

Sniperley Park

Sustainable Development Masterplan Vision Document

November 2021

LD&DESIGN

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This document has been prepared and checked
in accordance with ISO 9001:2015

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1.0 Introduction

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Purpose of Sniperley Park Sustainable Development Masterplan

The masterplan has been developed by the Council, including discussions with site promoter and landowners, to create shared vision for the site which will guide the future planning, design and development of the site as it moves towards and beyond delivery.

This masterplan outlines our understanding of the existing site and its context, outlines our vision for the development of the site and defines a clear framework for its delivery. Ultimately, the report aims to set out Durham County Council's expectations for the site, against which future Planning Applications will be assessed.

Durham County Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. As part of that declaration we are working towards a Carbon Neutral County Durham as soon as possible. The vision that we are aspiring to is that all the energy that we use will be generated from renewable sources, including the way we heat our homes, both new and old. All of our transport will be ultra-low carbon, and everyone will have access to safe and reliable public transport. Our natural environment will be thriving and beautiful and it will easily offset any remaining carbon emissions. Our strong local economy will supply locally grown food and many of the other goods that we need, creating local jobs. There will be almost zero waste in a circular economy and our residents and businesses will be protected from extreme weather events.

This is in line with the need to significantly reduce emissions in this decade and to ensure that new development does not increase the burden of emissions reductions by constructing homes that have low embodied emissions and are heated and powered by renewable sources.

The Sniperley development provides an opportunity to show what can be achieved through good sustainable planning, by ensuring there is no connection to the gas network, instead heating homes through passivhaus principles, individual Air/Ground Source Heat pumps or district heating; sustainable construction methods; embedding excellent transport links throughout; and ensuring biodiversity is maximised.

Sniperley Park will also provide opportunities to live well and nurture physical and mental wellbeing including through extensive and high-quality new parkland both within the site and on the remaining Green Belt for new and existing residents. The site will also be supported by the infrastructure it needs to be a thriving community, including a new local centre, a new primary

school, community building and significant highway improvements.

The production of a comprehensive masterplan is intended to enable a 'joined-up' approach across multiple land holdings to bring forward proposals that have a coherent approach to placemaking, access, movement, green infrastructure and drainage.

The principles set out in this document are there to ensure that new development meets national and local planning policy objectives for sustainable development, good design and placemaking as well as meeting regional and local housing needs.

The final part of this document sets out anticipated next steps; with high level phasing suggested together with an outline of the planning approach. It is important to note that the Masterplan has been prepared using the evidence base prepared for the County Durham Plan, which by the nature of that process is high level. However, much more detailed assessments relating to transport, ecology, noise, visual impact etc. will have to be submitted by the applicant as part of the planning application process. These will be consulted on as part of process of determining the planning application. Nevertheless, the vision and principles set out within this document should be treated as the starting point for forthcoming masterplanning work which may form an outline application for the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the County Durham Plan, which give further background and detailed analysis of the site and its context.

Sustainable Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that the purpose of the planning system and resultant development is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the delivery of good design. The Local Plan (5.281 -282) sets out to raise design standards based upon a thorough understanding of the site and its wider context.

The site has been subject to an Examination in Public as part of the Local Plan and the Inspector concluded that exceptional circumstances existed for the removal of the site from the Greenbelt, thus highlighting its sensitivity in its location on the edge of the city. Local Plan Policy 5 sets out the policy requirements for Sniperley Park itself.

In summary, the policy establishes that the masterplan must include the following key components:

- Deliver land for 1700 homes (which meet the requirements for affordable and older persons housing);
- Provide a centrally located local centre which will act as the focus for community activity;
- Identify a suitable site for a readily accessible primary school and the replacement (or retention) of playing fields;
- Provide structural landscaping and sustainable urban drainage;
- Have appropriate regard for Sniperley Hall and Farm and retention of the woodlands;
- Give special regard to the significance of any visual associations with the World Heritage Site;
- Provide approximately 25ha linear park within the site;
- Provide compensatory Green Belt improvements;
- Grasp opportunities for a district heating system; and,
- Ensure strong connections beyond the A167 via suitable, convenient, safe and attractive cycleways and footpaths

Consultation

How Do I Get Involved?
Consultation on the draft Masterplan begins on 29th November 2021 and 14th January 2022. All comments should be submitted to us by 4.30pm, 14th January 2022. Comments can be submitted on our consultation portal: <https://consultdurhamcc.objective.co.uk/kse> or sent via email to spatialpolicy@durham.gov.uk or by post to the Spatial Policy Team using our freepost address, which is Freepost Spatial Policy. No further information is required for the address.

On request a Microsoft Word response form is also available. You can also telephone the Spatial Policy Team with any questions, to request hard copies of the documentation or to request further information on tel: 03000 261906/261907.

A summary of all representations on the will be published in a Statement of Consultation, but apart from the name of the sender and company/organisation (if relevant) no other personal information will be publicly available. The Council will share details in line with the Spatial Policy Privacy Notice and when required to do so by law and/or statutory regulations in producing the development plan and planning policy documents. Any information and personal data will be retained securely and in line with Durham County Council's retention guidelines.

Following this consultation, officers will review and consider all of the comments made and changes made where possible. We will give reasons where it has not been possible to make a change. The revised Masterplan will then be published as soon as practicable.

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2.0 Sniperley Today

Strategic Context

Sniperley Park is located to the north-west of Durham City; to the west of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me. The site is situated between the A167, which runs north out of the city towards Chester-le-Street, and the A691, which runs north-west out of the city towards Lanchester and Consett. Running between these two A-roads, the B6532 dissects the site and connects Durham to the village of Sacriston to the north.

The site benefits from close proximity to Durham Railway Station, accessible either by foot, bicycle or bus and providing frequent connections regionally to Newcastle (12 min.), Darlington (15 min.), York (47 min.) and, further afield, to London (3 hrs).

The Site

The site can be broadly sub-divided into three areas; the western area around Sniperley Hall, the central Sacriston Road corridor and, finally, the north eastern part of the site around Cater House Pit.

The western part of the site is defined by a mature woodland belt, creating a largely self-contained area of parkland punctuated by the historic buildings of Sniperley Hall and Sniperley Farm. The site falls to the west towards the A691. The more modern structures of Lanchester Royal Hospital, to the north, and the Durham Community Fire Station and Park & Ride, to the south, surround the area.

The central swathe of the site, flanking the B6532, consists of open terrace farmland with clear vistas towards Sacriston to the north and includes the existing sports pitches adjacent to the A167.

The north eastern part of the site is strongly shaped by the Folly Gill catchment and Cater House Pit - with associated steep topography and existing woodland. In the northernmost point of the site is the Potterhouse Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre, accessed from the Pity Me roundabout or from Potterhouse Lane itself.

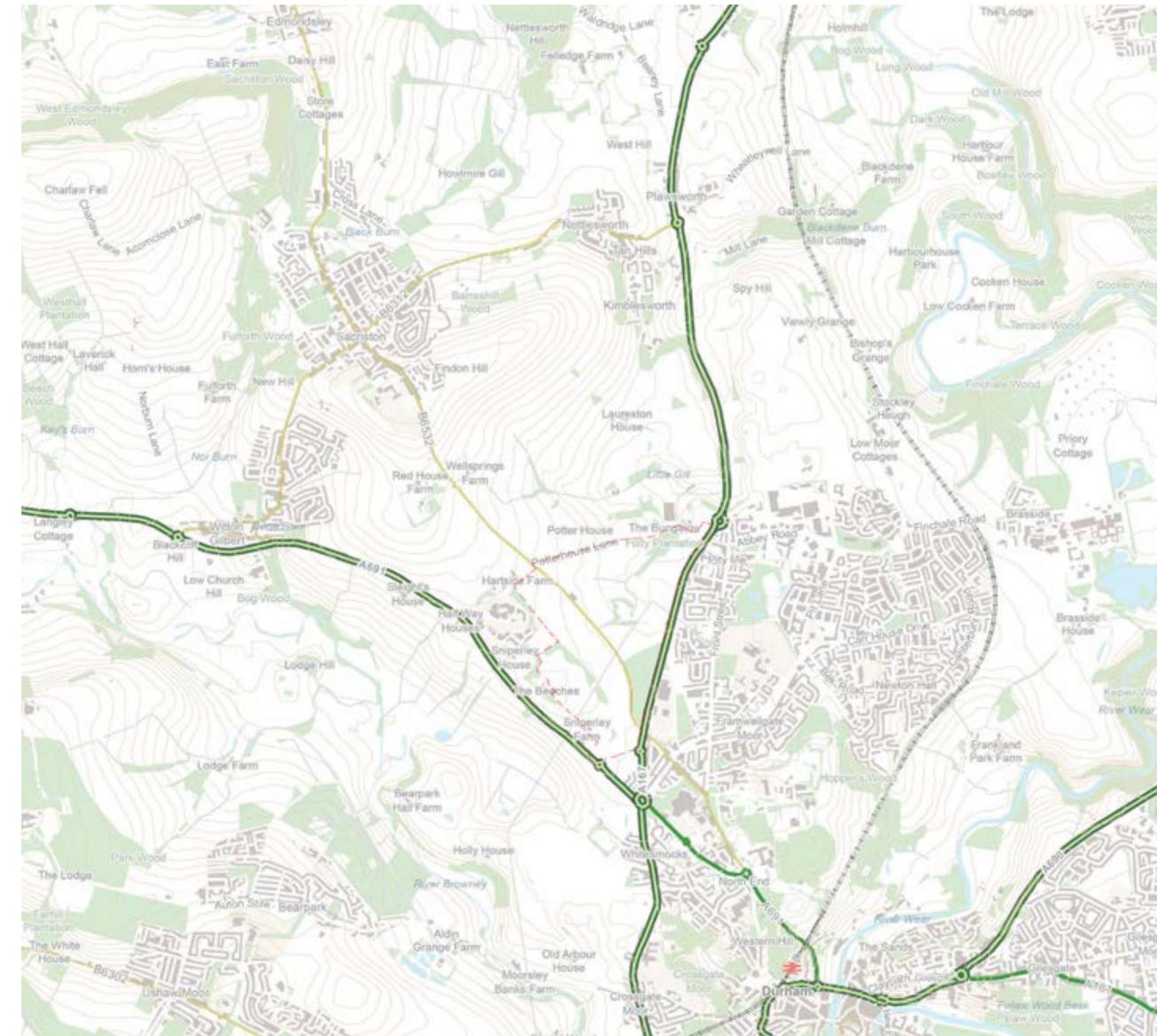
The suburban communities of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me sit adjacent to the site to the south east, providing a number of local amenities within a short walk of the site including New College Durham (post 16), schools and local centres. A limited number of small detached properties and farms are located to the north of the site between the site boundary and the village of Sacriston.

Connections to City Centre

Whilst on the edge of Durham, the site is well connected to the city centre. From the centre of the site it is 2.5 miles to the city centre - around a 40 minute walk or a 15 minute cycle on well signed, good quality cycle paths. A bus from the Park & Ride site or local bus stops takes around 20-25 minutes into the city centre.



Sniperley Park Site Boundary



Strategic Context

Townscape

The local 'villages' of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me are closely related to the growth of coal mining in the area. Framwellgate Moor owes its existence to Framwellgate Colliery (the Old Pit). It's biggest development occurred in the C19th and early C20th with the growth of the coal mining industry. Caterhouse (also called New Pit) was Framwellgates partner pit and was opened in 1894. The pits were connected both underground, and over ground by the wagon way.

