

**Special Economy and Enterprise
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

25 February 2025

Strategic Sites Update



Report of Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides members with an overview of the key strategic employment sites in County Durham and an update on progress in the delivery of these sites across the county to support job and wealth creation.

Executive Summary

2. The County Durham Vision for 2035 is that the county is a place of more and better jobs, people living long and independent lives, and our communities are well connected and supported. The vision identifies that to create the conditions for more and better jobs, we need to develop major employment sites across the county to build a strong, competitive and lower carbon economy.
3. In December 2022, the council adopted the County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES). The IES sets out a vision for the county as a sustainable and inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels. The strategy seeks to raise aspirations amongst young people and deliver a step-change in economic growth.
4. Working in collaboration with neighbouring authorities provides an opportunity to positively impact upon our shared economic prosperity. As a result of the North East Devolution Deal, £1.4 billion of additional investment, over the next 30 years, will be leveraged alongside the ability to influence local delivery activities across skills, transport, housing and regeneration.
5. Facilitating business growth and inward investment is one of the key drivers of economic growth. Ensuring a sufficient supply of land and commercial properties is essential to ensure both the retention of existing

businesses and attracting new businesses to the area through mobile inward investment opportunities.

6. To create the right conditions for growth, the role of the local authority is critical to driving investment and job creation by working collaboratively with its private sector partners. Durham County Council does this in several ways:
 - a. Supplies a framework through the local plan with a sufficient land supply to meet the longer-term needs of the county,
 - b. Provides vision and direction through the Inclusive Economic Strategy, setting out opportunities to support wider economic growth,
 - c. Applies for funding to accelerate delivery such as that available through Investment Zones,
 - d. Directly supports and delivers key employment sites, where there is a requirement for public sector intervention,
 - e. Collaborates with key partners such as Durham University to capitalise on research and innovation,
 - f. Provides a comprehensive service to the business community to drive growth and productivity,
 - g. Positions County Durham as a leading location to live, work and visit by working collectively with Visit County Durham, Invest North East England and the Department for Business & Trade.
7. The County Durham Plan, adopted in 2020, includes 300 hectares of new land that has been allocated for business and industry.. These allocations were informed by evidence within the Employment Land Review which identified how much employment land is required across the plan period (up to 2035) with forecasted requirements based on past trends and take-up, and the locations of such land to meet the needs of businesses. In addition to these new sites, the plan also set out a further 1,500 hectares of land protected for employment uses across 106 existing industrial estates across the county.
8. Within the allocation, several sites were identified as 'strategic employment sites', owing to their significant size, economic potential or regional importance. These sites included: Forrest Park, NETPark, Integra 61, Aykley Heads and Jade Business Park, and collectively have the capacity to deliver over 17,000 jobs.
9. While the strategic employment sites are the drivers of significant economic growth, it is important to note that these form part of a wider portfolio of existing employment sites across the county which includes

Aycliffe Business Park, Peterlee Industrial Estate and Spectrum at Seaham. These, in addition to concentrations of employment around Bishop Auckland, Spennymoor, Consett, Stanley, Chester-le-Street and Durham City, are essential components in the county's economic prosperity, providing local services and job opportunities; many being the beating hearts of our communities.

10. Durham County Council's business support service, Business Durham, provides comprehensive business support information and advice to all locations throughout the county to ensure businesses are sustainable, productive and are supported to grow. Dedicated business support networks are delivered across these locations to facilitate collaboration, provide direct support and enable a platform from which to gather information and intelligence on the needs of the business community. This insight is used to inform future plans such as the emerging Industrial Strategy and the review of the County Durham Plan.
11. Through its comprehensive support to the business community, Business Durham typically engages and supports over 1,000 businesses per annum, and in 2024/25 supported the creation of over 1,100 new jobs through direct intervention, including 16 inward investments.
12. The council also plays a key role in supporting businesses to secure external funding and leveraging funding to accelerate delivery of employment sites. This includes circa £11m Investment Zone monies recently secured via NECA to unlock further development on Zone 1 of the NETPark Phase 3 development.
13. There continues to be strong demand for large scale industrial sites across the North East and especially those located along key transport nodes such as the A1(M) and A19 corridors.
14. Progress across Durham's strategic employment sites over the last 12-months has been steady with several key developments coming forward, such as:
 - a. Phase 3 Zones 2 & 3 – NETPark
 - b. Connect – Integra 61
 - c. DPD (Unit 1) – Forrest Park
15. Momentum has been gathered across each of these sites, with strong interest in the newly constructed industrial units, alongside a small pipeline of inward investment enquiries for bespoke design and build solutions.

16. There remains a challenge across the wider North East, on the readily available supply of commercial accommodation for businesses, as occupiers' preference for existing stock over purpose-built solutions continues to remain strong. It is critical that the council continues to work with its development community to ensure a mix of opportunities are available in the market.
17. Meanwhile, developing an inward investment strategy, setting out the county's assets and opportunities for businesses across the region, nationally and internationally is essential to driving economic growth and supporting the creation of more and better jobs in County Durham.

Recommendations

18. Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on the information contained within this report.

Background

19. Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee have expressed an interest in reviewing the progress of delivery of employment space, on strategic employment sites, across the county.
20. This report provides a further update and builds upon annual updates provided to members since 2021.

Strategic Context

County Durham Vision

21. The County Durham Vision for 2035 is that County Durham is a place where there are more and better jobs, people live long, and independent lives and our communities are well connected and supported. The Vision identifies that to create more and better jobs we will develop major employment sites across the county to build a strong, competitive and lower carbon economy.
22. The County Durham Vision document outlines six specific objectives to achieve more and better jobs across the whole county, with the first objective being:

We will deliver a range of accessible employment sites across the county.

