

# towns & Villages

## County Durham Housing Strategy: Targeted Delivery Plan Coundon Grange

March 2021

Durham  
County Council



# Targeted Delivery Plan: Coundon Grange

## Context

The County Durham Housing Strategy sets out that the Council will seek to improve the quality of the existing housing stock and the wider residential environment. The Strategy notes that the Council will develop localised and Targeted Delivery Plans (TDP) to outline activities to support the creation and maintenance of mixed and balanced communities.

This TDP has been developed by Durham County Council with input from Believe Housing, the Registered Housing Provider who own stock in the wider area.

## Location

Coundon Grange is an area to the east of Bishop Auckland, South Durham. This TDP relates to Coundon Grange as defined on the map on page 8. This boundary is based on the Lower Super Output Area, however in practice, actions will not be limited at the boundary if there is a rationale to extend interventions to adjacent sites and nearby streets.

## What are we trying to achieve in Coundon Grange?

Coundon Grange experiences a relatively high proportion of long term empty homes, which will impact upon the character and perception of the area and perpetuate low demand for homes. There is an opportunity through the TDPs to focus on addressing the empty homes to reduce the proportion of empty properties in locality. This work will be coordinated alongside general improvements to the built fabric of the area, including addressing graffiti and fly tipping. The intention is that combined with a reduction in empty homes, this will bring about a perceptible change in Coundon Grange, increasing confidence in the housing market and improving the living environment for existing and future residents.

Coundon Grange is associated with higher than average levels of unemployment and lower than average incomes. This will impact on residents in a number of ways, but in a housing context, this has resulted in higher than average levels of fuel poverty, with people being unable to heat their homes.

Through the TDP, the Council and its partners will tailor energy efficiency measures to properties in the area ensure residents have warm homes. This will be coordinated alongside a number of measures to address poverty and support tenancy sustainment. This will be of benefit to the health and wellbeing of residents.

## What will be the outcome for Coundon Grange?

The targeted intervention through the TDP will have a positive impact on the housing market and the wider sense of place for Coundon Grange. By reducing the proportion of long term empty homes and improving the housing environment the TDP will stem issues associated with low demand. This will be apparent in the street scene and will result in an improved living environment for residents.

Focused interventions with the intention of addressing poverty, will have a direct benefit for the residents of the area improving financial and health wellbeing.

## Past and ongoing interventions

The Council and its partners have undertaken a series of interventions in this area this includes:

### Past interventions

- Community Action Team intervention in 2019 to address fly tipping – ongoing monitoring of sites.
- Discussions with Accent Homes about stock in St Mark's Court.
- Ongoing interventions
- Energy Company Obligation boiler and insulation grants for low income and fuel poor households.
- Warm and Healthy Homes project with GP surgeries to provide warmer homes for patients with a cold related illness.
- Managing Money Better service providing energy bill saving and fuel debt advice and support.
- Warm Homes Fund providing grants for first time central heating measures.
- Green Homes Grant Fund targeting fuel poor homes for insulation retrofit and renewable heating installations.

## Evidence base

The Council has developed an evidence base to identify which communities would benefit from intervention to maintain and improve the existing housing stock and the wider housing environment and to inform the actions in those areas.

In addition, the Housing Strategy notes that the Council will ensure that housing is provided specifically to meet the needs of the older people within our communities. It is recognised that the population of

County Durham is already ageing and over the next few decades, there will be a 'demographic shift' with the number (and proportion) of older people increasing. This TDP therefore contains an action to identify opportunities to deliver accommodation for older people.

# Targeted Delivery Plan: Coundon Grange

## Evidence and monitoring

Coundon Grange is in the top 10% of deprived areas in County Durham. The data shows that there are issues in this Lower Super Output Area regarding long term empty homes, fuel poverty, income, employment and crime which are all in the worst performing 10% of LSOA areas in the County. It is recognised that there are interrelationships between these issues.

The percentage of long-term empty homes is 8.5%, compared with the County average of 1.7% (2018). This indicates lower demand for houses in this area. Furthermore, long term empty homes can blight areas which can compound any demand issues in an area. Areas with high proportions of empty homes can suffer from issues relating to environmental health and anti-social behaviour which have a negative impact on an area and the community.