The defining feature of both Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me are the strong frontages onto Front Street - the majority of which remain as 2-storey brick terraces. Along this street are intermittent modern parades of shops and individual businesses intermingled with residential properties.

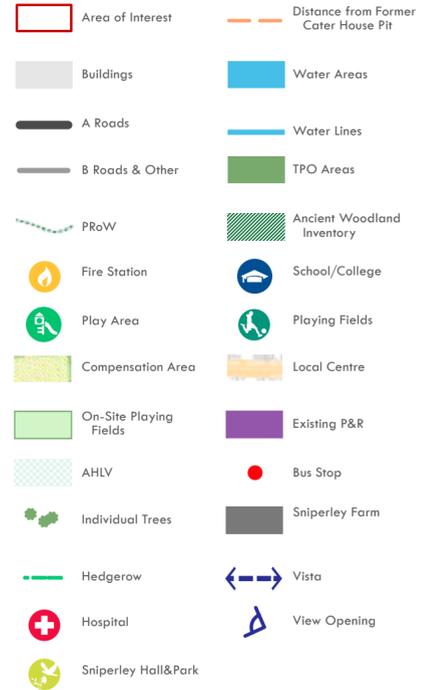
Sacriston, approximately 1 mile north of the site, was also historically closely connected with coal mining. The village is structured around the crossroads of Front Street (B6532) and Witton Road/Plawsworth Road (B6312) both of which have a strong frontage of terraced buildings. To the north of the B6312 further terraced streets are set out in a gridded layout. More recent development has extend Sacriston further north and south and includes a wider mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings.

Similarly other local settlements, for example Bearpark and Brancepeth, have developed over time, originally a small terrace of houses fronting onto the main street, and over time expanding to include a wider range of house types.

There are a number of key external views into and out of the site, as well as external views. Whilst the site is relatively concealed there are key strategic views into the site from the B6532 to the north. Likewise, views out of the site are to the north with glimpses of the Penshaw Monument to the north east. Internal views are limited to local internal views framed by mature tree belts, hedgerows and field boundaries. Views to existing structures of Sniperley Hall and Sniperley Farm, to the west, are limited from within the site but are part of the visual character to the west. Views to the east and south are dominated by highways infrastructure and the current connections (B6532 and underpass) are somewhat unwelcoming pedestrian/cycle connections.



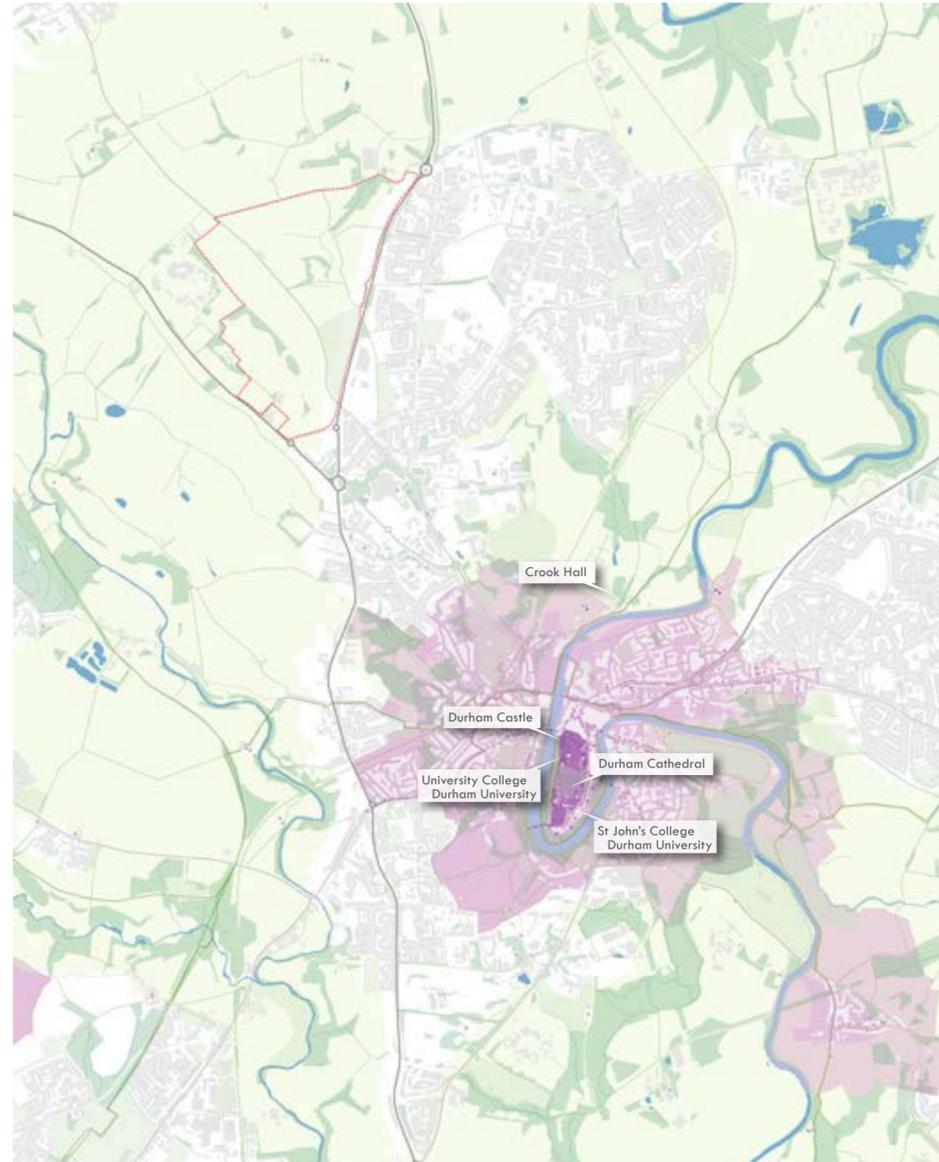
Surrounding Townscape Setting



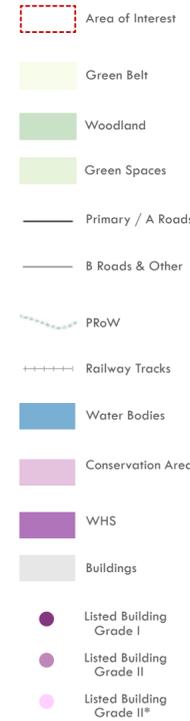
Heritage Context

Sniperley sits to the north of Durham's historic centre and the designated world heritage site. The centre of Durham also contains a number of listed buildings and conservation areas and, whilst all of these sites are not within close vicinity, they provide significant historic value and townscape context.

In the context of Sniperley, the historic value of the landscape, particularly Cater House Pit, and Sniperley Hall to the west deliver a distinctive character for the area. In addition Sniperley Farm and the surrounding Pit Villages to the north offer historic towns



Heritage Context



Historic Growth

The adjacent plan outlines the historic growth of Durham city and the surrounding area. It shows how the city grew around the river and Castle before expanding towards the northern Pit Villages, growing out of the river valley. The natural form of the River Wear has created green separation within the city, forming wedges to the north east and south in particular.

Growth through the 20th Century expanded the city to the borders of Sniperley Park with the A167 creating an edge to the city. Expansion of the city in Sniperley Park provides a logical evolution, if done sensitively to create a distinctive urban edge to the city.



Site Constraints and Considerations

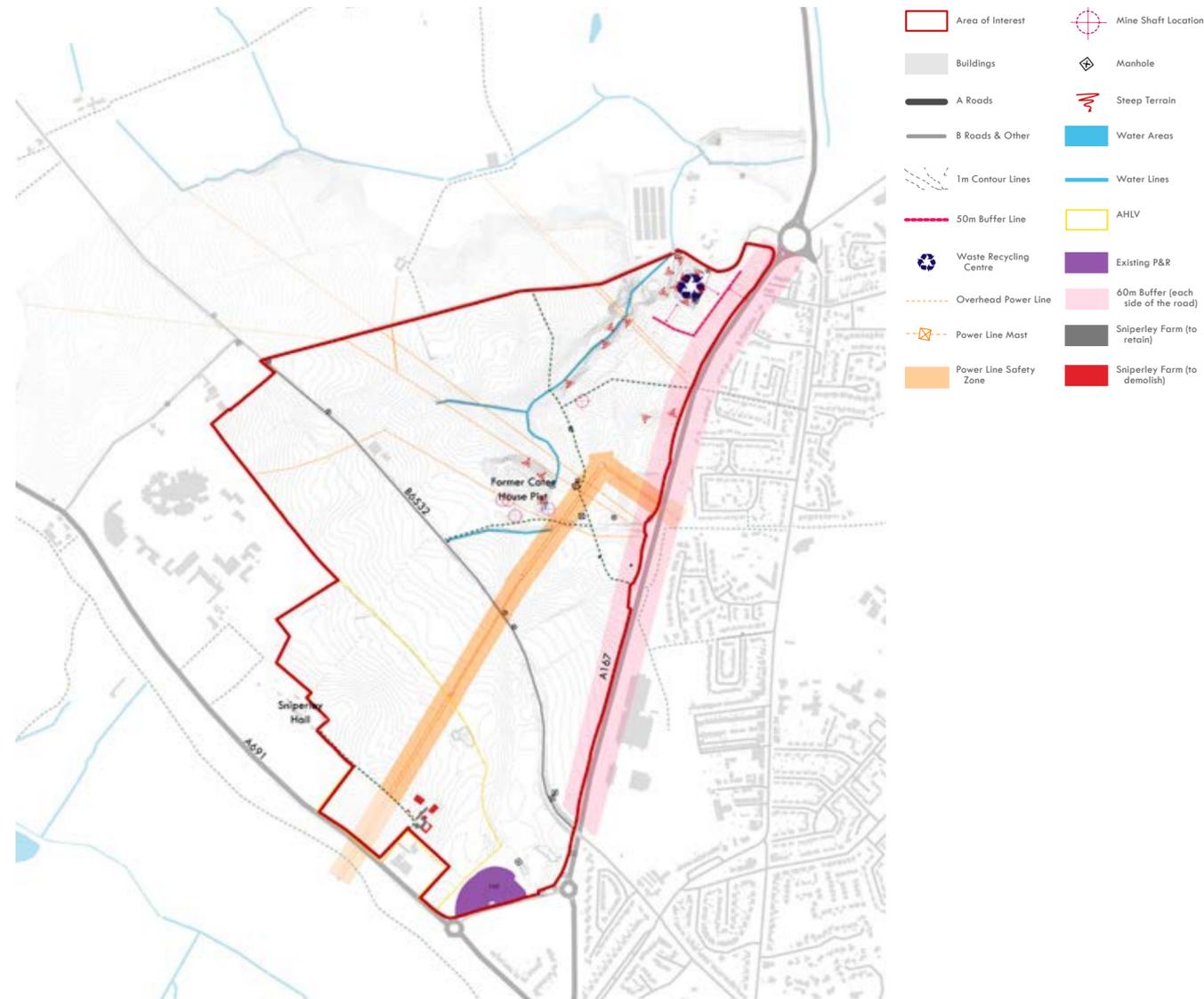
The townscape review sets out the transition from the parkland around Sniperley Hall, through the central farmland and onto the areas around Cater House Pit and the Folly Gill catchment. The site is also defined by a number of natural and man made factors which create constraints or challenges to development.

