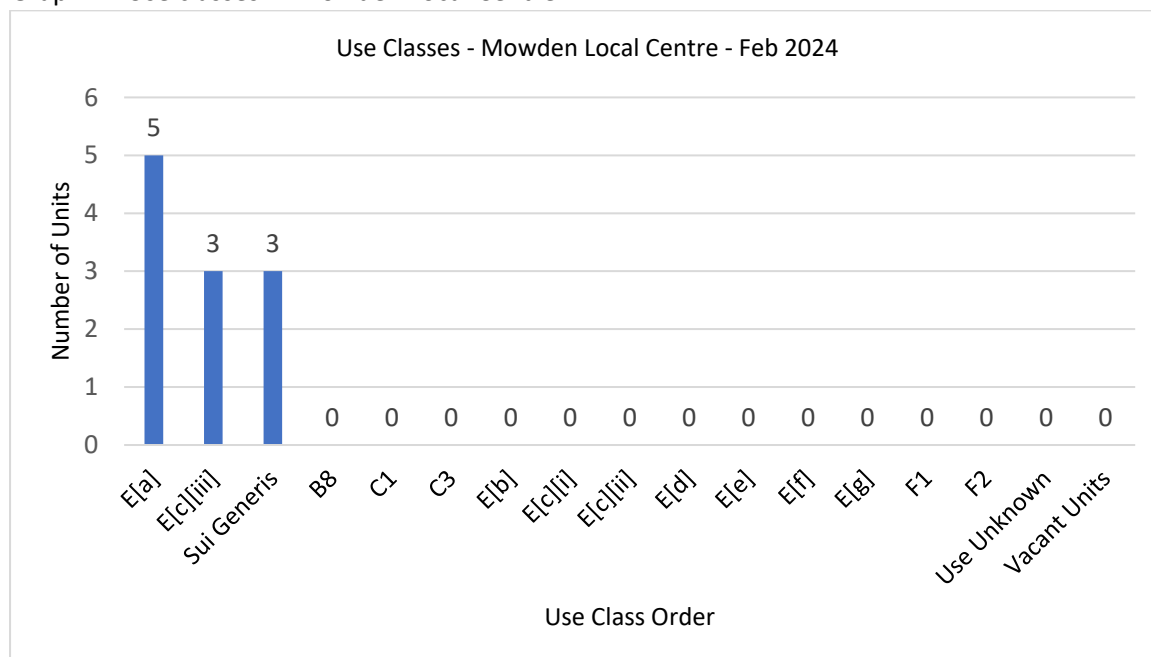
- Cockerton (District Centre)
- Mowden (Local Centre)

Policy TC4 states the types of uses that will be acceptable within these centres include shops, financial services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways and a range of community and leisure facilities (included within class E(a-f) and Sui Generis of the Use Classes Order). The first surveys of Cockerton District Centre and Mowden Local Centre by the Planning Policy Team took place in February 2023.

Graph 3: Use classes in Cockerton District Centre



Graph 4: Use classes in Mowden Local Centre



Both Cockerton District Centre and Mowden Local Centre were found to be in a healthy state. Only one vacant unit was recorded in Cockerton District Centre, and there were no vacant units in Mowden Local Centre. In both centres, uses are principally in the E[a], E[c][iii], and Sui Generis classes. As regards planning applications, during the monitoring period, one application was determined within Cockerton District Centre. No applications were received for Mowden Local Centre.

Table 13: District and Local Centre Applications

Reference	Address	Description	Decision
22/01099/FUL	4 West Auckland Road	Change of use from hair salon (Use Class E) to take away and restaurant (Sui Generis/E) including installation of ventilation system and 1 No. door to side elevation and 1 No. door to rear (Retrospective).	Granted with Conditions

Policy TC 5 Retail Impact Assessment Threshold

During the monitoring period, no applications have been granted for retail (convenience and comparison) and/or leisure development generating over 500sqm additional floorspace outside of the Town Centre Boundary. Therefore, no Retail Impact Assessments have been received.

Policy TC 6: Darlington – Town Centre Fringe

The Town Centre Fringe is a priority location for brownfield development within the Borough. Five applications were granted within the Town Centre Fringe within the monitoring period. Two of these were prior approval applications, while the other three were for full planning permission.

