

Shildon Regeneration Framework

Regeneration and Economic Development
October 2013 Draft 4 Vs 9

(Final – Cabinet)



Durham County Council will:

- Encourage the development of **new housing**
- Encourage **new business activity** and allocate space for **new employment opportunities**.
- Seek to **maximise the economic benefits** to the Town from visitors to **Locomotion**
- Enhance the **quality, appearance** and **function** of the **town centre**

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Town Profile, Challenges and Proposals	3
2. The Town	3
3. Socio-Economic Background	4
4. Employment	4
Employment Opportunities	5
5. Housing	6
Housing Opportunities	7
6. Town Centre and Retail	8
Town Centre Opportunities	9
Opportunities and Aspirations	10
7. Transport and Connectivity	11
8. Education and Training	12
Education and Training Challenges	13
9. Environment	13
10. Visitors and Leisure	14
Opportunities	15
11. County Durham Plan and Infrastructure Summary	18
12. Delivery Approach	20
13. Delivery Plan	25
Appendix 1: Statistical Profile of Shildon (2013)	28
Appendix 2: SWOT Analysis	29



Introduction

1.1. This masterplan provides a summary of the programme of regeneration and investment activity that is taking place or is planned in Shildon. It is intended that the masterplan will cover a 3 to 5 year window over a period of continuing economic volatility. It provides the strategic context which underlies delivery and seeks to establish key principles to co-ordinate and focus investment in the town for housing, retail, leisure and tourism.

1.2. Through the emerging County Durham Plan and its actions the Council will:

- Encourage the development of **new housing**
- Encourage **new business activity** and allocate space for **new employment opportunities**.
- Seek to **maximise the economic benefits** to the Town from visitors to **Locomotion**
- Enhance the **quality, appearance** and **function** of the **town centre**

1.3. Tackling key issues will help Shildon retain and build on its employment and housing opportunities and adapt its local service hub. It will continue to provide a major tourist attraction at Locomotion that links more effectively to the town. It will act as a distinctive residential centre within a rural setting and with a town centre changing to meet the requirements of the town and provide an attractive place to live. The anticipated public investment in the town is £1.5 million with the potential to generate up to £63.5 million in private investment over the next 30 years and including the longer term housing approvals and employment allocation proposals.

Town Profile, Challenges and Proposals

2. The Town

2.1. Shildon will always be associated with the age of the steam engine. Often referred to as the ‘cradle of the railways’ it is here that the first steam hauled public train began its historic journey in 1825. The railway industry dominated the town until the abrupt closure of the Shildon Works in 1984. The town's connections with the birth of the railways are marked at Locomotion National Railway Museum, which has proved an extremely popular visitor attraction since opening in 2004.

2.2. History

The original rural village and landscape became overlain with collieries, quarries and works through the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries. Shildon's story of growth is the evolution of wagonways and inclines into the earliest fully functioning railway system to service local industry.

Based on the older village core¹ and the Shildon Lodge colliery (opened 1830), ‘Old’ Shildon grew at the top of the hill. Separately, on the original Stockton and Darlington railway, ‘New’ Shildon grew around the engine works (opened 1825). This became the ‘Soho’ Works under Timothy Hackworth and the site is now part of the Locomotion

¹ Durham County Council, Conservation Area Appraisal, December 2011

Museum.² The Soho works became a separate company in 1840, moving to a nearby site to produce rolling stock and growing to dominate the town's economy. The railway works finally closed in 1984, the site becoming the Hackworth Industrial Park.

The Shildon Tunnel bypassed the inclines leading to the establishment of Shildon Station in 'New' rather than Old Shildon. The townships coalesced and were infilled in the earlier 20th century to form the town as it now is. In the 1960's the town expanded westwards.



3. Socio-Economic Background

3.1. Shildon has a population of 10,079³, with 7,131 within the working age band.⁴ The local employment base has historically been reliant upon the changing manufacturing sector. The average weekly household income is lower than the County and North East averages.⁵ The town's population profile shows the percentage of older people growing at a faster than average rate and the pre-school age group increasing at a higher rate than the County average.

4. Employment

4.1. The town sits within the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) area. It has strong labour, housing, retailing and transport connections with Tees Valley and Darlington which affords opportunities for complementary economic growth, to widen labour market catchments, and extend the benefits of growth in the NELEP. The town is within close proximity to significant employment areas at nearby Newton Aycliffe, as well as the A1(M) which facilitates access to regional markets.

4.2. Manufacturing remains the dominant sector for work. Companies include those concentrating on high quality specialist production engineering and others that are part of international groups. The employment sites in and around Shildon mainly cater to local demand. The majority of businesses in Shildon employ a workforce of fewer than 15 people and only 4% employ more than 100 employees.

² Additional railway history from Age of Steam Website www.railcentre.co.uk courtesy John Metcalfe 2006

³ As used in the County Durham Plan Settlement Study 2012

⁴ Based on 2011 Census (inc. the Lower Layer Super Output Areas of Shildon West, New Shildon, Eldon, Sunnydale, Thickley, and, Shildon East)

⁵ CACI (DCC), 2011

4.3. The main locations are around the southern edge of the town benefitting from good road links along the A6072 to the A1(M), which is around 6 miles south of Shildon. The All Saints Industrial Estate is well used - a number of firms have located here including PPG which is a global supplier of paints and coatings for the aeronautical industry - and contains a number of good plots for future growth as included in the County Durham Plan allocation.

4.4. South of All Saints is George Reynolds Industrial Estate, which also benefits from good road links. The estate has some bulky goods retailing, leisure and office uses on site. Other estates include the Hackworth Industrial Estate which contains several waste recycling facilities and the adjacent Furnace Industrial Estate which is predominantly in use for general industrial and storage/distribution. The Shildon Industrial Estate (also known as the Dabble Duck Estate) includes the Shildon Business Centre, managed by the County Council. The Centre contains 8 office units and currently fully occupied (October 2013).



All Saints Industrial Estate



All Saints Industrial Estate

Employment Opportunities

4.5. Shildon needs to continue to play a key role in accommodating manufacturing and other significant employment-generating businesses. It remains important to both protect current businesses and avoid a reduction in employment levels.

4.6 It has the opportunity to take advantage of emerging growth sectors such as automotive industries and high added value engineering. The NELEP envisages focusing growth within Sunderland and the A19 corridor but Shildon (together with Newton Aycliffe) is well placed to further expand manufacturing activities as part of the supply chain and to include support for ultra-low carbon vehicles. There are opportunities for business expansion in the town allowed for through the potential County Durham Plan allocations. Transport links are good and opportunities exist to link into emerging growth sectors and the manufacturing centres at Newton Aycliffe and Tees Valley. The recent agreement of Hitachi Rail to locate at Newton Aycliffe will provide substantial new opportunities for Shildon to become part of the supply chain for this new facility.