The key technical constraints and considerations to development are:

- Existing pylons & overhead powerlines
- Vehicular noise and air pollution generated along the A167, the A691 and, to a lesser extent, the B6352
- Proximity to Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) on Potterhouse Lane, including the potential for a buffer to any residential development (c50m) and its required expansion
- Sensitive response to nearby heritage including to Sniperley Hall and Sniperley Farm
- Existing mine shafts
- Existing woodland, landscape features (inc. Cater House Pit local nature area) and steep topography to north east of site
- Retention of existing Park & Ride site and requirement for expansion of this facility
- Retention of the B6532 running through the centre of the site to facilitate north-south connection between Sacriston and Durham city centre
- Congestion on Potterhouse Lane related to operation of civic amenity site
- Sports pitches occupying large area of site

Many of these factors can be considered enabling constraints which, if treated sensitively and considered creatively through the masterplan process, could become distinctive assets to the site. For example, the centrally located constraints and topography can become a distinctive and accessible landscape feature for the central linear park for the site.

Further opportunities and constraints relating to landscape and green infrastructure are set out in the next section.



Existing Site Constraints



Ecology, Landscape & Green Infrastructure

The Masterplan contributes to and enhances the natural environment. It seeks to minimise impacts on, and provides net gains for biodiversity while reflecting the special landscape character of the area and ensuring high quality green infrastructure throughout the site. The site benefits from a wide range of landscape features which provide positive aspects to be included as part of the development, though they also bring some constraints or challenges to how the site might be developed.

Valuable landscape: wildlife & heritage assets:

The following landscape features are vital assets for Sniperley Park and should form a key element of the emerging masterplan.

- Folly Gill valley system and woodlands to the north east, including steep topography & watercourse – avoid severance by roads
- Cater House Pit Nature Reserve and wagonway at the centre of the site; steep topography and woodland - respect heritage and wildlife value
- Sniperley Park and Browney Valley Area of High Landscape Value - respect the historic parkland /landscape value
- Hedgerow network, mature trees and woods, historic network of roads and paths - keep intact where possible

It is important to note that whilst this masterplan work has been informed by desktop analysis of ecological issues and opportunities for biodiversity net gain. The masterplan is informed by baseline ecological data comprising of data searches and aerial photography which identifies the key ecological and green infrastructure receptors on the site. These receptors are then protected and enhanced through the development of the LPA masterplan and used as the basis for the schematic layout of the site and the green infrastructure provision.

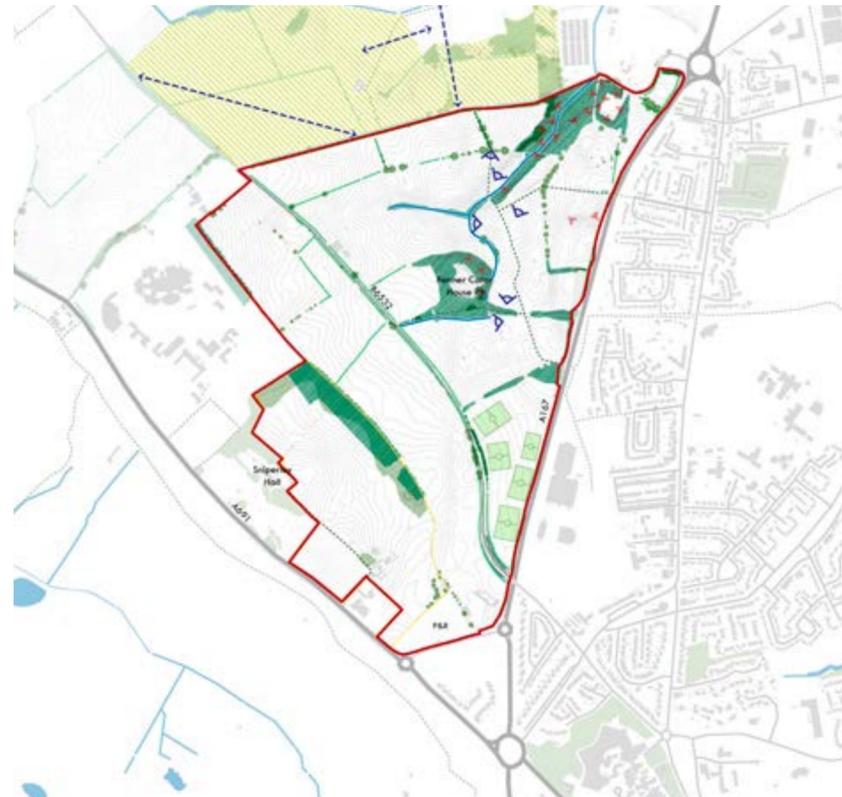
Future planning applications will be informed by more detailed ecological survey work that includes habitat assessments and surveys for protected or priority species to ensure that the ecological value of the site will be protected and enhanced

Visual characteristics

The following visual characteristics create distinctive

features through the site and should be sensitively addressed by the masterplan.

- Views into the site from the wider area to the south and east are limited by vegetation and the landform
- Some elevated longer views over the site from the edge of Sacriston to the north-west and very long distance view to Penshaw Monument to north-east
- Limited visibility between the site and the city centre / World Heritage site
- The site is largely enclosed by woodland / landform
- Greater visibility within central corridor either side of the B6532 (apart from southern end) creating an inward looking land form in this area
- Visibility across land to the north-east of the site is limited by landform, woodland and tree cover



Existing Landscape & Green Infrastructure



Landscape Character

Based on the existing land form and landscape and ecological context we can defined three landscape character areas across the site. The plan adjacent outlines these defined areas.

A - Sniperley Parkland

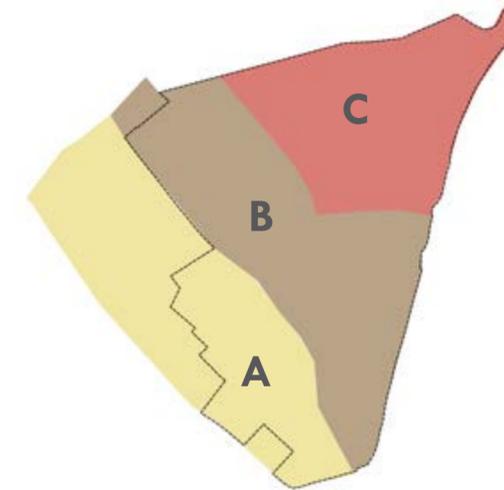
- Estate farmland forming part of the historic parkland setting of Sniperley Hall
- Medium scale arable fields
- Remnant hedgerow structure with occasional trees
- Enclosure provided by substantial belt of planted woodland along north east boundary and gently rising land to ridge along south west edge

B - Open terrace farmland

- Large-scale farmland under arable/ grassland cultivation
- Regular, orthogonal field pattern typical of later enclosures
- Open, expansive character with some remnant hedgerows but limited tree cover
- Flattish or gently undulating topography

C - Folly Gill catchment

- More complex topography forming drainage system of Folly Gill
- Smaller-scale, fragmented and irregular pattern of pasture/arable fields, incised wooded valleys and developing woodland/scrub at former Cater House Pit
- Strong enclosure and intimate character provided by mature hedgerows, woodland and other tree cover



C



A



B



B



Access & Movement

Access into the site and its character is currently dominated by highways, being abutted on all edges by major arterial routes and dissected by a key north-south connection into Durham city centre. There are, however, an extensive network of public rights of way which navigate through the site to the north. The masterplan will maximise the opportunities for sustainable and active travel in order to deliver a sustainable, healthy and active new urban community.

Walking and Cycling

The following public rights of way traverse the site.

- Bridleway 4 / Footpath 4 / Footpath 10 - Connection from underpass beneath A167 from Framwellgate Moor, heading north across the site to Potterhouse Lane and beyond
- Footpath 5 - Connection from the eastern edge of the site from Pity Me, across the A167 at grade and connecting to PROW 4
- Bridleway 6/44 - Connection from this path west, south of Cater House Pit linking to B6532

Whilst the site has good provision of public rights of way to the north it is poorly connected on its edges to surrounding communities, with the only access across the A167 provided by a poorly lit and suffering from localised flooding underpass. The west of the site has no public right of way connecting into or through it. Furthermore, pedestrian crossings on the A691 are very limited.

Public Transport

Sniperley Park & Ride is situated to the south of the site with regular (10 mins) connections into Durham City Centre. Further bus connections are provided off the A691 and the B6532 (jct with Potterhouse Lane) connecting into and out of Durham.

Whilst provision is good for the site there is limited connectivity to existing bus stops, and particularly the P&R, so the masterplan will need to unlock these connections and ensure provision through the site.

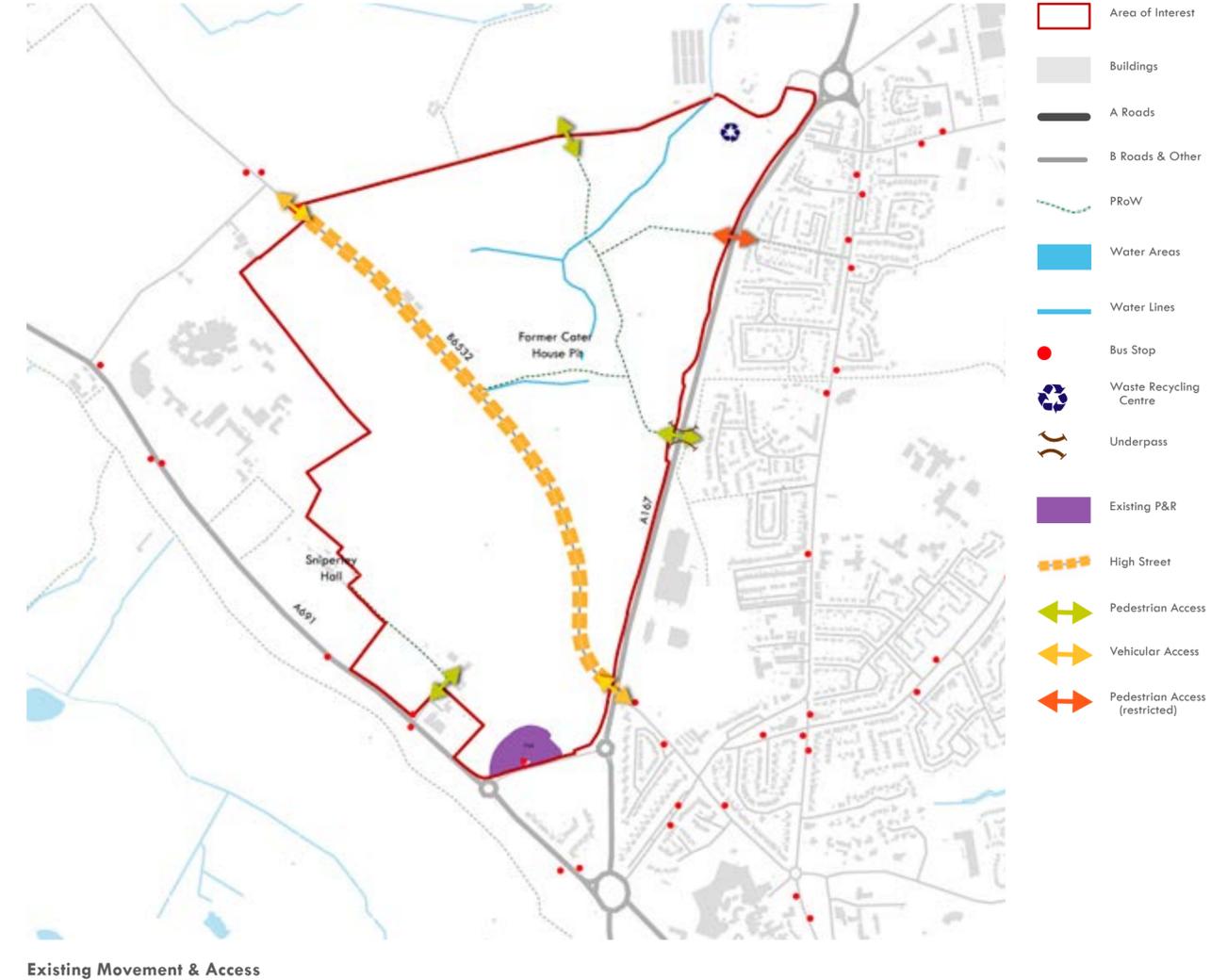
Additionally, there is an existing requirement for a Park&Ride extension that has to be taken into account when safeguarding future access onto the site.