Crime in Coundon Grange is ranked 11th out of 324 LSOAs. Crime is a serious issue in itself, but it can also trigger other issues such as driving demand in this area down, which can exacerbate issues such as empty homes.

Employment is ranked in the worst performing 10% of the County. There is a likely relationship between data on relatively low levels of employment, low average income and a higher percentage of income deprivation affecting children. Fuel poverty is high in Coundon Grange and the data suggests that it is related to low income rather than factors relating to the housing stock and the proportion of homes with solid walls. If households must spend a higher proportion of a fixed or low income on heating their homes or cannot keep their homes warm, this can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing, particularly in the winter months.

Addressing these multiple issues can therefore have positive knock on affects as well as addressing specific issue themselves.

| Issue  | Context   | Coundon Grange   |
|--|---|--|
| Long-term empty homes                          | Long term empty homes are those which have been empty for 6 months or more. The county average is 1.7% of stock as Long term empties (2018).  | 8.5% of stock are long term empties (2018).  |
| Fuel Poverty                                   | Fuel poverty is measured using Low Income High Cost calculations. 14% of households across county Durham are in fuel poverty.   | 18.7% of households are in fuel poverty.   |
| Income deprivation IMD 2019                    | The Income Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income.  | Within County Durham Coundon Grange is ranked 14th out of 324 LSOA's with 1 being the most deprived.                               |
| Income deprivation affecting children IMD 2019 | The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.  | Within County Durham Coundon Grange is ranked 3rd out of 324 LSOA's with 1 being the most deprived.                                |
| Crime IMD 2019                                 | The crime domain includes recorded crimes around violence, burglary theft and criminal damage.  | Within County Durham Coundon Grange is ranked 11th out of 324 LSOA's with 1 being the most deprived.                               |
| Demographics and housing stock profile         | In County Durham, 20.6% of the population is aged 65 and over. County Durham has a relatively low proportion of bungalows (13.7%) compared to other housing stock. This highest proportion of housing stock in terraced at 36.9%. (MHCLG 2017). | Within Coundon Grange 13.1% of the population are aged 65 and over. 10% of the housing stock are bungalows and 63.3% are terraced. |

# Targeted Delivery Plan: Coundon Grange

## Action Plan

The TDP action plans bring together actions from across the Council's range of functions and that of partners to address the issues identified in the evidence base. In TDPs, the actions are identified as having the following timescales:

- Mainstream activity / core offer: These are Council or partner activities that are undertaken routinely, but opportunities will be sought to focus these within the TDP area to bring an intensive approach to addressing issues.
- Short term: New actions which will be undertaken within 2 years. Some of these actions will be delivered in a substantially shorter timeframe, depending on their nature.
- Medium term: New actions to be undertaken within 5 years
- Longer term: New actions to be undertaken over a period longer than 5 years, in recognition of the scale of the intervention.

The Action Plan notes the status of individual actions, to note some of these will be undertaken as ongoing actions, others will be associated with existing funding streams, however, others will require funding. The Council and its partners will make use of the TDPs to support applications for funding.

## Support and maintain mixed and balanced communities across County Durham

| Ref | What  | Lead (and Partners)  | Timescale / Notes   |
|-----|---|--|---|
| A1  | Selective Licencing Area Designation multiple criteria.   | DCC Selective Licencing team.                                    | Mainstream activity.  |
| A2  | Monitor, update and develop evidence at a localised level to understand stock condition, demand and supply and associated issues. Consider options for targeted demolition.   | DCC Empty Homes team.  | Mainstream activity.  |
| A3  | Work with Registered Providers to encourage use of their 'buy back' option to bring former right to buy stock back into the market as affordable housing and to assist in supporting and maintaining mixed and balanced communities, where appropriate. | DCC Housing Regeneration team, Believe                           | Evidence to be gathered and options to be developed.          |
| A4  | Work with DCC Community Action Team to programme regular targeted interventions to address environmental issues.  | DCC Environmental Health team.                                   | Mainstream activity.  |
| A5  | Continuous liaison with private landlords.  | DCC Private Landlords team.                                      | Mainstream activity.  |
| A6  | In line with Cabinet's September 2020 decision to agree to begin a Council house building programme of up to 500 homes over the period 2021-26 opportunities will be explored for homes across the county, including this TDP area.                     | DCC Housing Development.   | Mainstream activity.  |
| A7  | Work to deliver potential housing site at Former Terraces at Eldon Lane area (SHLAA 3/DV/21).   | DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management. | Long term. Project to progress in line with Cabinet approval. |