4.7 There is currently no business forum operating in Shildon which potentially reduces communication between businesses and key stakeholders. A forum would provide the basis for discussing ways to support businesses and market what the town has to offer.

Key opportunities -

Action - The County Durham Plan proposes protection for the existing main employment sites and waste sites and allocates circa 6 hectares of land for new employment uses based on current availability.

Other Action

- Shildon Secure Retailer Grant Scheme
(Delivery: DCC, Bishop Auckland and Shildon AAP, Safe Durham Partnership)

This project would offer grant assistance to small and medium businesses to help improve the safety of buildings and implement security measures to reduce crime opportunities.

- Business Forum – the council will encourage the establishment of a local chamber of trade through the town council and AAP.

5. Housing

5.1. Housing Strategy

The council agreed a new housing strategy for the county last year. The “Building Altogether Better Lives Housing Strategy” sets out how the council and its partners will deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy’s ambition of “creating sustainable places where people want to live, work, visit and invest”. There are three key objectives for the Housing Strategy:

- ***Altogether Better Housing Markets:***
- ***Altogether Better Housing Standards:***
- ***Altogether Better at Housing People.***

5.2. Shildon has 5,141 dwellings and these are predominantly terraced houses (approx. 59%) with detached houses and bungalows comprising around 11% of the stock. Around a quarter of units are semi-detached and around 5% are flats.

5.3. Development is underway adjacent to Spout Lane to provide detached housing. Elsewhere in the town there has been some small scale housing development on the south eastern edge of the settlement adjacent to the A6072. There is evidence that investors are buying 2 bedroomed terraced houses in Shildon⁶.

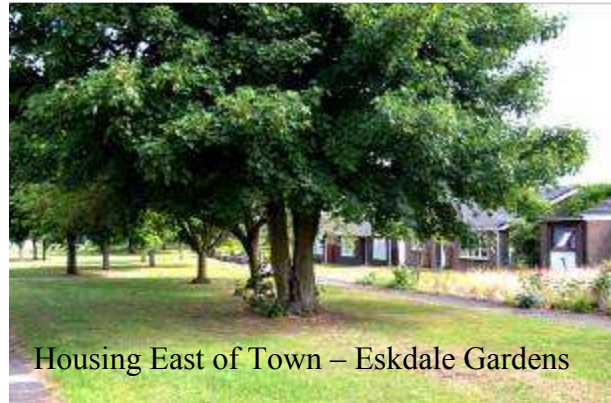
5.4. Approximately a third of households live in social housing, the majority of which (27% of all households) is owned and managed by livin⁷. There is a high proportion of social rented property in Thickey, Sunnydale and the east of Shildon. livin currently owns a total of 1,176 properties, including one and two bedroom bungalows and two to three bedroom family homes and is currently delivering over £9.5 million of investment in Shildon up to 2015. This represents a very substantial investment into the town.

⁶ Arc⁴ for Durham County Council, **County Durham 2012 Strategic Housing Market Assessment**, 2012

⁷ See **livin Shildon Local Offer 2012-15** and **Shildon Community Plan 2012-14**



New Housing Stephenson Court



Housing East of Town – Eskdale Gardens

5.5. The west of Shildon - New Shildon and Eldon, has a high rate of private rented properties. This can potentially increase the number of mixed tenure areas within the town, which can have management implications for registered housing providers. It would potentially benefit from intervention to bring properties back into use and ensure high quality management standards from private landlords. The majority of older houses in the town could benefit from improved energy efficiency standards.

Around 16% of households in Shildon live in privately rented properties which is comparable to national rates⁸. This profile will change as the new housing at Dale Road and Spout lane is developed.

Housing Opportunities

5.6. There is potential to improve the current housing stock. Closer working with local registered providers on an area basis would support the communities of the area.

5.7. Work to bring more owner occupiers into the vicinity would be beneficial. Better quality and variety of housing is needed. This is tackled within the emerging County Durham Plan proposals. There is potential for linking the provision of better homes and high quality services for vulnerable groups.

5.8. Substantial new housing provision is confirmed in the County Durham Plan proposals. The identified requirement of 560 new homes is based on sites that are already committed (i.e. benefitting from planning permission). The two large housing schemes are at Dale Road and Spout Lane which will deliver some 287 and 270 houses respectively.

5.9. Opportunities and Action

Key Issues – the requirement to ensure that the housing profile meets emerging population requirements.

Action – Ensure an appropriate housing profile through the development management process

Key Issue – Condition of private housing stock and provision of housing for all sectors of the population

⁸ Informal commentary livin 2013

Action – The council will pursue the actions outlined in its housing strategy delivery plan and work with the principal social housing Registered Providers.

6. Town Centre and Retail

6.1. Retail activity is concentrated around Church Street and Main Street which form a relatively attractive and popular town centre, although its role and vitality have changed in recent years. There are a number of civic buildings at the edge of the centre including the Civic Hall, library, community centre, health centre and Town Council offices.

6.2. The main shopping centre serves a tight retail catchment and shoppers are more likely to be frequent visitors who visit the centre on foot. Survey work has shown that over 50% of resident respondents do their main food shop at Bishop Auckland. Similarly over 50% regarded Bishop Auckland and Darlington as their main shopping centre. As the St Helen Auckland retail park has developed it has potential to draw in more shoppers from the surrounding area and weaken reliance on other stores.

6.3. Respondents suggested in 2008 that what they liked most about Shildon was that 'it was close to home'⁹. The majority of stores in the centre cater for convenience shopping while there are some service uses (i.e. cafes) and a bus station at the east end of Church Street. The bank has recently closed in the town impacting on business and non internet users, although there are ATMs in the Post Office in New Shildon and within Morrisons. There is scope with increased housing for the town centre to offer local services.