Strategic Road Network

The site is flanked on two edges by A-roads. The A691 (60mph, one footway on eastern side) is set back from site boundary to the west with a private access provided to Sniperley Hall, Lanchester Hospital and the Community Fire Station. The A167 (60mph, shared footway/cyclepath on eastern side) generally sits above the site to the east. The A167, in particular, creates significant noise and air pollution along the edge of the site. The only existing direct access into the site is provided off the Pity Me roundabout to the north, however further access is provided via the B6532, via Trouts Lane and the Blackie Boy Roundabout.

Local Roads

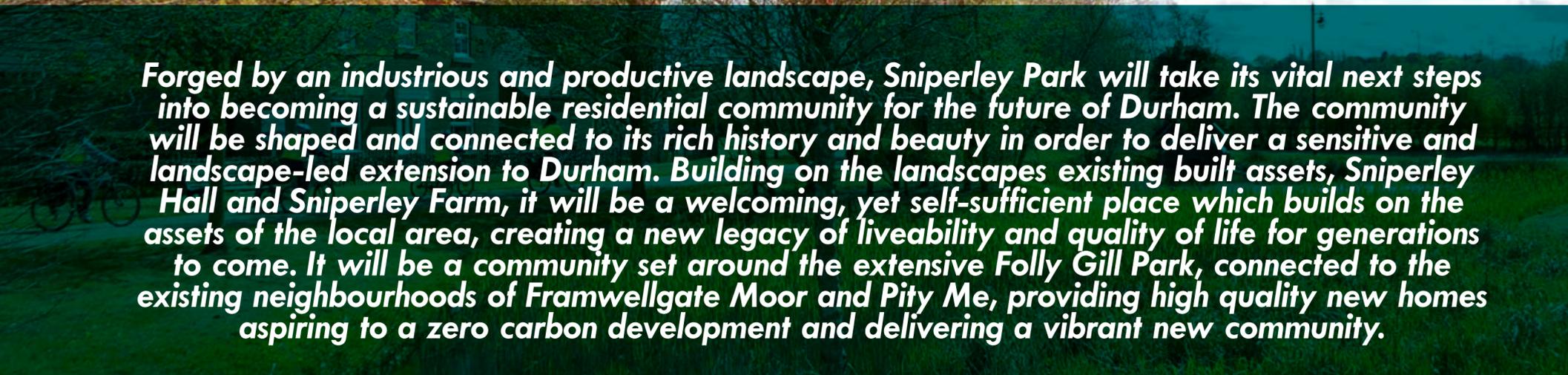
The B6532 (60mph, one footway on eastern side) dissects the site, providing direct connections into Durham City Centre and north to Sacriston. Its intersection with Trouts Lane and Potterhouse Lane creates a staggered junction which links the B6532 with the adjacent A-roads. Both lanes are rural in character and have limited carrying capacity.



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3.0 The Vision



Forged by an industrious and productive landscape, Sniperley Park will take its vital next steps into becoming a sustainable residential community for the future of Durham. The community will be shaped and connected to its rich history and beauty in order to deliver a sensitive and landscape-led extension to Durham. Building on the landscapes existing built assets, Sniperley Hall and Sniperley Farm, it will be a welcoming, yet self-sufficient place which builds on the assets of the local area, creating a new legacy of liveability and quality of life for generations to come. It will be a community set around the extensive Folly Gill Park, connected to the existing neighbourhoods of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me, providing high quality new homes aspiring to a zero carbon development and delivering a vibrant new community.

Durham County Council's vision for Sniperley Park is that of a high quality, zero carbon well designed community that will stand the test of time and leave a legacy which Durham will be proud of.

Folly Gill Park, the linear park, and the compensatory land to the north and south-west will be a fantastic asset for those living in this area and across Durham. It will define a new urban edge to Durham, sensitively transitioning from urban to rural. Sniperley Park will combine the best of city and country living by creating healthy homes and workplaces in a vibrant community set in a beautiful landscape setting.

Sniperley Park will have excellent connections by foot and bicycle to the existing neighbourhoods of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me; connecting to these existing communities to their mutual benefit.

The masterplan for Sniperley Park will be landscape-led; delivering high quality, large scale open spaces and drawing the landscape character from Sniperley Hall, Cater House Pit and the wider Durham landscape.

Objectives & Key Moves

The masterplan set out within this section is framed by the objectives set out in County Durham Plan, Policy 5. This sets out the objectives for Durham City's Sustainable Urban Extensions. A summary of the key aspects of this policy is provided to the right, though the full document should be referred to for specific policy requirements.

These objectives underpin the Key Moves encapsulated in the masterplan.



Creating a Destination Public Park



- * The provision of such an integral public park at the heart of the proposals will be a fantastic amenity for residents and the local community - providing opportunities for healthy lifestyle and recreation.
- * The park provides an opportunity to retain and incorporate important existing landscape features and habitat across the site including woodland, trees and hedges, Folly Gill and Cater House Pit.
- * The park will also be important as a means for crossing through the scheme - it will accommodate the existing Public Rights of Way plus will be a setting within which to provide new pedestrian and cycling routes to create a well connected place.
- * The existing variation in landscape character should strongly influence the proposals for the park.



Making Connections



- * There is a great opportunity to create a community which is well connected; this includes the need for good physical infrastructure to provide direct, safe and attractive routes between Sniperley Park and its adjacent neighbours - the communities of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me, plus to nearby amenities such as the Park & Ride, local schools, hospitals and the compensatory land.
- * It is important in creating a sustainable urban extension that the residents are enabled to walk, cycle or take public transport rather than necessarily being reliant on a private car.



A Centre in the Centre



- * There is a great opportunity to create a community which is well connected; this includes the need for good physical infrastructure to provide direct, safe and attractive routes between Sniperley Park and its adjacent neighbours - the communities of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me, plus to nearby amenities such as the Park & Ride, local schools, hospitals and the Green Belt land.
- * It is important in creating a sustainable urban extension that the residents are enabled to walk, cycle or take public transport rather than necessarily being reliant on a private car.

County Durham Plan: Policy 5 requirements

- Sniperley Park will be a sustainable urban extension incorporating a centrally located local centre
- A new primary school will be provided of a scale which will meet the expected requirement for school places generated by the new housing development
- The design of development in the vicinity of Sniperley Hall and Farm will have regard to their character and setting, and the recognition of the area as an Historic Park and Garden of Local Interest
- A linear park will be provided in perpetuity through the centre of the site. The park will comprise of approximately 25 hectares of public open space, wildlife habitats, playing fields and community woodlands connected by a network of footpaths and cycleways linking housing areas with the local centre, the wider countryside and the urban areas to the east
- In order to achieve sustainable and cohesive communities, the development must be connected to the existing development to the east of the A167 through suitable, convenient, safe and attractive cycleways and footpaths
- The expansion of the Sniperley Park and Ride facility will be required. Attractive and safe links between the housing and the existing Park and Ride facility will be created
- In order to reduce the dominance of car traffic and improve the permeability, both sites will incorporate convenient, safe and high quality bus, pedestrian and cycle routes within, and connecting to, adjoining facilities
- The sites will deliver attractive, well designed places, incorporating sustainable development principles, adopting sustainable construction methods, and using appropriate densities. Design codes will be utilised to ensure distinctive, high quality design outcomes for the sites.

Guiding Design Principles

The Masterplan makes clear that Sniperley will be an extraordinary development that responds to its special location and character. It will be an exemplar of design excellence and strive to be a carbon neutral development through its use of renewable energy, excellent sustainable transport connections and the high standard of its housing. Sniperley Park will also provide opportunities to live well and nurture physical and mental wellbeing including through extensive and high-quality new parkland both within the site and on the remaining Green Belt for new and existing residents. The site will also be supported by the infrastructure it needs to be a thriving community, including a new local centre, a new primary school, community building and significant highway improvements. To ensure that this is delivered, we have set out the following guiding principles.

Principle 1: Establish 'The Park' as the defining feature and identity of the new community

Sniperley Park should be defined by a major new linear public park which sits at the heart of the site and the community that emerges around it.

The park will:

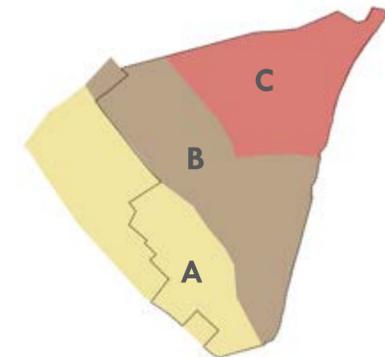
- * Have a clear boundary that defines it as a coherent 'entity' within the overall green infrastructure network (e.g. distinctive boundary treatments and 'gateways' to define its edges)
- * Have integrity as a continuous area of greenspace that is not severed, or intruded upon, by roads/vehicular traffic
- * Incorporate, protect and enhance the key environmental and heritage assets of the site (Cater House Pit, Wagonway, Folly Burn/Gill and Plantation and surrounding mature hedgerows/woodland)
- * Provide new areas of accessible greenspace that have a clearly defined character and function appropriate to the needs of the community and the local context
- * Provide a distinctive setting and unique identity for residential development within the new community

Principle 2: Create an unbroken, cruciform framework of green infrastructure (the 'Green Cross')

A green infrastructure (GI) framework will be established to deliver connected and active natural habitats and walkways. They will be vibrant and safe areas for people to come together, exercise and play throughout the area.

Key components of the GI framework will include:

- * The northern 'arm' of the cruciform – a green corridor that connects Cater House Pit along the valley system of Folly Gill with Potterhouse Lane and with the wider access network within countryside to the north, and beyond Pity Me
- * The 'eastern' arm - a green corridor connecting Cater House Pit with the edge of the existing urban area, along the route of the former wagonway and the existing footpath network in the vicinity of the underpass
- * The 'western' arm – new greenspace/ access connections between Cater House Pit and the wagonway with the existing woodland and parkland around Sniperley Hall, and beyond to the Browney Valley
- * The 'southern' arm – new greenspace/access connections between Cater House Pit and the southern extremity of the site, forming a green corridor between the woodlands at Sniperley Park and Ride
- * A green corridor running north-west to south, parallel to the boundary with the hospital and Sniperley Plantation, connecting Trout Lane with the 'southern arm'
- * Further smaller-scale green links and wildlife corridors, incorporating existing hedgerows and mature trees and vegetation, connecting the arms of the cruciform to create a 'green web' across the site, and local pocket parks and greenspaces within the residential neighbourhoods
- * Wetland/SUDS features appropriately located and designed to respond to natural topography, drainage features and local character
- * Sufficient minimum width within all green corridors to allow trees to mature and spread.