Table 14: Applications granted within the Town Centre Fringe

Reference	Address	Description	Decision
23/00466/PA	Feethams Roundabout, Darlington	Prior Approval for the installation of a new 15.0M Phase 8 monopole, cabinets and associated ancillary works	Prior Approval Granted
23/00800/FUL	Enterprise House, Valley Street North, Darlington	Partial change of use of the existing car park area (east of the site) for the temporary siting (5 years) of 16 no. storage containers for the storage of office equipment	Granted with Conditions
23/00914/FUL	Drive Motor Retail, Chesnut Street, Darlington	Partial change of use of existing units from car workshop and parts area to car showrooms (Sui Generis) with ancillary office area together with associated external alterations including new cladding, doors and glazing on south and west elevations and demarcation of car parking area	Granted with Conditions
23/01004/PA	East Coast Darlington Railway Station, Park Lane, Darlington	Prior Approval application for the provision of two platforms with footbridge, lifts, stairs, canopy, enclosed waiting room and associated works, together with works within the main station building including the demolition of the 1970's travel centre, retail units and part of the barrel roof to facilitate the Installation of a linked footbridge, lifts, escalator, upper lobby and split stairs to platform 1 and re-positioning of ticket gate line on platform 4	Prior Approval Granted
23/01167/DC	156 Northgate, North Lodge, Darlington	Internal and external repairs and alterations to facilitate conversion of restaurant (Use Class Eb) to offices (Use Class Eg) to include demolition of conservatory and external stairs to rear, formation of paved area to rear, renewal of mechanical and electrical services, alterations to levels and paving and installation of door in south elevation to allow level access to building	Granted with Conditions

## 7. Environment

This section addresses how Local Plan policies strive to provide a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

### Policy ENV 1 Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting Darlington's Historic Environment

#### Historic England Advice

In this monitoring year it is understood that no planning permissions have been granted contrary to Historic England advice.

#### Heritage at Risk

In total there are 5 entries on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register (2023) which are located in Darlington Borough. These comprise:

- Grade II\* Listed Building – Goods Shed, North Road Station, Darlington
- Grade II\* Listed Building – Dovecote 45 metres east of Manor House, Houghton Bank, Houghton Le Side
- Grade I Listed Place of Worship – Church of St Cuthbert, Market Place, Darlington
- Conservation Areas x 2 – Northgate and West End

This is 3 less entries to those that were on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register in 2022. This shows there has been a reduction in the number of entries in this monitoring year. The assets removed from the Heritage at Risk Register are:

- Grade I Listed Building and Scheduled Monument – Church of All Saints, Sockburn Lane, Neasham
- Grade II Listed Place of Worship – Church of St Hilda, Parkgate, Darlington
- Conservation Areas – Victoria Embankment

The Church of All Saints at Sockburn was an important seat of ecclesiastical power, occupied since the 8th century. The site includes a Norman church which housed an important collection of Viking carved stones. The church was put on the Heritage at Risk Register in 1999 due to its poor state of repair, as well as the condition of and risk to the stones.

Following repairs to the church, the stones were moved to Durham Cathedral where they underwent specialist conservation work and now form part of its permanent collection. The church is now no longer considered to be 'at risk'.

As set out below, reviews of the two Conservation Areas at Risk have been prioritised and continue to be scheduled to take place over the coming years.

#### Local List

No progress has been made during this monitoring year on the preparation of a Local List with work prioritised to responding to and advising on planning applications and listed building consents.

#### Conservation Areas

No Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans were completed where one has not been produced previously nor were any reviewed that are already in existence. The Conservation Officer is

currently finalising a review of the Northgate Conservation Area Appraisal which will include amendment and extension of the Conservation Area which it is anticipated will be completed and published by the end of 2024. Work is then expected to focus on a proposed new designation of the Middleton St George Stockton and Darlington Railway Conservation Area and then a review of the Victoria Embankment and West End Conservation Areas over the coming years.

#### Policy ENV 2 Stockton & Darlington Railway

In this monitoring period no applications were granted which were considered to have an impact on the Stockton and Darlington Railway and its branch lines.