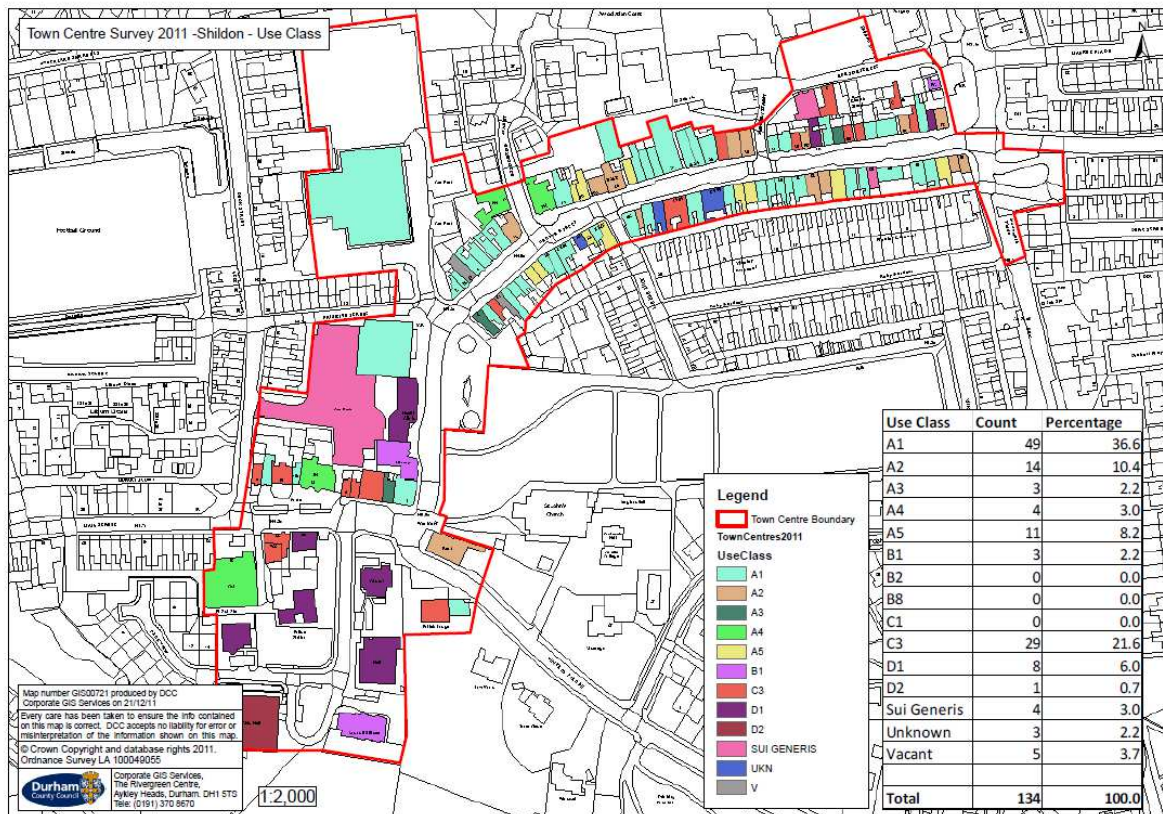
6.4. There are a substantial number of takeaway premises which tend to detract from the retail character and vibrancy of the shopping centre.

6.5. Morrison's has generated an improvement in the main food market share secured by Shildon from the wider Bishop Auckland catchment (up from 4.6% to 10%). Vacancy rates are in line with national trends at around 12%. Vacant floorspace has increased significantly since 2009 (c. 800 m²) but this accords with the trend nationally.

6.6. The town centre public realm has been addressed during a previous environmental improvement scheme in the late 1990s. The 'town square' was part of the last environmental scheme for the town centre. The space provides a focal point however its potential remains to be fully exploited and some of the features are showing early signs of wear and tear.

⁹ Household and Business Survey, Sedgefield Borough Council 2008

6.7. Town Centre Survey (2011)



Town Centre Opportunities

6.8. Independent retailers continue to give life and vitality to the main shopping street but Shildon town centre may be vulnerable to further adverse change due to economic conditions. The centre is underrepresented by multiple high street retailers with the notable exception of the Morrisons supermarket.



6.9. The respondents to the survey also noted concerns about the lack of banks and poor quality environment. Of the local business operators to respond, most considered car parking and accessibility to be satisfactory while all were satisfied with the quality of accommodation although some highlighted a 'lack of supporting facilities such as public

toilets and places to eat as lacking'. Key priorities for improvement for all respondents were ensuring a better quality and range of shops.

6.10. The indirect links between the town centre and the heritage attraction at Locomotion means that there are missed opportunities for businesses in the town centre and vice versa. In image terms the town could capitalise more on association with the appeal of Locomotion.

Opportunities and Aspirations

6.11. Shildon is unlikely to be able to effectively compete with larger neighbouring centres and there is a need to focus on supporting businesses that are already located in the town and assisting with start-ups. In this respect the town is ideally positioned as rents tend to be relatively low and the smaller, more flexible premises are likely to appeal and there are a number of opportunity sites and premises.

6.12. If Shildon is to achieve an improvement in the quantity and quality of retail provision then it is clear that extra expenditure linked directly to the town needs to be generated. New housing in the town will increase the total population in the catchment area. Given the quality of housing planned it will also attract a population with higher than average household incomes. This will potentially make Shildon a more attractive location for retailers; improved retail provision will, in turn, enhance the town's ability to sustain itself as a service centre.

6.13. The 2008 Retail Centres Framework¹⁰ identified opportunities for the way the town centre functions. These were ambitious and replaced the relatively recent public realm improvements that continue to shape the image of the town centre. Given the extent of these development sites and the public funding needed to achieve these proposals, they are longer term aspirations requiring substantial reappraisal as the service function of the town centre and the economic context changes. Action on these is not included in the masterplan but a review of regeneration potential of projects is recommended.

6.14. Key Issues and Actions

The need for improvement is recognised. Retention of businesses and attracting new uses will be encouraged. The County Durham Plan does not consider there to be any real requirement for additional retail capacity in the town centre. Proposals that come forward should be predominantly aimed at meeting local residents' shopping needs and be of a scale appropriate to the town's catchment. The council will remain supportive of positive private sector proposals for town centre development. We will implement a Targeted Business Improvement Programme and work with landowners to improve the appearance of underused properties e.g. introduce shop wraps on vacant properties. These measures will improve the appearance of the centre & provide a better environment for people using the centre.

Action - DCC will help tackle the high level of takeaways by seeking through the emerging County Durham Plan to prevent the opening of new takeaway businesses. The Plan considers a threshold of 5% to be appropriate to ensure a diverse mix of uses

¹⁰ Sedgefield Borough Council, **Retail Centres Framework, Shildon**, 2008, DTZ

and proposals for additional A5 uses will not be permitted in Sildon.

Action - DCC will encourage the formation of a local business forum/chamber of trade and involve partners in the process.

Action – DCC will implement a Targeted Business Improvement programme



7. Transport and Connectivity

7.1. The town is well connected by road and rail to nearby towns and employment centres. The A1(M), A68 and A688 are within easy reach of the town providing links with the rest of the region. There is a bus station to the east end of Church Street which provides regular services to Darlington, Newton Aycliffe and Bishop Auckland and connections to Durham.



Bus Station



Rail Station

7.2. Sildon is a compact settlement with most residential areas well linked to the town centre. The New Sildon area, including the railway station and Locomotion Museum is more divorced from the town centre. This is affected by indirect pedestrian and cycle links between the two which limit opportunities for complementary trips between Locomotion and the town centre.