# Targeted Delivery Plan: **Coundon Grange**

## Support and maintain mixed and balanced communities across County Durham (continued)

| Ref | What  | Lead (and Partners)  | Timescale / Notes  |
|-----|---|--|--|
| A8  | Work to deliver potential housing site at Former Terraces at land east of St Phillips Close (SHLAA DV/04).  | DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management. | Medium/Long term. Site deemed suitable but not currently achievable. |
| A9  | Work to deliver potential housing site at the South Church, Dene Valley School Site (SHLAA 3 DV/21).  | DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management. | Medium/Long term. Planning permission for a care home.               |
| A10 | Delivery of housing site allocated at East Bracks Road for up to 50 homes. Allocated site (H29) under Policy 4 of the County Durham Plan.                       | DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management. | Medium/Long term. Site deemed deliverable in next 5 years.           |
| A11 | Outline planning permission in place for Auckland Park (500 homes).   | DCC Housing Development, Spatial Policy, Development Management. | Medium/Long term. Site deemed deliverable in the next 5 years.       |
| A12 | Localised graffiti removal in areas such as St Mark's Court and removal of fly tipping in areas such as Arthur Street.  | Scoped and coordinated by Community Economic Development.        | Short term. Issues identified following Autumn 2020 initial scoping. |
| A13 | Scoping targeted business improvements to support shop front improvements, benefiting the wider street scene along areas such as Eldon Lane and Spencer Street. | Scoped and coordinated by Community Economic Development.        | Medium term. Identified following Autumn 2020 initial scoping.       |
| A14 | Promote County Durham Lettings Agency and leasehold scheme.   | DCC County Durham Lettings Agency Team.                          | Mainstream activity.   |
| A15 | Address legacy issues associated with remaining infrastructure on former clearance sites.   | DDCC Housing Regeneration team.                                  | Long term.   |
| A16 | Facilitating new housing development including the opportunity for the delivery of homes to meet the needs of older people.                                     | DCC Planning and Housing Development and Regeneration team.      | Mainstream activity.   |



# Targeted Delivery Plan: Coundon Grange

## Meeting the needs of our residents

| Ref | What   | Lead (and Partners)                  | Timescale / Notes                                    |
|-----|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| B1  | Stock Condition Survey of St Phillip's Park Traveller Site underway. | DCC Regeneration and Local Services. | Long term. DCC to respond to outputs of this survey. |

## Improve energy efficiency of properties to ensure County Durham has a stock of warm, healthy and energy efficient homes

| Ref | What  | Lead (and Partners)            | Timescale / Notes    |
|-----|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| C1  | Ensure integration between various advice schemes and programmes.   | DCC Housing Regeneration team. | Mainstream activity. |
| C2  | Raise awareness for warm homes campaign using area based promoting.   | DCC Housing Regeneration team. | Mainstream activity. |
| C3  | Solid wall stone and brick terraces predominate opportunity for BEIS GHG/LAD funding.   | DCC Housing Regeneration team. | Short term.          |
| C4  | Energy Performance Certificate survey to be undertaken for all solid wall streets. This will further develop evidence base inform future funding opportunities. | DCC Housing Regeneration team. | Short term.          |

## Addressing poverty in a housing context and the impacts of welfare reform in a housing context

| Ref | What   | Lead (and Partners)  | Timescale / Notes    |
|-----|--|--|----------------------|
| D1  | Work with landlords to enable greater understanding of the impact of poverty.      | DCC Housing Regeneration team, Head of Transformation and Partnerships and Children's Services | Mainstream activity. |
| D2  | Poverty Action Group and WRT financial support for tenants to sustain their homes. | DCC Housing Solutions.   | Mainstream activity. |

## Address empty homes to support communities

| Ref | What   | Lead (and Partners)   | Timescale / Notes    |
|-----|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| E1  | Working with property owners to help them sell or rent properties (via Durham Key Options).                        | DCC Empty Homes team. | Mainstream activity. |
| E2  | Financial assistance loans and grants to potential purchasers and empty home owners of long term empty properties. | DCC Empty Homes team. | Mainstream activity. |