Principle 3: Respond to landscape character and history to create local identity and distinctiveness

The design of the new community should respond to the particular physical, landscape and historical context of the site in order to create a distinctive sense of place and local identity. It should respond to the variations in topography and vegetation cover across the site, its patterns of land use, drainage and field boundaries, its mining history and surviving evidence, and its relationship with surrounding areas. All these factors add richness and meaning to place-making, and root the new community within its local environment.

Three broad distinctions in character are defined within the site (as set out in Ch 2), reflecting the local landscape types of 'Parkland', 'Terrace farmland: open' and 'Terrace farmland: pasture' within the Western Valley Terraces (County Durham Landscape Character Assessment 2008).

The design response should take account of the following:

A: Sniperley Parkland

- * Protect and integrate remnant historic features (e.g. woodland belts, field boundaries and significant trees/copses)
- * Reflect designed parkland landscape characteristics and devices, e.g. formal layouts, symmetry, lines/belts/avenues of trees, ornamental planting, vistas/focal points etc
- * Reflect 'rural estate' character in layout and character of built form, road and boundary treatments

B: Open terrace farmland

- * Maintain large-scale, simple and orthogonal landscape pattern
- * Incorporate existing remnant field pattern where possible
- * Opportunity for development to be focused along historic route (B6532) as new 'high street' or 'front street', reflecting pattern and characteristics of pit villages e.g. terraces, orthogonal layout
- * Introduce a light touch of 'wider parkland/ estate' character, e.g. parkland trees, avenues, copses, tree belts (but avoid masking historic boundary of Sniperley Hall parkland)

C: Folly Gill catchment

- * Protect important landscape and heritage assets (Cater House Pit, Folly Plantation, mature trees and hedgerows)
- * Create fragmented, irregular pattern of smaller-scale development parcels to reflect patchwork landscape character
- * Maintain well-treed, enclosed and intimate character, development parcels 'carved out' of woodland
- * Reflect 'wet/marshy' characteristics of valley landscape and former moorland



Guiding Design Principles

Principle 4: Place the Local Centre at the heart of the new community

A successful place needs a lively and active local centre and the aim is to locate it centrally in order to make it accessible and walkable for all residents. By establishing the local centre early in the life of the new community it will encourage a greater sense of belonging and identity, encourage social mixing and new friendships and promote more sustainable behaviours, including supporting local shops and local businesses and the location of a new primary school.

The local centre should:

- * Be located roughly in the geographical centre of the site (to the south of Cater House Pit and close to the B6532) placing nearly every part of the new community within 600m-800m (< 10-15 mins walk) of the centre
- * Have a distinctive character (defined by form, density and function) so that is immediately recognisable as the centre and focus of the community, with a strong sense of arrival
- * Incorporate a significant public space (e.g. a 'green' or square) that acts as a community focus and opportunity for social mixing

Principle 5: Transform the Sacriston Road (B6532) into a new 'neighbourhood street'

The Sacriston Road (B6532) is an historic route leading north-westwards out of the city and will serve as a key thoroughfare running through the heart of the new community. It will be downgraded to form a street providing frontage for, and connections between, the residential development along the route, akin to 'Front Street' which links the mining settlements of Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me. It will form a 'neighbourhood' or 'social street' that connects with the local centre and provides opportunities for incidental activity, community facilities and social mixing along its length.

Key aims of the neighbourhood street are:

- * To create a linear extension of the local centre in the form of a tree-lined, 'social street', with active frontage, incidental places to meet and socialise, and occasional local services or facilities
- * To slow and calm traffic through the new neighbourhood and to encourage active travel and bus use as an alternative to the car
- * To encourage pedestrian and cycle journeys in and out of the city and to other important local destinations such as New College, University Hospital and Ayclay Heads Employment Area
- * To retain the alignment of the B6532 as an historic route in and out of the city
- * Offer variation in character and speed to prioritise pedestrians at key points and junctions

Principle 6: Arrange buildings and spaces to minimise the impacts of existing power lines

The powerlines are a dominating feature and, if retained, constraint for the site. They need to be sensitively treated in terms of their setting and impact on the experience and views through the site.

- * Where overhead power lines are retained there should be no built development underneath them and an the required safety buffer should be maintained either side of them
- * Where roads pass beneath pylons, they should ideally pass under the lines perpendicularly, or close to this, rather than running parallel to the lines which can give them greater emphasis
- * The positions of existing power line masts should be considered so that they do not end up in a prominent positions within the proposed development and

act as gateways or terminations to views.

Principle 7: Accommodate school and community playing field requirements efficiently and in the most suitable location

Sniperley Park will bring a large population to Durham and it must create its own sense of place and community. Central to this will be the delivery of public and social infrastructure.

- * The existing sports pitches should be reprovided on the site in line with Sports England requirements.
- * The school playing fields and community playing fields are recommended to be co-located, within easy reach of the local centre.
- * Often school perimeter fencing leads to lengths of inactive frontage with no overlooking of adjacent streets and spaces. The location of the school and pitches, and their detailed arrangement should provide a solution that avoids this scenario.
- * A suitable drop off area should be provided for the school with additional measures to prevent stopping on main vehicular routes.

Principle 8: Introduce variety in built form and housing densities to create distinctive places

Variety in form and tenure will enrich the community, bringing architectural interest and a sense of place throughout the site. This should be considered at all phases and written into the design of the place.

- * Built form should be of a scale, density and height that responds appropriately to the character of the local context and landscape taking cues from the three broad distinctions set out in Principle 3.
- * Development at the west of the site should have an appropriate relationship to Sniperley Hall and Farm - both in how it physically abuts this area and in the character of the proposals.
- * Built form along Sacriston Road should reflect its new character as a 'neighbourhood street'.
- * Built form around the Local Centre should be of a higher density and have a distinctive character, which relates to the surrounding development, so that is immediately recognisable as the centre and focus of the community.
- * Built form around Folly Gill Park should reflect the character of this 'edge of park' area, with smaller-scale development parcels of a more irregular pattern
- * Built form should be designed with an active frontage

and overlooking of all green infrastructure.



Principle 9: Overcome the A167 as a barrier to connectivity with existing neighbourhoods

The edges of Sniperley Park must be seen as welcoming gateways and thresholds into a fantastic new community asset for the whole city. The barriers on its edges, namely the A167, must be unlocked.

- * The current connections across the A167 (underpass and unsignalised crossings) are inadequate to serve the new development and should be enhanced.
- * New pedestrian and cycling connections to join Sniperley Park with Framwellgate Moor and Pity Me must provide a safe connection - at all times of day and for all residents.

Principle 10: Design a sensitive movement network that promotes active travel over the use of cars and fits with the landscape

The proximity of Sniperley Park to the city centre and surrounding countryside places is in an enviable position to become a healthy and active place which encourages sustainable and active modes of transport implementing the connections shown within the 'Healthy and Active Travel Connectivity Plan'.

- * In developing a movement network, priority should be given to providing for active travel first, public transport second and cars third
- * Existing Public Rights of Way should be retained with care being given to incorporating them positively within their new setting - whether urban or open space.
- * There should be a strong emphasis on providing new direct, safe and attractive pedestrian and cycling routes through the scheme and that connect to local communities and amenities. This may be a combination of cycle lanes through built development and connections through the park.
- * It is recommended that Sustrans Design Principle should be a guiding principle for the design of active travel routes - that they "facilitate independent walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyone, including an unaccompanied 12-year old".
- * The development must allow for maximum public transport penetration via through routes.
- * Detailed consideration should be given to providing positive natural surveillance of active travel routes, good lighting and secure sheltered bike storage to encourage year round use.

Principle 11: Define a new green edge to Durham

The site must form a new, sensitively realised, urban edge to Durham city. The sites character on Sacriston Road and the A691 is critical in defining the urban character and arrival into Durham from the north.

- * The Green Belt compensation land and emerging development should be used to define a mature green edge to the Sniperley Park community and Durham as a whole
- * The set back from the A691 should be considered to retain a green/ rural edge to Durham along the A691 ensuring that a staggered or poorly defined residential edge to the city does not emerge.

* The above should be considered fully throughout the phasing and delivery of the site.

Principle 12: Aspiring to a zero carbon development

Ensure that the development embeds an environmental and social ethos into the design, ensuring a low carbon development, in terms of both construction and use, whilst creating a community that has access to facilities, services and transport options. There is an expectation of an exemplar sustainable development, taking in to account the declaration by Durham County Council of a Climate Emergency and cognisance of ecological impacts on our natural world. This should include provision of onsite electric and non fossil fuel based heat production, consideration of PassivHaus construction and extensive biodiversity net gain.

Sniperley Park has the potential to become a true sustainable community.

- create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions and include appropriate and proportionate measures to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security;
- minimise greenhouse gas emissions, by seeking to achieve zero carbon buildings and providing renewable and low carbon energy generation, and include connections to an existing or approved district energy scheme where viable opportunities exist. The development should utilise renewable and low carbon technologies as the main heating source, as gas should not be utilised on site;
- minimise the use of non-renewable and unsustainable resources, including energy, water and materials, during both construction and use by encouraging waste reduction and appropriate reuse and recycling of materials, including appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste and prioritising the use of local materials;
- provide high standards of amenity and privacy, and minimise the impact of development upon the occupants of existing adjacent and nearby properties;
- the public realm, including new roads, paths and other rights of way, open spaces, hard and soft landscaping, boundary features and other structures, are designed to be functional, well-managed safe and durable, taking into account the lifetime needs of its users;
- connections are made to existing cycle and pedestrian

networks;

- amenity open space is designed with regard to the local micro-climate including sunlight, shade and shelter;

Furthermore, it is advised that no gas should be connected to any part of the development in lieu of forthcoming changes to building regulations as laid out in the future homes standards. Heat should therefore be delivered through either individual or community Heat Pumps (air or ground) or be passivehouse. This should also be supplemented by Solar PV. All homes should also include a EV charging point as standard.



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4.0 The Masterplan

The Masterplan Vision

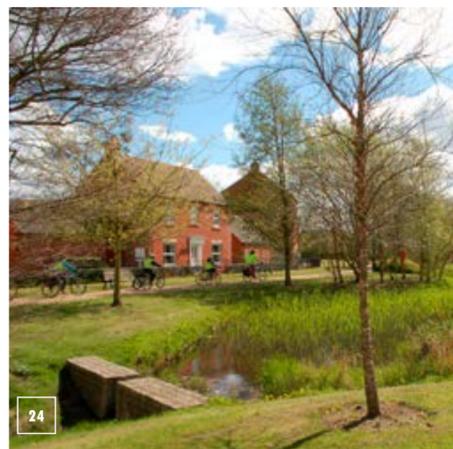
The plan (on page 33) sets out our illustrative vision masterplan for Sniperley Park. It sets out a deliverable framework which is focussed around achieving a balance between maximising placemaking, connectivity and development opportunities across the site. The plan works with the existing landscape features and physical constraints of the site in an efficient and delivery focussed manner, ensuring a masterplan that can be delivered in a logical series of phases. The following sets out the key elements of the plan.