7.3. Building on the 12,000 Locomotion visitors a year that arrive at the station and its value to local residents, the infrastructure plan identifies station improvements as part of future proposals. The Bishop Line (as the railway line is now called) is supported by the Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership that helps promote use and awareness of the line.

7.4. There is scope for further connections and improvements to links between towns and into the surrounding countryside.

7.5. Opportunities and Action

Key Opportunity – Pedestrian and cycling accessibility and connectivity between towns, into the surrounding countryside and between the town Locomotion and the railway station.

**Action - Local Motion, Cycling Advocacy Programme
(Delivery: Local Motion)**

Local Motion is an organisation set up to encourage more sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking and public transport. They have funding up to 2015 to improve the route between Darlington, Newton Aycliffe, Shildon and Bishop Auckland. They will visit schools and the streets of Shildon to provide information, advice and support to encourage more people to use sustainable transport.

**Action - Walking and Cycling Improvements
(Delivery: DCC, Sustrans, Shildon Town Council)**

- Funding has been secured to improve the cycle and pedestrian link between Shildon and Newton Aycliffe Train Stations. The route extends to approx. 2 miles running alongside the Bishop Line on the northern side.
- There is potential to improve links between the station and town centre. The local sustainable transport fund team have been carrying out audits of the rail stations in the County to assess cycle links and 'on routes' from the stations. The ultimate intention is to improve links between the main towns (Shildon, Newton Aycliffe and Bishop Auckland) and Darlington.

**Action – Links to Locomotion,
(Delivery: DCC Economic Development / Public Rights of Way Team,
Voluntary sector, Town Council)**

Review links, associated rail historic assets and funding

**Action – Bishop Line
(Delivery: Community Rail Partnership)**
Promote use and awareness of the rail line

8. Education and Training

8.1 Educational attainment and attendance within Shildon at both Primary and Secondary levels show improvement. There are three primary schools in the town; Thornhill, St. John's Shildon and Timothy Hackworth. The latest, published information shows that all three improved their results in 2012. The town's children achieved in line with national and county performance expectations at the end of primary school and they made better progress throughout their years in junior school. Thornhill and St. John's were rated as outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspections, whilst Timothy Hackworth was judged to be good.

8.2 There is one secondary school in Shildon; Sunnydale Community College for Maths & Computing. The school continued to improve its results in 2012, with 995 of its pupils achieving 5 good GCSE's. The school has also increased the proportion of its pupils attaining 5 good GCSE's (including Maths & English) from 39% in 2009 to 57% in 2012. The 2011 Ofsted Report found that the Community College was a good school and gave it a grade 2. It has been officially recognised for the third year in a row as being amongst the top 100 schools for year-on-year improvement. It is also part of a trust (ASSET) with other schools, colleges, South West Training and Teesside University that works to extend the curriculum on offer for students from 14-19 and holds specialist status for mathematics and computing. Shildon benefits also from a sure start centre and access to further education in nearby Bishop Auckland and further away at Darlington.

8.3 There is a range of adult education and training opportunities offered by the Jubilee Fields and Peoples Centres. S & D Training (originally formed in Shildon) based in Bishop Auckland and working across the local area offers strengths in local apprenticeship provision and training. Business training services are also provided by organisations operating within the town. These opportunities are addressing the relatively poor level of qualifications amongst the town's adult population.¹¹

Education and Training Challenges

8.4 Issues and Actions

Key Issues – supporting educational improvement and ensuring provision is compatible with increased population through new housing

Action - Educational provision will be supported through the council's children and young people's service delivery and assessed against any new housing proposals as they emerge

Key Issues – ensuring training to increase levels of qualification and employability.

Action – the council will work with existing providers in relation to any emerging employment investment opportunities to enhance provision.

9. Environment

9.1. The conservation area is focussed around the former steam engine workshops and associated infrastructure. Church Street retains much of its historic character, however this is impacted upon by some poor quality 20th Century retail units and inappropriate shop frontages and shutters.

¹¹ The 2011 Census indicated that around 42% of the working age population in the community have no formal qualifications.

9.2. The Bishop Auckland to Darlington railway is recognised as a key asset running through the core economic area of south Durham; connecting the main towns of Bishop Auckland, Shildon and Newton Aycliffe and providing a key gateway to the Durham Dales. Together with the Weardale Railway it forms a strategic railway tourism corridor linking the Darlington Railway Museum, Locomotion at Shildon and Weardale heritage railway.

9.3. Opportunities, issues and actions are dealt with under other sections, see below and Town Centre, section 6.

10. Visitors and Leisure

10.1. Locomotion The main leisure attraction in the town is at Shildon Locomotion Museum, which opened in September 2004 as part of the National Railway Museum. It incorporates the Timothy Hackworth Museum which celebrates the renowned engineer. It is a particularly popular county and regional destination attracting over 200,000 visitors annually and reached its millionth visitor in 2010. It is estimated that Locomotion brings £3.6 million into the local economy and around £3 million into the region. It impacts on local companies, trading with about 90 local companies - 47 of which operate within South West Durham. Of its annual visitors, over 40,000 of stay in the region for at least one night and 12,000 arrive at the museum by rail. More than 9,000 children visit in booked school parties.

10.2. The Locomotion National Railway Museum provides significant ongoing opportunities for Shildon. The County's tourism destination plan (2012-2016) ranked it as the fourth most visited attraction in the county. Locomotion has won 15 major awards for excellence including the Museum and Heritage Show Award for Best Permanent Exhibition and the Best Free Venue in the UK in the Rough Guide to Accessible Britain Awards 2010. The museum has trained 7 apprentices and has over 70 locally based volunteers who gave over 5,300 hours of their time to the museum in 2012-13.

10.3. The vacant business sites at the entrance to Locomotion are proposed for housing development under a planning approval (Dale Road).



Locomotion Sidings



Locomotion Goods Shed

10.4. The town has a good range of indoor and outdoor facilities, along with well established football and cricket clubs. The county council operates the Sunnydale Leisure Complex which provides a substantial range of both outdoor and indoor sport

and physical activity facilities, including a running track and sports field at the stadium. The facility has shared use agreements in place with the secondary school.

10.5. There are several outdoor open spaces and parks including Hackworth Park. Parts of the town suffer an under-provision of open space (particularly multi use games areas in the Thickley/Jubilee Fields and New Shildon areas of the town. Elsewhere facilities are generally adequate in quantitative terms however there are areas that could be improved i.e. quality of changing accommodation and provision of youth shelters.¹² New housing will need to continue adequate levels of leisure space/green infrastructure.

10.6. Hackworth Park. The park celebrated its centenary in 2012 and is a significant recreation provision and attraction for the town centre with links to Shildon's railway heritage. It is maintained by the town council and has been extensively renovated through a programme of projects variously funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Shildon Town Council, Sedgefield Borough Council and others.