#### Policy ENV 3 Local Landscape Character

Policy ENV3 identifies areas locally designated for their landscape importance including rural gaps, green wedges, existing green corridors, historic routes and urban and rural parklands. In this monitoring year there were no permissions granted which have resulted in the loss of any or parts of any of these areas of local landscape importance.

Planning permission was granted (23/00782/FUL) for the development of Local Plan site allocation – Site 403 at the former Blackwell Grange Golf Club. As part of this permission a range of works have been undertaken to improve and enhance the adjoining Blackwell Grange parkland which also forms part of the Blackwell/Skerne Park green wedge.

#### Policies ENV 4 and ENV 5 Green Infrastructure

An open spaces assessment will be undertaken in the following monitoring year which will enable more detailed monitoring to be provided on this topic in future monitoring reports.

No significant loss of green spaces has been granted through planning permissions determined in this monitoring year.

Planning Permissions granted in this monitoring year that will provide new green infrastructure include:

- Residential development of 44 dwellings at Former Blackwell Grange Golf Club development includes the improvement and enhancement of the adjoining Blackwell Grange Parkland

Permissions granted incorporating additional green infrastructure provision was more limited in this monitoring year than would be ordinarily expected due to the continued delay in housing development permissions issued because of the introduction of nutrient neutrality.

#### Policy ENV 6 Local Green Spaces

No net losses have been identified in this monitoring year to the designated Local Green Spaces set out in Policy ENV6.

### Policies ENV 7 and ENV 8 Biodiversity

During this monitoring period all relevant applications granted were required to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity. This was achieved and where this was not possible on-site this was secured off-site within the Borough.

All applications granted were determined in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy established in Policies ENV7 and ENV8.

A 10% Biodiversity Net Gain became mandatory on development through the Environment Act on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 for major developments and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 for small scale developments. The Councils Ecologist and Planning team have been working on the Councils processes and systems including monitoring for the new mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. As this was only introduced at the very end of this monitoring year further information on the biodiversity that has been secured will be provided in future years monitoring reports.

Three planning permissions were granted in this monitoring period for the creation of a total of 10 great crested newt ponds at Brafferton, Bishopton and Low Dinsdale respectively which are being created as part of the Natural England District Level Licensing Scheme.

### Policy ENV9 Outdoor Sports Facilities

There was no net loss of sports facilities as a result of planning permissions granted in this monitoring year and no planning permissions were granted for new sports facilities during this monitoring year.

## 8. Transport and Infrastructure

This section seeks to reflect on the Council’s delivery of the transport policies within the Local Plan, together with the delivery of new infrastructure in the borough. The chapter will focus on new developments which have taken place, any that are within the pipeline, and will outline any new projects.

### Policy IN 1 Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network

Nationally, transport statistics show that whilst road usage by goods vehicles now exceeds pre-pandemic levels, the total road usage for all motor vehicles was still below the baseline of 96% as of 18th October 2021, with car usage still at 91%. This is likely to reflect the significant proportion of employees continuing to work from home (the commute accounts for 20% of distance travelled on UK roads). Public transport usage was even lower relative to pre-pandemic levels, at 62% for National Rail passenger journeys and 76% for non-London bus travel. Again, this likely reflects the continuance of homeworkers; however, hesitancy in using public transport due to concerns around infection may also be a factor. We will continue to monitor these trends in the future.

Table 15: Progress and delivery of sustainable transport links detailed in Policy IN 1 and Figure 10.2 (shown from West to East)

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Status in 2023/24</b>
Coniscliffe Park (NW7) – link road connecting A67 to Staindrop Road	Applications now granted permission
Stag House Farm (NW6) - link road connecting Newton Lane to Staindrop Road	No application submitted.
West Park Garden Village (NW2) -link road connecting Edward Pease Way to Newton Lane	Complete
Faverdale link road (NW5/NW8) – connecting Burtree Lane to Rotary Way	Application for road and landscaping granted
Skerningham access roads (N3) –including local distributor road between the A167 and A1150 close to the Little Burdon roundabout in the broad location identified in the Skerningham Masterplan Framework	Design Code SPD Adopted. Detailed design yet to be determined and planning applications required.
Berrymead Farm (N1) – connecting Burtree Lane to the A167 and improvements to A167/Burtree Lane junction	Under construction.
Burdon Hill (E20) -link road connecting A1150 to B6279 Tornado Way and new link road to Red Hall and Skerningham access roads	No application submitted.
Link66/Symmetry Park (E3)-link road connecting the B6279 Tornado Way to B6280 Yarm Road	Complete