Key masterplan elements:

1. Sniperley Park Centre: centrally located local centre with a vibrant mix of retail, community facilities (to include a building suitable for health care) and higher density homes to create a focal point for the whole community.
2. Neighbourhood Street: characterful and slow street through the centre of Sniperley Park, with defined junctions and varied character with responsive set backs and green edges at key points.
3. Community Focal Point: secondary focal points within the community will deliver distinctive form and green spaces throughout the site, however not necessarily require any other land uses, including further commercial uses.
4. Sniperley Hall Street: a pedestrian and cycle street linking the local centre and Sniperley Hall to the west.
5. A691 Entrance: main western connection into the site, framed by landscape and facilitating connections for pedestrians.
6. Green Gateway: mature and welcoming green gateway to west.
7. Sniperley Farm: retention of key historic elements of Sniperley Farm, with support for their creative reuse as a community use such as community garden or cafe.
8. Sniperley Hall: unlock links to Sniperley Hall and positively address through well designed landscape and built form.
9. Sniperley Woodland Park: unlock existing mature woodland, integrating public footpaths, SUDs and east-west links.
10. East-West Link: create a vehicular link between A691 and reorientated B6532.
11. Park & Ride Link: enhance safe and attractive pedestrian links into expanded P&R.
12. Southern Entrance: new connection onto Framwellgate Moor Roundabout creating a new southern access to Durham city centre.
13. Linear Park: linear park forming a continuous Folly Gill

14. Primary School: new primary school located within easy reach and sight of the local centre.
15. Secondary School: appropriate financial contributions to local secondary provision will be required.
16. School Square: public square framing entrance to school and providing direct link to local centre.
17. Playing Fields: public and school playing fields retained. Any additional pitches may need to be provided within the compensatory green space to the north of the site.
18. Underpass: enhanced underpass with lighting, public art and wayfinding to create a positive arrival for pedestrians into Sniperley Park.
19. Village Green: green public space creating a formal village green setting linking Folly Gill Park, Cater House Pit and the local centre together.
20. Cater House Nature Reserve: enhanced Cater House Pit Nature Reserve with enhanced signage/interpretation and seating, including community planting areas.
21. Greenway: network of green corridors through the site, creating a green grid of landscape through Sniperley Park.
22. Folly Gill Park: a major new park (approx. 25ha) expanding through Sniperley Park, with a varied palette of wild woodland, formal parkland, ponds, waterways, tree corridors and play parks.
23. Park Edge: active urban and landscape edges to Folly Gill Park with park estate land development fronting onto park and creating passive surveillance and visual identity.
24. A167 Entrance: new roundabout onto A167 creating improved pedestrian connections to Pity Me and distinctive eastern gateway into Sniperley Park.
25. Dispersed Drainage: dispersed approach to sustainable urban drainage across the site, including swales, ponds and other water features to manage

26. Potterhouse Lane: lane altered to facilitate connections out of Sniperley Park towards compensation land. New roundabouts to be introduced at the junction of the Potterhouse Lane and B6532, and the junction of the A691 and Trout Lane.
27. Onward Connections: celebrated rural connections through enhanced green routes directly between Folly Gill Park and surrounding rural areas.
28. Active Woodland: enhancing woodland area to create an active woodland with walkways and cycle routes.
29. Household Waste and Recycling Centre: extended HWRC with enhanced landscape screening, and improved access including arrangements to facilitate queuing off Pity Me roundabout.
30. Infrastructure and Phasing: Planning conditions and obligations will be used to secure the delivery of the infrastructure and services that are necessary to support the development of Sniperley Park. This will include restricting the extent of residential development that can be constructed until such time that certain facilities and services have been delivered.
31. Green Infrastructure and Landscape Maintenance: high quality open spaces will be delivered and that will be the subject of agreed and enforceable long-term management and maintenance regimes.
32. The development must allow for maximum public transport penetration via through routes.
33. Aspire to deliver a zero carbon development.



Vision Masterplan



Framework Plans

The following pages set out a series of plans that capture the different aspects of the masterplan including:

Landscape and Green Infrastructure
 Land Use, Form and Character
 Access & Movement
 Placemaking

Landscape and Green Infrastructure

The Folly Gill Park, at the core of the new community, is the feature that should define its overall identity, character and sense of place. It will embrace and respect the existing key environmental and heritage assets of the site and create significant new areas of greenspace for the benefit of both the local community and wildlife. The park itself, together with connecting green infrastructure, provides the opportunity to create a major new community asset and to achieve environmental net gain.

The Park lies at the heart of the new community but is not an 'island' – it will form the axis of an unbroken cruciform pattern of green infrastructure across the entire length and breadth of the site, meeting at Cater House Pit and the local centre. The aim is to maximise connectivity and enable everyone to move by foot or by cycle through and across the site within a generous, continuous greenspace network that links outwards into neighbouring areas.

Key landscape moves:

- * Central linear park serving the whole site (approx. 25ha) - retaining woodland, Folly Gill watercourse and Cater House Pit Nature Reserve
- * Retention and responsive approach to existing PROW
- * Green network of pedestrian & cycle corridors, connecting park, local amenities, residential neighbourhoods and surrounding communities
- * Sufficient space allocated in each development area to allow for source and conveyance SuDS features which will later discharge to a site wide SuDS network

-  Central Linear Park
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Existing PROW - retained
-  Connecting Landscape / Green Corridor
-  Pocket Park / Incidental Greenspace
-  Compensation Land



Proposed Landscape Structure

Landscape Character Areas

A - Folly Gill Parkland

- * Informal parkland/naturalistic character (open grassland/meadows, wooded dene, scrub, wetlands/marsh)
- * Informal recreation (walking, picnics, quiet outdoor pursuits, informal play areas, trim trail)
- * New folly focal point within park and to create local identity

B - Cater House Pit and Wagonway

- * Semi natural character (unimproved grassland, scrub, developing woodland)
- * Nature reserve controlled access for quiet recreation (nature study/bird watching)
- * Educational interpretation of wildlife and mining history

C - The Long Green

- * Semi formal character transition/link between informal parkland to North and designed parkland to South
- * 'Green' at the heart of the development and part of arrival experience
- * Active greenspace community use and activities, events space, café, formal play area, amenity grassland for informal play/ball games
- * Semi formal landscape elements avenue/ornamental tree planting, linear wetland feature

D - Sniperley Woods and Ride

- * Woodland forming boundary feature of historic landscape incorporating wetland features, glades and paths
- * Open grassy ride along eastern boundary of woodland open space and access corridor
- * Educational interpretation of designed, historic parkland landscape

E - The Avenue

- * Semi formal character amenity grassland with formal avenue planting, parkland ride character
- * Landscape/access link between Wagonway and Sniperley Park
- * Informal recreational uses by neighbouring communities

F - Playing Fields

- * Amenity grassland forming sports pitches
- * Formal recreation activity school and community uses
- * All weather pitch and formal sports facilities

G - Allotments

H - Compensatory Improvements to adjacent land

- * Country Park



Land Use Form & Character

Sniperley Park will be a residential-led community punctuated and enlivened by community facilities, retail and convenience. The Local Centre provides opportunity to provide independent and convenience retail, as well as provide locations for independent businesses such as hairdressers, nurseries and shared workspaces. The importance of day-to-day amenities such as these have become critically important as we emerge from Covid-19.

The following key land use moves are proposed:

- * Retention and expansion of P&R and Household Waste and Recycling Centre
- * Retention of several Sniperley Farm buildings
- * Centrally located Sniperley Local Centre
- * Pitches retained at existing location, adjacent to proposed Primary School

The urban character of the place should follow the landscape character defined previously, creating a diverse and contextually responsive built form throughout Sniperley Park. The following pages outlines high level thoughts on architectural, urban design and planning approaches in these areas.

Land Use Budget

The following outlines the site capacity based on the proposed masterplan vision. The proposed masterplan has a capacity for up to 1,700 homes, with a 28ha park delivering a landscape setting for a sustainable and liveable new community.

Land Use	Area (ha)	Dwellings
Park	28.00	
Developable Residential (inc. Local Centre)	50.23	1700
School & Pitches	6.52	
Recycling Centre inc.extension	1.60	
P&R inc. extension	3.14	
Primary road corridor	6.08	
Other (inc. secondary roads, green corridors, incidental green space)	14.66	
Redline	110.23	

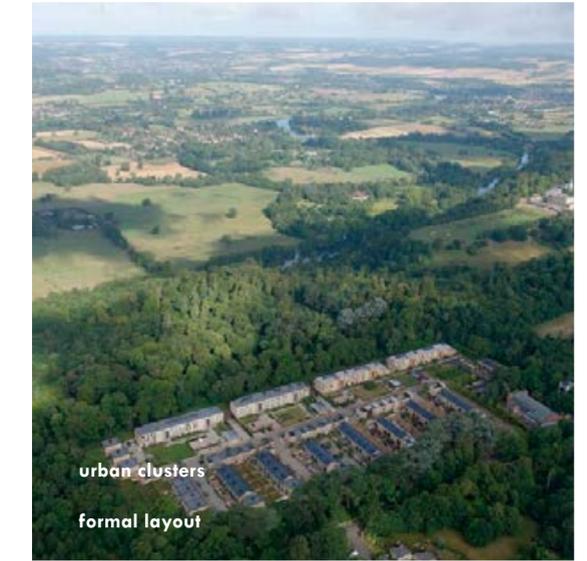


Proposed Land Use Approach

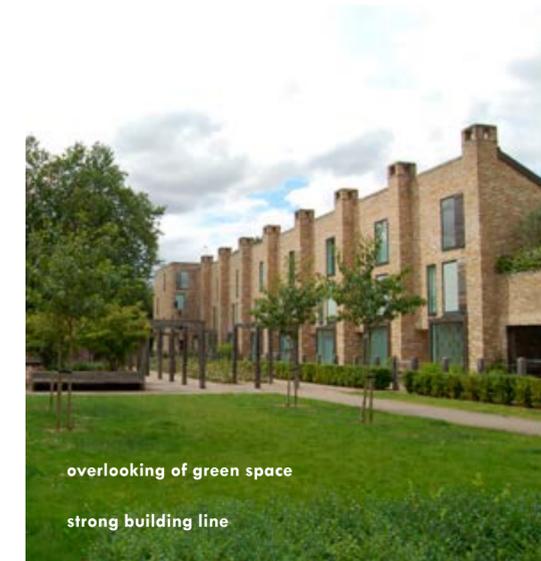
Sniperley Hall and Park

Varied built typology of small clustered residential plots set within a woodland setting. Centred around a northern focal point adjacent to Sniperley Hall the area will be focussed around pedestrian and cycle connections to the emerging local centre in Sniperley Park.

- * Series of urban clusters which integrate into surrounding woodland context.
- * Formal layout as a response to Sniperley Farm to south with looser form provided to north
- * Maintain a vista south of the existing hedge towards Sniperley Hall
- * Create a footpath link through generous setback from the Cottage at Sniperley Hall
- * High quality designed environment in terms of built environment & landscape design.



urban clusters
formal layout



overlooking of green space
strong building line



Folly Gill Park

Lower density parkland residential plots framing the park and routes towards it. Future gateway to north east (A167) to create unique visual character and strong urban form to frame access.