Ornamental Fountain



Surtees Rail Trail – Course of the Surtees Railway

10.7. Leisure Facilities - The town is well served for leisure facilities however additional leisure development and proposals that will enhance the evening economy will be supported to improve the current provision. The scale of this need will be monitored as the provision of new housing progresses.

In 2011 the Council undertook a review of all of its leisure facilities, the purpose of the review was to increase efficiency and it was agreed that centres that provide a 'core offer' be retained. Individually the centres at Shildon and Woodhouse Close in Bishop Auckland did not meet the full core offer but combined, they do. It was therefore agreed to retain both sites.

The Council continues to develop built facility strategy which will shape the future provision of Sports, Arts, Library and other built leisure facilities across County Durham. This work will lead in turn to further review of facilities in Shildon and various options for the future delivery of services.¹³

Opportunities

10.8. Locomotion is a major attraction to the town and the county but surveys suggest that the majority of visitors to the museum do not extend their visit to the town centre. When asked if there was anything that could be done to encourage them to visit the

¹² Durham County Council, **Open Space Needs Assessment**, 2008

¹³ Durham County Council (Leisure), **Sport and Leisure Service Strategy 2011-2014**, 2011

town centre, responses included: more information about the town centre within the museum; provision of restaurants or tea rooms; better shops and markets. Locomotion is supported by the various actions relating to county wide tourism development – such as the tourism management plan¹⁴.

10.9. Signposting at distance to Locomotion is very good; the entrance to the main building and car park is less well presented. There are various routes between the museum site and the town centre, however none are especially well signposted or as direct as they could be which exacerbates the physical separation of the two. Apart from a detour around the cricket club, one route runs parallel with the rail line where it tunnels under the town. It is difficult to see the historic cutting, tunnel entrance (1842) and aqueduct from the route that possibly could provide a further attraction for visitors.

10.10. Some signage and information boards are deteriorating and if visitors are to be attracted they will need more co-ordination and upgrading together reviewing linkage into the town. There is a need to review and seek funding for the improvement of the town's rail trail and if possible the Daniel Adamson Coach House acknowledging adjacent private ownership.

10.11. Improving linkages and economic spin-offs/benefits for Shildon town centre is needed to deal with the following key challenges:

- Making clear what Shildon has to offer
- Difficulty of overcoming the physical separation of the site from the town centre for pedestrians.
- The majority of visitors to Locomotion are day trippers.

10.12. Issues and Actions

Key issue – Ensuring adequate provision of leisure space and green infrastructure.

Action – The council will incorporate standards for green space and leisure provision in the County Durham Plan and implement the requirements in relation to new private sector development.

Key Opportunity – Ensuring that Locomotion remains successful as an attraction and that the town benefits from its visitors.

Action - Generally the council will encourage beneficial links to Locomotion and the continuing success of the museum through its actions relating to tourism development. The County Durham Plan recognises the need to improve perceptions of Durham as a family-focused destination to build upon the portfolio of attractions that includes Locomotion.

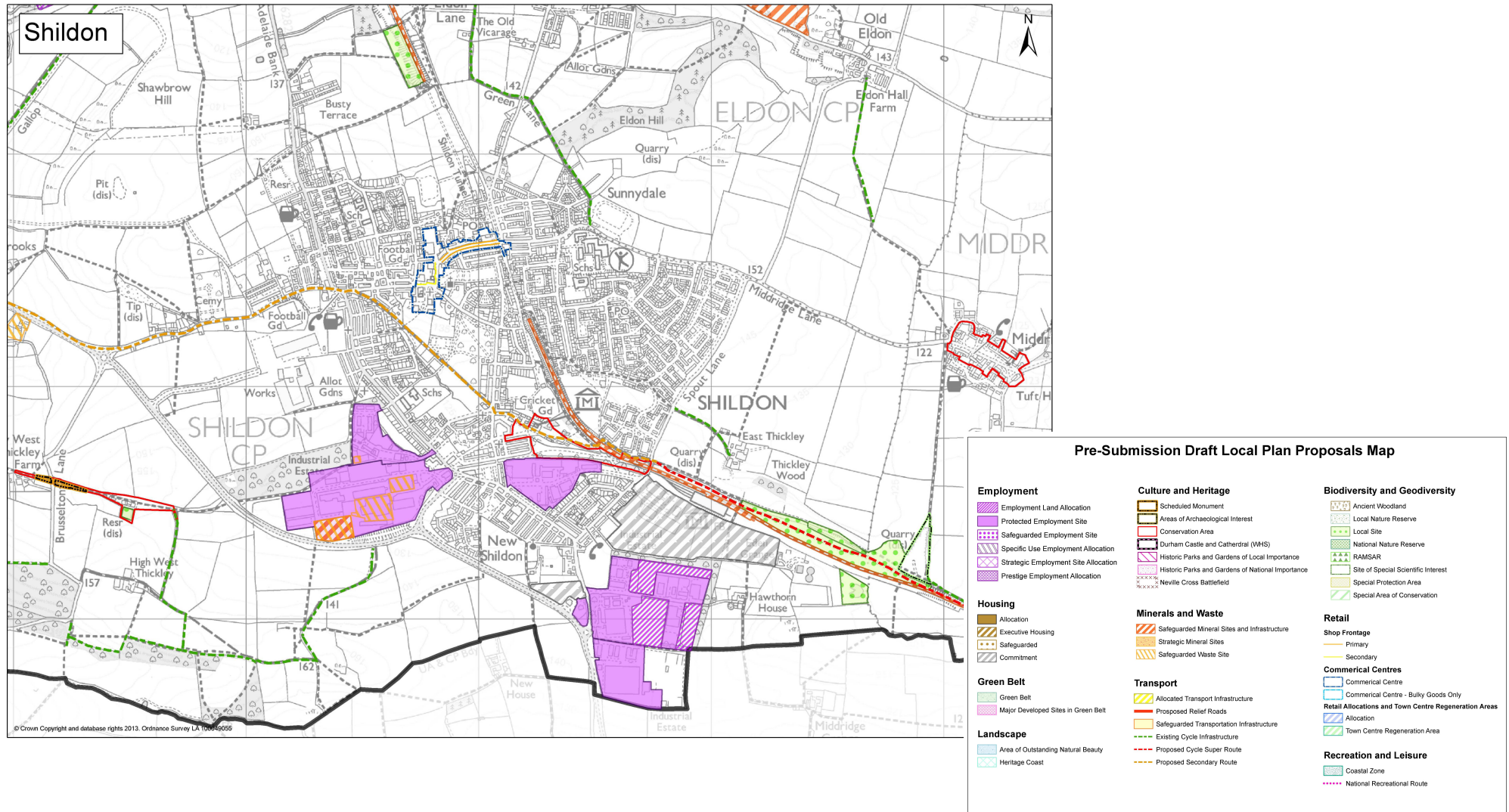
Action - See Transport Section 7 for links to Locomotion

Action – The council will work with other organisations to review links, associated rail historic assets and funding.