### Policy IN 3 Travel Plans

Policy IN 3 of the Local Plan has introduced a requirement for Travel Plans to be submitted with all major developments. The Travel Plan process should help to embed sustainable transport within all new developments and inform the scheme throughout its development. During 2023/24 we received 3 major applications for commercial uses and 1 housing proposal likely to have a significant traffic impact. All of these applications were accompanied by a Travel Plan.



### Policy IN 4 Electric Vehicle Charging

Policy IN4 requires all new build development to make provision for electric vehicle charging on all residential properties. This is a requirement of validation so it should be assumed that this requirement is fully met. This requirement is likely to be superseded with updates to the Building Regulations.

### Policy IN 5 Airport Safety

As part of the application validation process the Civil Aviation Authority are consulted on development, over certain heights, within the defined safeguarding area around airport.

### Policy IN 6 Utilities Infrastructure

This policy requires developments to demonstrate that they would have no net negative impact on utility provision. As discussed earlier in this report limited new housing permissions have been granted during the monitoring period due to nutrient neutrality but utility providers remain consultees on all major applications including non-residential proposals. No objections were received during the monitoring period to any proposals granted permission.

In addition, the council is taking an active role as a supporting authority to the Tees Valley Combined Authority on the preparation of a region wide Local Area Energy Pathway (LAEP) which is an energy strategy document to cover the progress of a local government area to a Net Zero target.

### Policy IN 7 Telecommunication Masts

5 applications for new or upgraded telecommunication masts have been received and granted within the monitoring period. This is an increase from 3 in 2022/23, as shown below.

Table 16: Applications submitted for new and upgraded telecommunications within the monitoring period

Reference	Address	Description	Decision
23/00070/PA	O2 Telecommunications Mast (Cell 2360), Bottom House Farm, West Auckland Road, DARLINGTON	Replacement of existing 15m monopole, 3 No. antennas and 3 No. remote radio units, replace with 20m monopole supporting 6 no. antennas on a replacement open headframe, 2 No. relocated transmission dishes with ancillary development including Ericsson Radio Systems	Granted
23/00184/PA	Telecommunications Mast, Glebe Road, DARLINGTON	Prior Approval for the replacement of existing headframe with Swan 5G Ergonomic crows nest headframe, replacement and removal of antennas and associated ancillary works	Granted
23/00277/PA	Faverdale Streetworks, Faverdale, Darlington	Prior Approval for the installation of a new 15.0M Phase 8 (5G)	Granted

		monopole, cabinets and associated ancillary works	
23/00415/FUL	Regent House, 10 Commercial Street, Darlington	Installation of rooftop telecommunications equipment and associated ancillary works	Granted
23/00466/PA	Feethams Roundabout, Darlington	Prior Approval for the installation of a new 15.0M Phase 8 monopole, cabinets and associated ancillary works	Granted

#### Policy IN 8 Broadband Infrastructure

The Building etc. (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2022 came into force on 26 December 2022. These regulations introduce gigabit broadband infrastructure and connectivity requirements for the construction of new homes in England. This building regulation requirement now exceeds the requirement set in this policy so it will not be monitored going forward.

#### Policy IN 9 Renewable Energy Infrastructure

In total, 1 solar farm was granted planning permission in this monitoring period with a total potential generating capacity of around 49.9 MW. This was:

- Land South of Long Pasture Farm, Little Stainton (22/01329/FUL) - 49.9 MW

#### Policy IN 10 Supporting the Delivery of Community and Social Infrastructure

No financial contributions were received within the monitoring period.

Policy IN 10 safeguards an area of land to extend West Cemetery and an application has now been approved for this land.

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