- * Strong relationship with park & green spaces, overlooking of green spaces.
- * Possibility for self build / custom build / modern methods of construction (MMC) / no car zone.
- * Larger detached houses with looser arrangement.



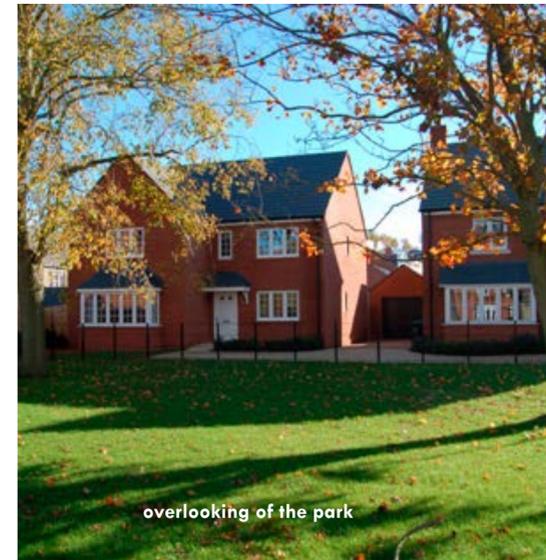
overlooking of the park



generous green corridors



larger detached houses



overlooking of the park

Cater House Street

Central corridor defined by varied urban frontage to both Sacriston Road and the linear park/ Cater House Pit behind. Opportunities to create visually distinctive architecture set back behind strong landscape edge/ set back in traditional Durham form.

- * Benefits from flatter topography
- * Formal layout and consistent built form responding to linear nature of B6532 and aligned land
- * Consistent buildings line with varied setbacks for key clusters along route
- * Traditional set back with linear green spaces providing landscape amenity and visual breaks
- * Recreation of the B6532 as a High Street with nodes of activity / spaces along it



street trees
consistent building form



formal layout
taller buildings at centre



views to green spaces

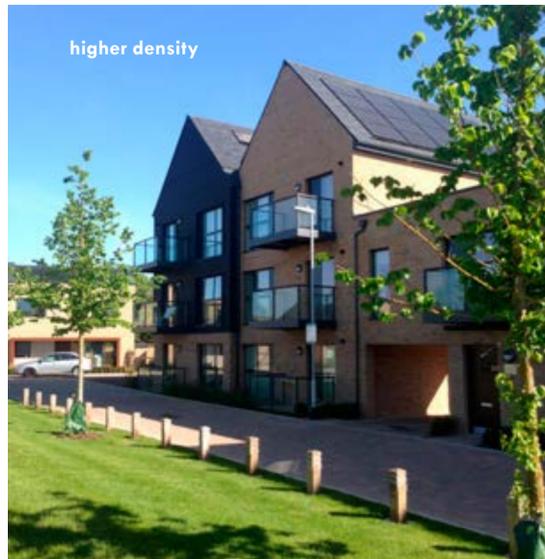
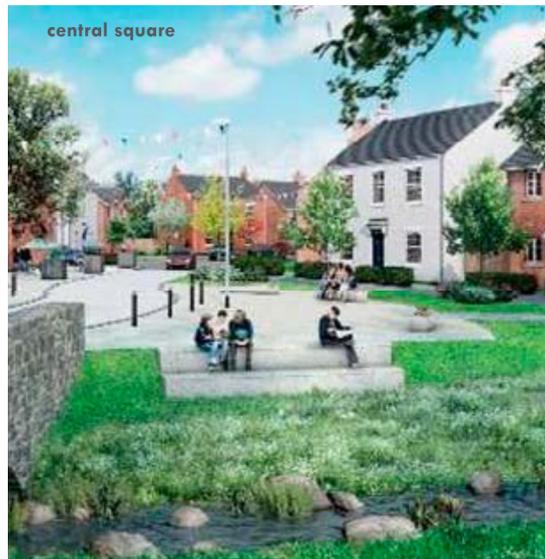


consistent building form

Sniperley Local Centre

Central local centre acting as a key focal point for community, housing diversity of uses and a denser, more active urban form. Framed by high quality public realm and altered highways form, connecting people to the school and surrounding landscape.

- * Denser Local Centre with 'village green', shops, nursery etc. acting as a focal point for the area
- * Denser & taller residential development around local centre amenities



Access & Movement

The Masterplan presents a permeable access strategy for all modes, including maximising bus penetration, throughout the development to reduce stress on the adjacent highway network. Minimising development generated traffic as far as possible on the A691 and its junctions with Sniperley roundabout and the Park and Ride roundabout will reduce development traffic impacts. In achieving a sustainable development with support for all modes, it is considered it would be beneficial to not only serve north-south linear routes, but also present an east west cross development route.

The east-west link from the B6532 to the A691 will be an important connection to achieve the aim of improved traffic distribution and improved opportunity for public transport links. This would facilitate penetration by public transport to all phases of the development. It also offers the opportunity for residential development cells to discharge traffic onto the B6532 and onwards south and north bound on the A167 from the Park and Ride east roundabout junction. This would relieve and better distribute demands on each leg of the Sniperley roundabout.

Traffic using this route can avoid the heavily congested A691 Sniperley roundabout and avoid adding to the significantly high peak hour volumes traveling along the A691.

The development must allow for maximum public transport penetration via through routes. Routes must be designed to accommodate full sized buses with bus stops at appropriate intervals in suitable locations to be agreed. The development should provide, where appropriate, infrastructure including lay-bys, signage, shelters and real time information boards. Service provision may be in the form of adapted existing and/or new services, providing frequent links to Durham city centre, in addition to the existing Park and Ride provision, which will have walk-in access from the development site. All parts of the site should be within 400m walk of a bus stop.

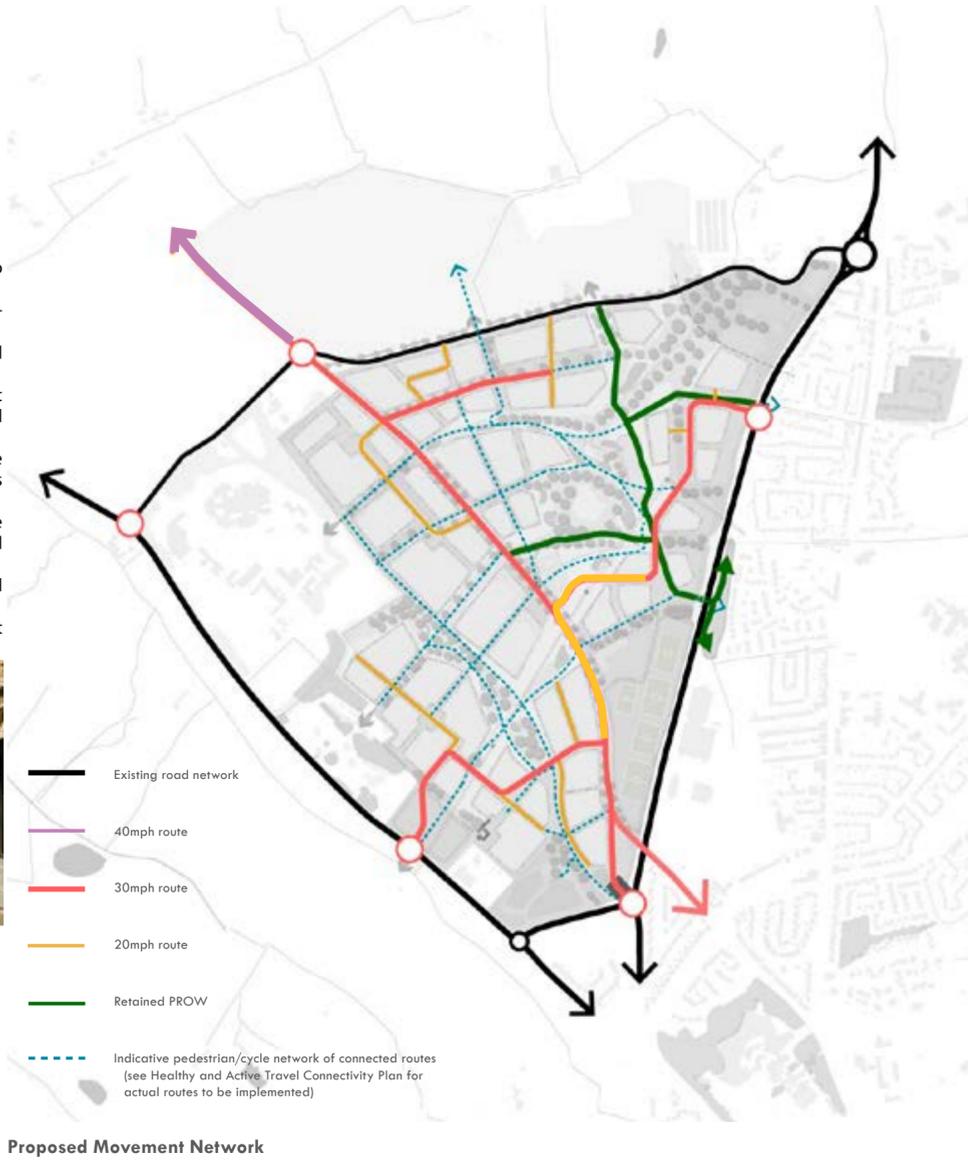
A Healthy Active Travel Connectivity Plan has been prepared for the Sniperley Park site. It illustrates the significant opportunities for active travel within and surrounding the Sniperley Development site, including the upgrading of existing walking and cycling routes and the creation of new routes to adjoining services and facilities such as shops, schools, employment and greenspace. The Masterplan incorporates this work and will expect these routes to be delivered as part of the development

Key southern pedestrian and cycle links are created or

enhanced to facilitate key movement into the surrounding community and city centre, as well as create connections into a vital new landscape amenity for the city. These include an enhanced underpass, and pedestrian crossing at new junction on A167 (adjacent Woodbine Road).

In order to achieve site-wide accessibility for all transport modes, including, achieving bus permeability across the site and benefits to the wider highway network (in particular Sniperley roundabout), a link road shall be provided between the A691 and the B6352.