¹⁴ Visit County Durham, **Durham Tourism Management Plan, 2012-2016 (DTMaP)**, 2012

10.13. Regeneration – There is potential for further project work to develop Shildon's potential and for a review to establish funding and scope for change.

11. County Durham Plan and Infrastructure Summary



11.1. Much of the proposed action is based on the emerging County Durham Plan and underlying infrastructure analysis. The strategic basis and summary of proposals are detailed in this section. This masterplan also draws upon previous work undertaken by DCC, Bishop Auckland and Shildon Action Partnership, Visit County Durham, The Homes and Communities Agency and a range of external consultants. It demonstrates how phased sustainable development can be brought forward to benefit the town's economy and enhance Shildon's built environment.

11.2. County Durham Regeneration Statement. The strategic importance of Shildon is recognised within County Durham's regeneration statement and aims to embed a "whole town" approach to regeneration and use place-shaping activity to unlock the town's full potential and underpin the County Durham Plan:

The Regeneration Statement contains five ambitions¹⁵, of which three relate to Shildon:

- Vibrant and successful towns
- Competitive and successful people
- A top location for business

The County Durham Plan

11.3. The Pre-Submission Draft County Durham Plan sets out where new housing, jobs, shops and infrastructure will be developed up to 2030. The Plan sets out how the Sustainable Community Strategy, adopted by DCC and the County Durham Partnership, will be delivered. It will also deliver key elements of the regeneration statement; which directs the delivery of regeneration and economic development activities across County Durham. The focus of these strategies is to shape County Durham into a place where people achieve their potential and want to live, work, visit and invest. Shildon is recognised as a main town where new development will be directed to improve the sustainability of the settlement.

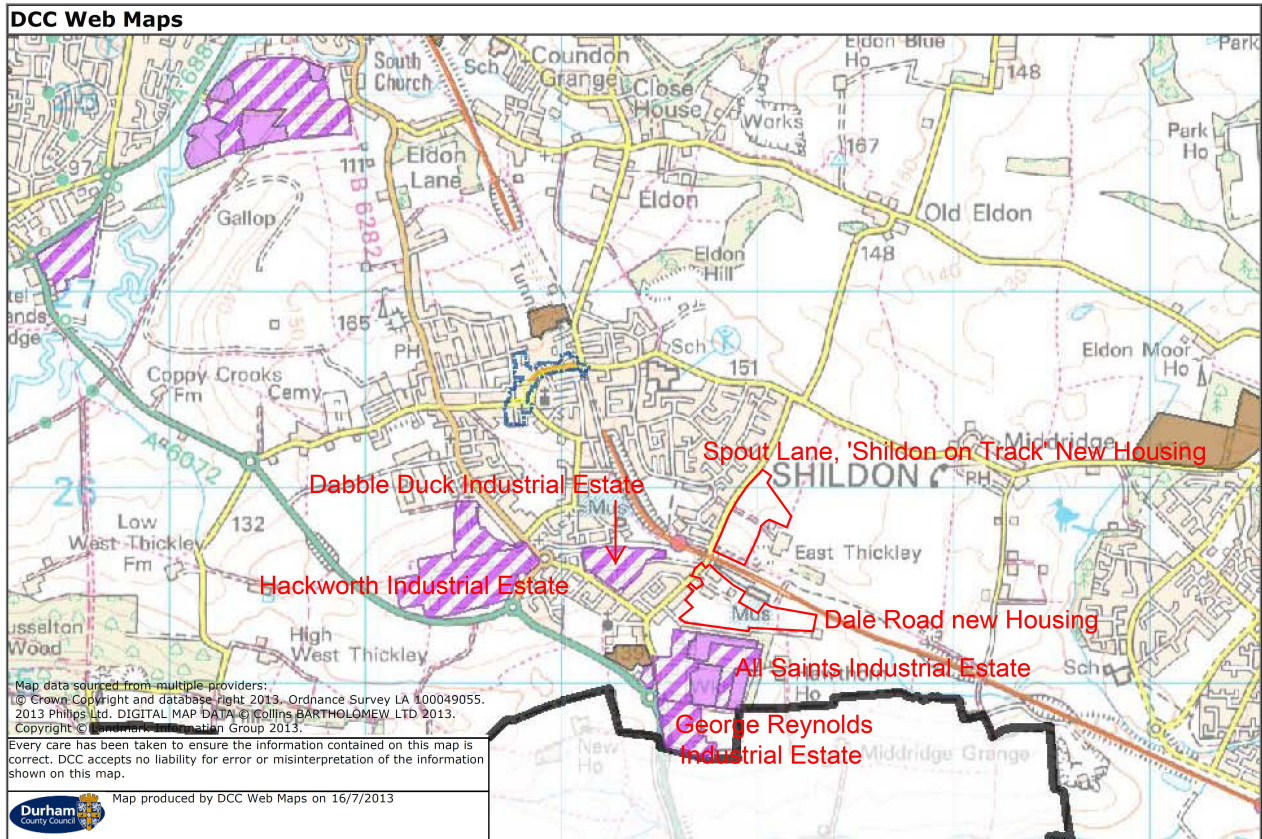
11.4. The County Durham Plan indicates need for:
(See previous page for proposals map)

New Homes - The County Durham Plan indicates that 560 additional homes will need to be built in Shildon up to 2030. Two large housing schemes are already committed at Dale Road and Spout Lane which are proposed to deliver 287 and 270 houses respectively.

Employment

The Plan identifies protection for the existing main employment sites, allocation of an additional circa 6 hectares of land for new employment uses at the All Saints Industrial Estate. The waste sites at Hackworth Industrial Estate are also safeguarded.

¹⁵ The other ambitions are *Thriving Durham City*, and *Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities*



Location Plan

11.5. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for County Durham identifies where local infrastructure is likely to need improvement in line with existing shortfalls and developments identified in the County Durham Plan.

- In Shildon the rail station, the Shildon to Newton Aycliffe cycling and walking route are indicated. The Shildon Health Centre was refurbished in 2012.

A further significant project in the town is:

- Provision of a new community facility on Church Street provided by livin and partners



12. Delivery Approach

12.1. Shildon is an asset for the south of the county. The town requires development in terms of additional housing and employment opportunities to strengthen its position. This masterplan expresses the council's desire to stimulate regeneration activity and to guide investment and development in Shildon. There are a range of development opportunities to be promoted in Shildon and provide the necessary conditions for a sustainable and competitive town centre.