# Targeted Delivery Plan: **Coundon Grange**

## Provide care and support for older and vulnerable people

| Ref | What   | Lead (and Partners)   | Timescale / Notes    |
|-----|--|---|----------------------|
| F1  | Consider requirement for support packages to meet needs in County Durham.  | DCC Head of Development and Housing, DCC Head of Commissioning, Registered Housing providers. | Short/medium term.   |
| F2  | Continue to widen wrap around support to support vulnerable people to achieve and sustain tenancies.   | DCC Head of Development and Housing, DCC Head of Commissioning, Registered Housing providers. | Short/medium term.   |
| F3  | Encourage uptake of Disabled Facilities Grants in order to enable individuals to remain in their home.   | DCC Housing Solutions.  | Mainstream activity. |
| F4  | Work with those residents whose homes are unable to be adapted via Disabled Facilities Grants to consider how to improve their homes or work towards energy efficiency measures. | DCC Housing Solutions.  | Mainstream activity. |
| F5  | Work to join up approaches to support families including through children's services, health and substance misuse.   | DCC Housing Solutions.  | Mainstream activity. |

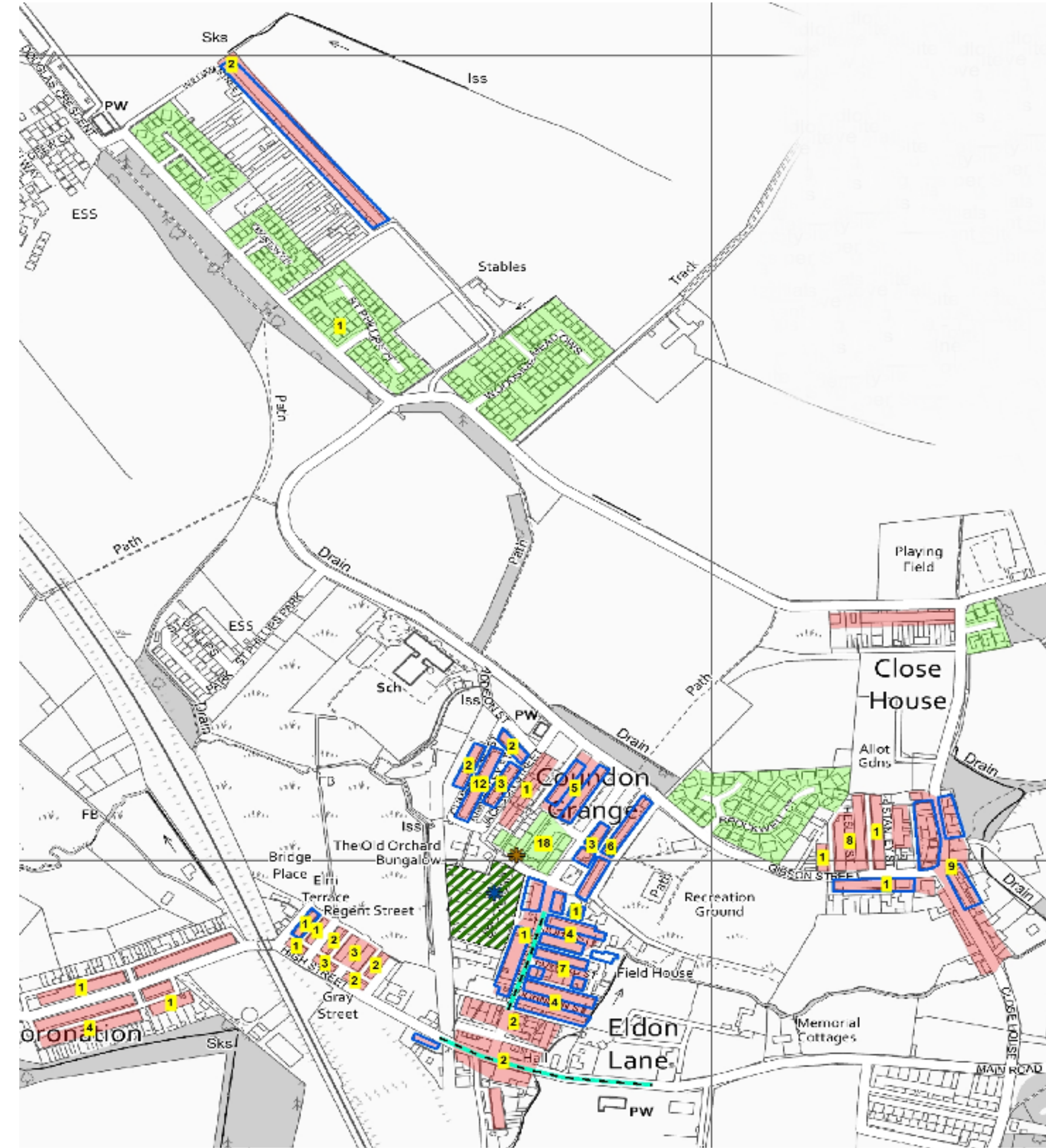
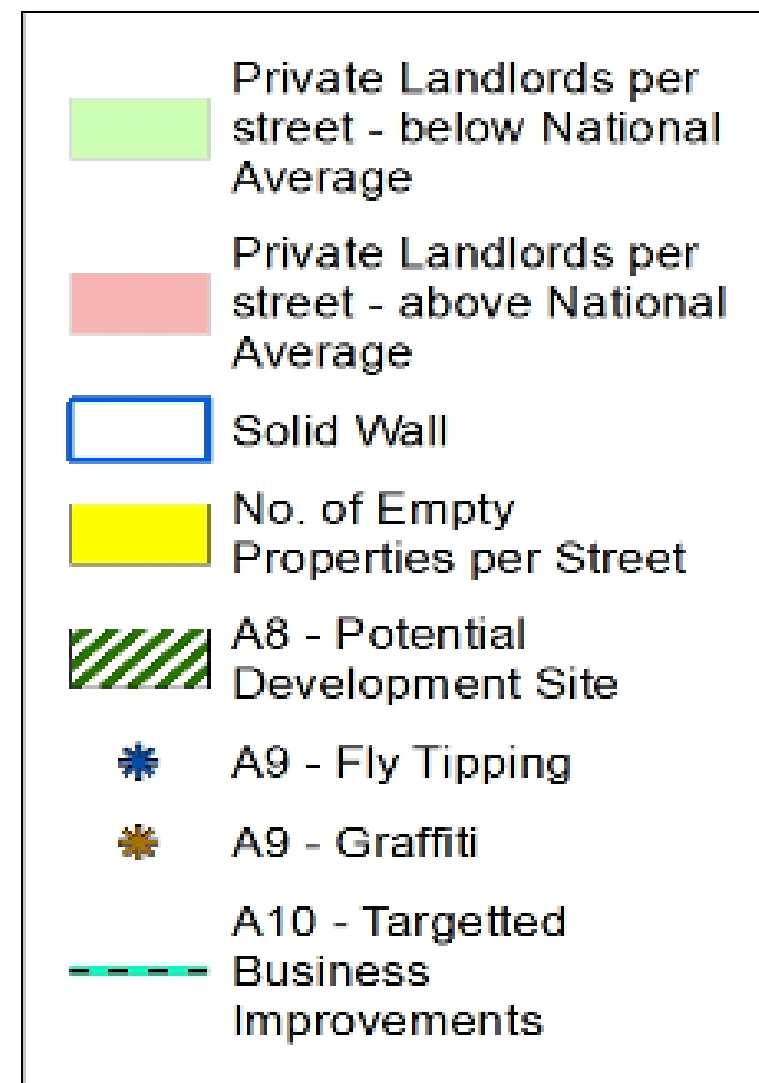


# Targeted Delivery Plan: Coundon Grange map of evidence and interventions

## Context

This map confirms the boundary of the Coundon Grange Lower Super Output Area. The map complements the action plan and provides an overview of evidence and issues to be addressed in the area, as well as highlighting future opportunities.

This map is based on the built up area of the Coundon Grange Lower Super Output Area, however in practice, actions will not be limited at the boundary if there is a rationale to extend interventions to adjacent sites and nearby streets.







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