- * Link B6532 at southern end to join A167 roundabout to release pressure at Blackie Boy roundabout
- * New vehicular junctions provided from A691 and A167 - creating east/west connection through site
- * Potterhouse Lane to remain open to through traffic and enhanced to promote pedestrian and cycle use
- * Create pedestrian and cycle connections throughout the site, associated with GI framework. Pedestrians and cyclists will have priority across the site
- * Improve pedestrian connections across Potterhouse Lane, A167 and A691 to unlock outwards connections into the site and its park
- * A mobility hub will be available at the local centre including exemplar car share scheme, and Park and Peddle facility
- * The highways impact on the wider road network should be assessed and appropriate mitigation provided
- * All routes and junctions are indicative and are subject to survey and detailed design



Placemaking

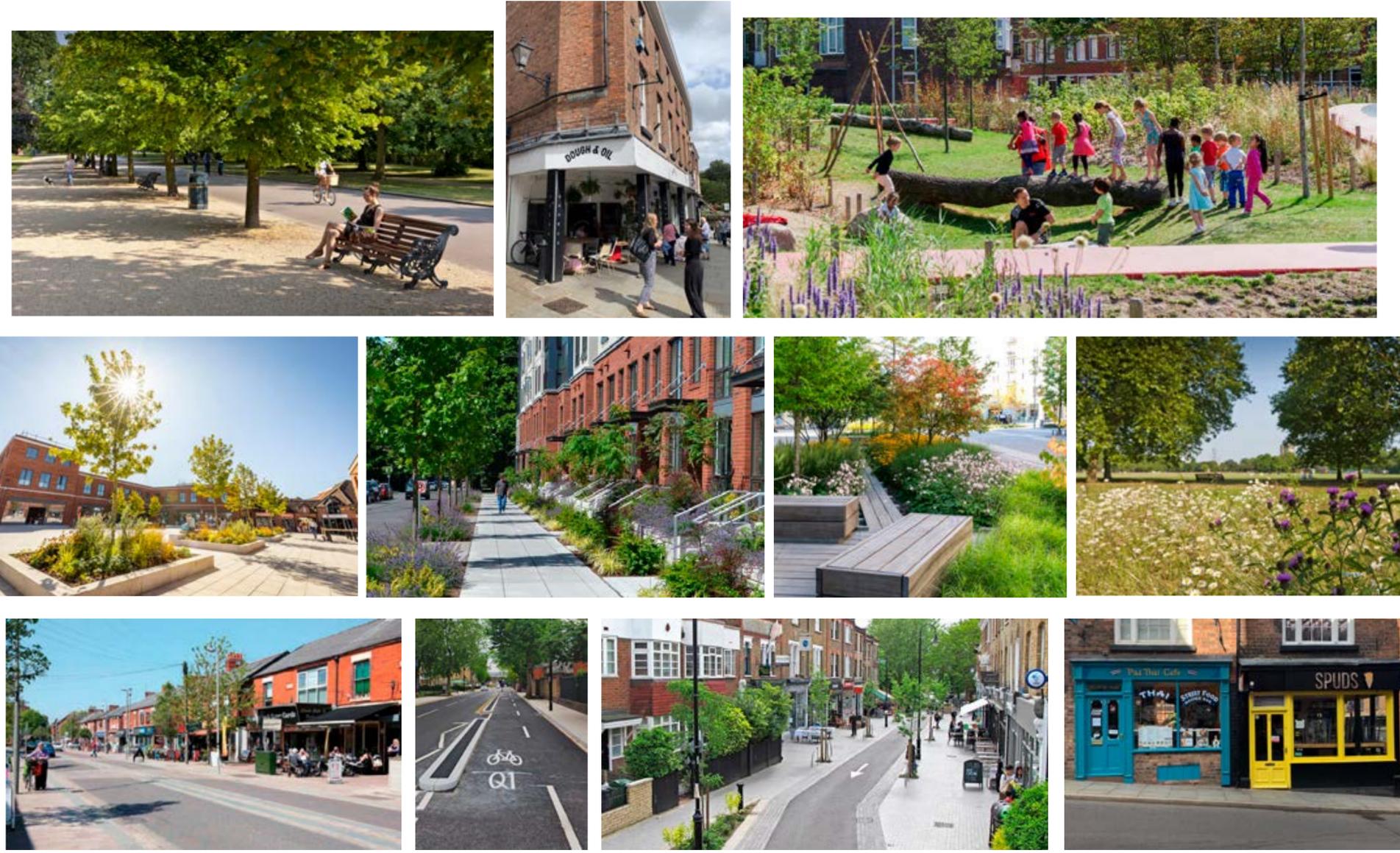
Sniperley Park will be shaped by four key placemaking principles; a vibrant and locally distinctive local centre acting as the focal point to the community, a mature and accessible linear park with opportunities for play, recreation and relaxation, a visible and an accessible school and playing fields, and, finally, a walkable and active street network.

- * Strong frontage along B6532 to form Cater House High Street with a similar character to those of the pit villages
- * Community focal point with 'village green' or square alongside key community amenities and retail, supported by a network of small neighbourhood centres be defined by a public space and architectural form (i.e. not necessarily alternative land uses)
- * High quality parkland frontage overlooking key green spaces to positively address all areas of landscape
- * Positive and active frontage to key routes and built assets (i.e. Sniperley Hall and Sniperley Farm)
- * Major central linear park accessible from all areas
- * Accessible and centrally located school and playing fields, directly linked to the local centre
- * Active, pedestrian friendly streets throughout the area



Proposed Placemaking Plan

- Park
- Local centre (inc. retail)
- Neighbourhood centre
- Primary Road
- Frontage to High Street
- Frontage to Park
- Enhanced Passageway





5.0 Next Steps

Phasing

Alongside the need for Sniperley Park to be comprehensively masterplanned, Policy 5 requires that the phasing of development will have regard to the provision and timing of the infrastructure and services necessary to support them. The phasing approach must prioritise placemaking and the delivery of mixed tenure of housing. This will entail the delivery of community facilities, such as schools and nurseries, and amenities, such as shops and open space within the early phases of development.

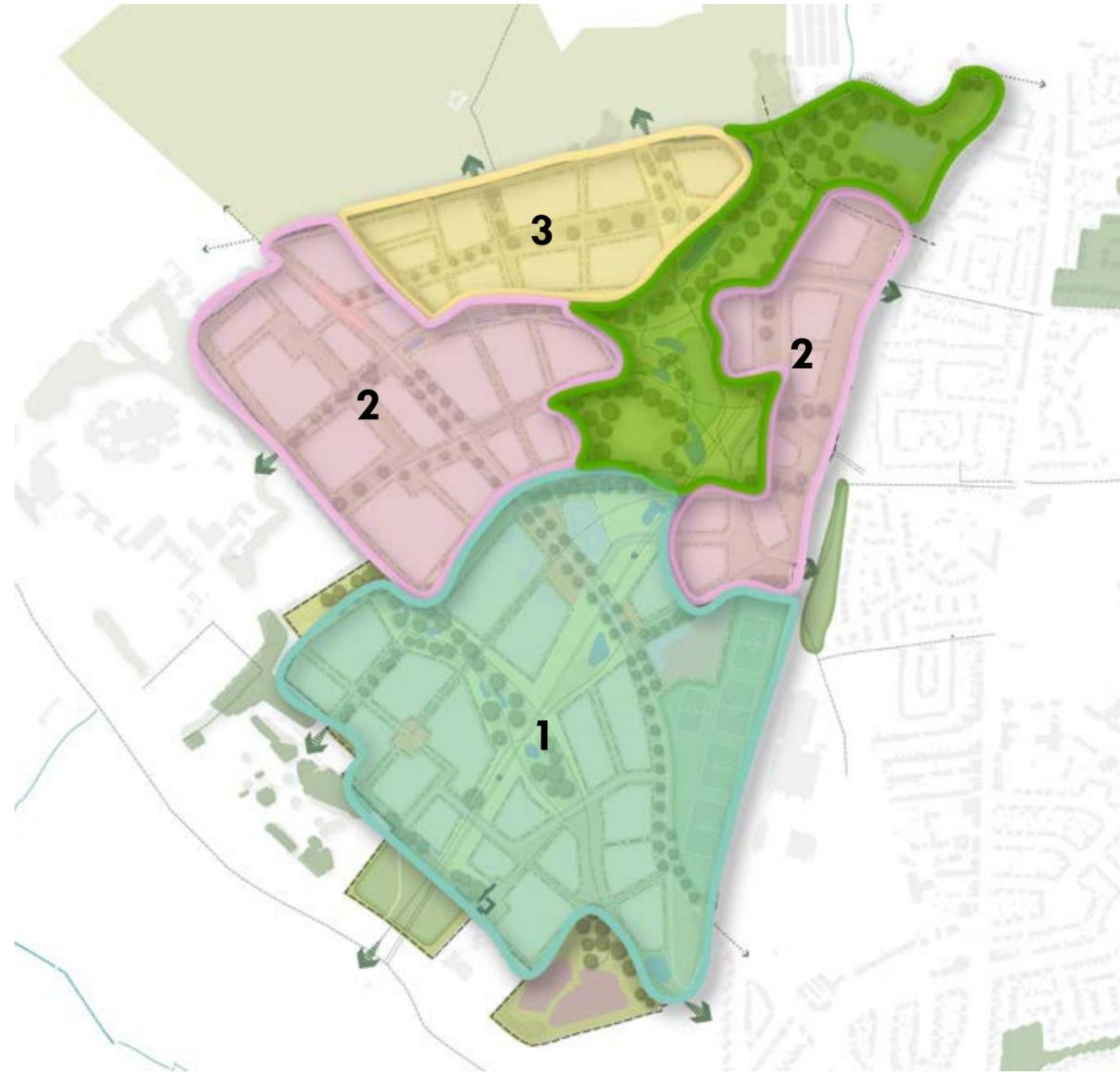
Whilst we consider further design and survey work is required, particularly related to capacity review and land equalisation, we consider the site can be clearly framed within three distinct phases.

Phase 1: Community Creation and Site Unlocking
Establish Folly Gill Park, local centre and primary school, as well as retention of playing fields. Create western and southern entrances into the site and create link between the two. Define pedestrian/ cycle connection between the local and community centre to the west, as well as deliver the Sniperley Woods.

Phase 2: Community Growth and Eastern Connections
With key placemaking elements in place, the groundwork is there to expand the community and expand the delivery of homes on Sniperley Park. Framing the newly established park this phase is critical to bring population and positively address Folly Gill Park. This phase will further unlock the site, offering the eastern connection to the A167 and facilitating further pedestrian connections to the north and east (over the A167).

Phase 3: Sniperley Park
The final phase will complete the delivery of the northern part of the site, retaining and enhancing northern connections to the compensatory land and further rural connections.

Folly Gill Park and the wider green infrastructure network, including the compensation land to the north, should form key parts of phases 1 and 2 to ensure the park is not only delivered and completed in the later phases. It should serve the whole population from the outset and throughout all phases.



Next Steps and Programme

Owing to the strategic nature of the site, it is important that the Masterplan is clearly articulated with key stakeholders, residents, neighbouring communities and businesses within the area. A public consultation is therefore being undertaken in order to seek views from interested parties from 29 November 2021 to 14 January 2022 on the Masterplan and associated Healthy Active Travel Connectivity Plan. All comments and suggestions raised as part of the consultation will be considered and, where relevant, amendments will be made.

It is important to note that the Masterplan has been prepared using the evidence base prepared for the County Durham Plan, which by the nature of that process is high level. However, much more detailed assessments relating to transport, ecology, noise, visual impact etc. will have to be submitted by the applicant as part of the planning application process. These will be consulted on as part of process of determining any planning application.

Once adopted the Masterplan will be a material consideration against which any planning application on the site will be assessed. Any proposal will also have to comply with Policy 5 (Sustainable Urban Extensions) and all other relevant policies in the County Durham Plan including Policy 25 (Developer contributions), Policy 15 (Addressing Housing Need), Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport), Policy 29 (Sustainable Design) and Policy 41 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), amongst others.

Whilst the Council is unable to prevent planning applications being submitted by landowners or developers in advance of the Council's masterplan being finalised, it is intended that the masterplan will provide a comprehensive approach across the site and any planning application's conformity with the masterplan will be a material consideration

L D Ā DESIGN

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