12.2. Delivery includes:

- Working with **local employers looking to expand their businesses**. Business Durham provides tailored advice and guidance to support the development and growth of businesses in the area and acts as the first point of contact for any business issues they may have;
- supporting **the allocation of employment land** and the **protection of industrial estates**
- **Working with a range of agencies** (including South Durham Enterprise Agency) to provide **business support** :
- Working with the private sector to develop a phased approach to **delivery of new homes** across a range of values and tenure types to support the resident population;
- **Working with livin** and **other social housing registered providers** (i.e. Four Group) to help deliver affordable housing in the Shildon area; and
- Working to identify development partners and deliverable development solutions for opportunities within the town centre.

The County Council is either leading or helping to shape the delivery of a number of priority projects across Shildon. Other agencies are active in the town and have projects planned in the short to medium term. Further details are set out in the Delivery Plan.

DCC will continue to play a role in facilitating developments through the County Durham Plan (the Plan) and the planning system (e.g. planning applications), using its land and assets to leverage development, and offering business support.

12.3. A Multi-Agency Approach to Delivery

Durham County Council has committed substantial sums towards investment in Shildon including:

- Support for sustainable travel including community transport and travel planning
- Cycle Super Routes
- Provision of super fast broadband throughout the County

The council is also currently actively engaged with a range of partners in order to influence the pace and scale of development in Shildon and to lever in maximum private sector investment. The council also provides strategic guidance and works in collaboration with other partners to deliver various social initiatives that improve the health, wellbeing and aspirations for those living in the town. (See below)

12.4. Bishop Auckland and Shildon Area Action Partnership Projects (Delivery: AAP + Partners)

The Bishop Auckland and Shildon Area Action Partnership (AAP) was formed to tackle the various issues affecting the people living in the area and to work to improve their quality of life. The AAP has facilitated the investment of almost **£1.9 million** in the area in the 2012/13 period. For 2013/14 the partnership will focus on the following priority themes:

- Employment and Jobs
- Crime and Community safety
- Children and Young People

The AAP has already established a successful record of partnership working and attracting match funding to supplement its core budgets, which are:

- Area Budget - £120,000 per annum
 - This is an annual allocation which is made to each AAP to support community led initiatives to meet local needs and identified priorities. The 2012/13 Area Budget was used to fund nine different projects including business advisor and employability projects in 2012/13. A further £187,000 has been attracted as match funding. In Shildon a variety of area budget projects have been supported including: a development worker for Shildon community safety group; a secure retailer premises scheme which provides target hardening grants to local businesses in Shildon and through Shildon Communities First a number of local initiatives will be introduced.
- Neighbourhood Budget - 20k per annum per Cllr. from 2013/14
 - This is an annual allocation to each of the county council elected members to support the improvement of priority social, economic and environmental activities. For Shildon this supported the delivery of ten separate projects including a new initiative for 2013 "The Health Express" which aims to create a healthier Shildon, as well as a small grants scheme that helped provide activities for children and young people.
- Members' Initiative Fund - £2,000 per Cllr. per annum
 - This is an annual allocation to support community, schools and voluntary groups in developing their effectiveness and to help them respond to community and neighbourhood needs.

In addition to the Area and Neighbourhood Budgets, the AAP is working in close partnership with the Community Development Foundation and the Big Lottery for external funding to benefit areas in and around Bishop Auckland and Shildon. Shildon West ward has been awarded £33,910 as part of a four year Community First Programme. The AAP is also managing The Shildon Health Express Project which will tackle the health inequalities in the town, improve access to services and increase the healthy life expectancy. It is envisaged that a major aspect of the project will be the establishment of a network of Community Health Champions.

12.5. Other Organisations

Shildon Town Council. As indicated through this masterplan the town council has an important role in delivery of a range of actions and in carrying out its own functions in

the town. These include management of the Civic Hall, open spaces allotments and Hackworth Park. This is supported by its parish plan¹⁶.

livin's role in the town and its substantial investment in its housing stock are detailed in section 4, housing. In addition livin provides a range of community support for its tenants, including helping people back into employment, working in partnership to improve health, and promoting financial inclusion. These are summarised in livin's community plan¹⁷.

The Voluntary Sector provides active involvement in providing a range of socio-economic initiatives and services for residents. The diverse work they carry out within the community includes the Citizens Advice Bureau and the community centres, including Jubilee Fields. In current economic conditions the voluntary sector can play an important role in supporting the social aims underlying the County Durham Plan and its delivery.

South East Durham Enterprise Agency (SDEA) works across South Durham and their initiatives include advice and guidance to individuals looking to start a new business. SDEA also provide a community access point for business support and guidance including business development projects, marketing, finance, HR or any business issues.

Other service providers. There is good access to health services provided through GP services, the NHS, and Sedgefield Health Network and supported by a new partnership project – the Health Express. There is no specific reference in delivery relating to the emergency services but their work also underpins social infrastructure in the town.

12.6. Business and social initiatives supported by the council include:

- The council business team working closely with partner organisations to develop and promote initiatives that encourage young people to raise their aspirations and become more knowledgeable about the business sector;
- Implementation of the anti social behaviour strategy; a joint agency approach to development of action plans to tackle anti social behaviour and lower crime levels;
- Developing a multi agency alcohol harm reduction strategy for County Durham;
- Implementation of a Mental Health Employment Strategy to promote social inclusion and increase the number of people progressing into education, training, volunteering and employment;
- Implementation of the National Drug Strategy 2010 to address issues such as offending, employment and housing; and
- Implementation of the cultural strategy through education to deliver outdoor arts events, and an educational programme within communities.

¹⁶ Shildon Town Council, **Shildon Parish Plan 2010-2015**, 2010/11

¹⁷ Livin, **Shildon Community Plan 2012-14**, 2012

13. Measuring success

13.0 The council has set itself a challenging set of targets, against which the measure of success in delivery and implementation can be assessed. In the short to medium term, the broad range of objectives includes:

- An improved retail, business and residential offer;
- Increased employment levels, with a particular focus on enabling young people to access work;
- Improved infrastructure, connectivity and access to employment; and,
- More business start ups and increased business growth.

13.1 These measures will contribute towards the following corporate targets for County Durham:

- Improved employment rates;
- Higher numbers of business registrations; and,
- Improved productivity.

13. Delivery Plan

Theme / Strategy	Project activity	Timescale	Outputs / Outcomes	Project Lead and Partners	Budget details / proposals
<i>Vibrant and Successful Towns</i>	DCC County Durham Plan	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2014 Adoption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Allocations ○ Employment land Allocations 	DCC	DCC
	Housing Development Based on the two current major housing planning approvals Spout Lane (Shildon on Track) – underway Dale Road , to be implemented and requiring business relocation	Short-long term	<p style="text-align: center;">270 units</p> <p style="text-align: center;">287 units</p>	Private Developers	Estimated total over £41 million
	livin – investment in housing stock	Short- Medium Term	General improvements to housing stock	livin	£9.5 million investment up to 2015
	Regeneration Projects	Short term review, long term delivery	Opportunity and Funding review of potential projects	DCC	
	Town Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of takeaways • Public realm • Future potential - review 	<p>Short- medium</p> <p>Short</p> <p>short term as part of regeneration projects review, action longer term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitation of number takeaway businesses • Review condition of public realm • Future beneficial change 	<p>DCC</p> <p>DCC, AAP, town Council</p> <p>DCC, AAP Town Council, Private Sector, Transport providers</p>	

Theme / Strategy	Project activity	Timescale	Outputs / Outcomes	Project Lead and Partners	Budget details / proposals
<i>Competitive and Successful People</i>	Area Action Partnership 2013/14 Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Young People Employment and Job Prospects 	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional Citizen's Advice support Improving employability and access to jobs Working with schools to enhance vocational learning 	AAP	Based on annual AAP budget
	Establish Business Forum	Short/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New forum 	DCC with partner support	DCC
	Town Council Range of community support actions resulting from Shildon Parish Plan (2010 – 15)	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help to reduce anti social behaviour Help to improve job prospects and access to benefit assistance Promotion of education opportunities for children and adults 	Town Council, DCC, SEDA, AAP	Town Council, AAP, DCC, SDEA
	County Durham Plan Employment Allocations	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation of 6.15ha of employment land at All Saints Industrial Estate 	DCC	DCC
	Secure Retailer Scheme	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support towards improvements for business security in Shildon 	AAP, SDEA	£16,000
	Town Council Community support actions resulting from Shildon Parish Plan (2010 – 15)	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help to increase awareness of services in the town Develop a local chamber of trade 	Town Council, DCC, Locomotion	Town Council
	SDEA Business start up support Enterprise routes to employment	Short Term		SDEA, DCC	SDEA
	livin	Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement across a range of 	Livin	Livin

Theme / Strategy	Project activity	Timescale	Outputs / Outcomes	Project Lead and Partners	Budget details / proposals
<i>Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities</i>	Range of community support resulting from community plans and revised 2012 action plan		socio- economic targets		
	Area Action Partnership 2013/14 Priorities • Crime and Community Safety	Short Term	• Addressing community safety	AAP	Based on annual AAP budget
	Local Motion Share of S. Durham programme	2011-2015	• Addressing community transport needs	DCC/DfT	Share £6.4 million programme
	DCC Walking and cycling route improvement	Short Term	• Improvements to link between Shildon and Newton Aycliffe	DCC, Sustrans	Project cost of £650,000 (£500,000 secured)
	Shildon Railway Station Potential for future improvements	Long term			
	Locomotion • Review links, associated rail historic assets and funding	Short-medium	• Improved access and linkage to town • Care of historic assets • Beneficial links to town and encouragement of business benefit	DCC Community Economic Development / Public Rights of Way Team, Voluntary sector, Town Council	

Appendix 1: Statistical Profile of Shildon (2013)

Lower Super Output Area	Population	% of households with no adult in employment	% of residents with bad health	% of residents with very bad health	% of households in social rented sector	% of residents with no qualifications	% of residents with level 4+ qualifications	% of workforce economically inactive	% of workforce long-term sick or disabled	% of workforce that has never worked	% of workforce long-term unemployed	% of residents employed in manufacturing	% of residents employed in construction	% of residents employed in wholesale and retail trade	% of residents employed in human health and social work	% of residents employed in education
Shildon West	1,548	37.0	4.3	1.2	9.6	26.8	14.1	27.3	4.9	1.5	1.7	20.2	9.8	16.5	14.8	7.2
New Shildon	2,105	43.5	8.6	2.9	21.4	34.8	14.7	34.9	9.8	1.0	2.2	18.0	8.5	18.0	14.2	9.8
Eldon	1,730	42.4	6.7	2.1	10.3	32.1	11.9	33.9	7.4	1.2	2.8	19.2	11.6	18.2	12.0	7.1
Sunnydale	1,637	51.6	9.8	2.1	32.9	39.1	10.9	42.9	10.2	1.7	2.1	19.7	6.3	16.9	21.4	4.8
Thickley	1,580	46.7	7.7	2.1	31.3	37.6	10.4	41.7	9.3	1.3	3.5	21.1	8.4	15.9	14.2	7.4
Shildon East	1,763	50.7	8.9	2.5	49.2	41.3	7.7	40.9	11.0	1.5	5.3	23.7	6.6	18.9	12.3	4.8
Total	10,363															
County Durham	383,796	39.0	6.3	1.8	20.1	27.5	21.5	35.6	6.5	0.8	1.8	13.2	8.3	14.6	14.0	10.5
North East	1,924,206	39.0	5.8	1.7	23.0	26.5	22.2	33.9	5.8	1.0	2.1	10.2	7.9	15.4	14.8	9.7
England	38,881,374	33.3	4.2	1.2	17.7	22.5	27.4	30.1	4.0	0.7	1.7	8.8	7.7	15.9	12.4	9.9

Appendix 2: SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised as a main town centre in local policy • Locomotion National Railway Museum (increased visitor investment) • Local railway line and station • Good public transport and highway links • A strong identity reinforced in public realm • Robust urban structure in most areas • Ample free car parking • A number of local industrial/business parks supply local employment • Accessible town centre • Good quality local leisure facilities (Shildon Stadium, Football and Cricket Clubs) • Hackworth Park is a good quality public open space • Schools are improving • Active Town Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and employment growth • Improve links between Locomotion and the town centre - capture further passing trade from Locomotion and possibly establish additional attraction in the town centre • Assist more local small business start ups within town centre • Revamp the shop frontages • Investigate the potential to redevelop some of the more rundown buildings • Investigate the opportunity to inject some activity onto the square • Improve cycle and pedestrian connectivity in the Bishop Auckland to Darlington corridor • Employment opportunities stemming from high added value manufacturing growth in the North East (Hitachi at Newton Aycliffe) • Establish a business forum to mobilise and coordinate the offer of the town centre traders
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment community is less economically active/affluent than some other towns • Low spend • Poor links between Locomotion and the town centre • Few large employers • Underrepresentation from comparison and convenience sector • Proximity to competing, higher order centre including Newton Aycliffe and Bishop Auckland • Over provision of fast food takeaways • Tired, outdated feel to some shops and services • Town square is underused, initial signs of wear and tear • No bank in the town • No active business forum • Poorly managed private rented accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing economic recession • Further growth of competing centres such as Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe • Leakage to higher order centres • Long term degradation of town square and public realm • Proportion of vacant units appears to be increasing • Low levels of commercial interest • Growing number of A5 units (takeaways)