New and expanded employment sites across the county which are accessible to the labour market, will attract new employers, allow expansion of existing businesses and respond to the changing needs of the business sector, as well as being located in areas of the county that offer good opportunities to attract investment, in line with the County Durham Plan.

Inclusive Economic Strategy

23. In December 2022 the council adopted the County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES). It's vision for County Durham's future is to have a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business. The strategy aims to raise aspirations in young people and deliver a step-change in economic growth, with the council's and its partners activity aligned to deliver an agreed future vision.

24. A detailed Delivery Plan and monitoring framework to support the IES has been developed and members of the Committee will have received a separate report and presentation on progress with implementation of the Delivery Plan.

Devolution

25. The North East Mayoral Combined Authority was established on 7 May 2024, following a devolution agreement with central government. This agreement will provide the region with over £1.4 billion over the next 30 years, empowering the seven constituent local authorities to manage their activities in areas such as transportation skills and business support.
26. As part of the devolution deal, a North East Investment Zone (IZ) was established which provides £160m from government to accelerate growth and unlock private sector investment across the area. Four sites across the region were identified as part of the IZ, which included County Durham's NETPark as one of the two IZ Growth sites. Funding associated with IZ sites can be utilised to unlock sites for development and provide financial benefits for businesses seeking to locate in these areas.
27. In late 2024, the government set out its vision for a modern industrial strategy that will seek to provide a 10-year plan to deliver certainty and stability that businesses require to invest in high growth sectors to drive economic growth. The strategy, which is currently under development, will seek to address barriers to investment across several thematic areas, including: skills, recruitment of international talent, research and development, technology adoption, access to finance, infrastructure and planning.
28. Businesses in the County Durham area have been consulted as part of the development of the strategy to ensure the needs of our diverse business community is considered in its development. The plan is scheduled to be published in spring 2025.

Strategic Employment Sites Update

29. The County Durham Plan (CD Plan) identified 300 hectares of new employment land across the county and a further 250 hectares of land was identified for future development, beyond the plan period (post 2035).
30. These strategic employment sites each present opportunities for large scale commercial development and therefore the potential for significant job creation. Sites of this nature are located on key transport nodes such

as the A1(M) and A19 corridors and those which are the most successful have easy access to a skilled workforce, transport infrastructure and are complemented by ancillary amenities.

31. Collectively, these strategic employment sites have the capacity for over 6.9m ft² of commercial development, which could support the creation of over 17,000 jobs in the county.
32. These sites have been identified due to their strategic locations and regional, and potentially, national importance. Ensuring County Durham provides the right conditions to foster business expansion and secure inward investment opportunities, is key to driving economic growth and wealth creation in the area.
33. The council plays a key role in enabling development of strategic employment sites across the county, to ensure there remains a portfolio of opportunities to support business growth and to attract new inward investment opportunities. The extent of the council's involvement in each of the sites varies depending on its ownership and any developer(s) willingness to work in collaboration.
34. Due to their size and scale, the County Durham Plan makes provision for land up to 2035 and beyond, strategic sites can take many years to assemble and bring forward development. An update on progress with each of the strategic employment sites is provided below, and a further summary can be found at Appendix 2.

NETPark

35. NETPark is one of the UK's premier science and technology parks, owned and developed by the council. Located near Junction 60 of the A1(M), just north of Sedgefield, NETPark is already home to over 40 companies and provides employment for over 700 people operating in specialist research & development and science-based, high technology industries. Furthermore, the site also benefits from having three National Catapult Centres of Excellence: High Value Manufacturing Catapult, Satellite Applications Catapult and the Compound Semiconductor Catapult; as well as Durham University's Centre for Advanced Instrumentation and Orbit, the University Enterprise Zone.
36. In 2023 the Council agreed to invest in the development of Zones 2 and 3 on Phase 3 at NETPark to provide 232,150 ft² of laboratory, cleanroom and office space to enable companies to grow, scale-up and commercialise their operations. In addition to the council investment of £48m, the North East LEP provided £3.9m of funding for infrastructure

works for the scheme, alongside £10.7m of devolution regeneration funding from the North East Combined Authority (NECA).

37. Keir Construction were appointed to deliver the project and works commenced on site in July 2023. The £62.6m development is providing 11 units ranging in size from 11,000 ft² to 35,000 ft², which are on schedule to be completed by early April 2025, with one business already having committed to taking space and a further 5 units reserved.
38. In November 2024, the North East Combined Authority (NECA) also committed to providing £11.3m of Investment Zone funding for site preparation works to unlock further development on Zone 1 of Phase 3 and accelerate the development of a further commercial unit to enable a potentially significant inward investment opportunity.
39. Once fully developed, NETPark will comprise 77 ha of land and support 4,000 high value jobs. The site remains of both regional and national significance – as the UK's leading premier science, engineering and technology park it provides businesses with the conditions in which they can innovate and grow.

Jade Business Park

40. Providing an 18.85-hectare site located just off the A19, south of Murton, Jade has the capacity for over 655,000 ft² of industrial accommodation for industries operating in the advanced manufacturing, technology and distribution sectors.
41. The site is owned by Durham County Council and in 2021 the council funded the Phase 1 development with the speculative construction of 7 industrial units, ranging in sizes from 11,000 ft² to 51,000 ft²: creating a total of 155,000 ft² of commercial floorspace. The units were quickly occupied leading to the creation of 160 new jobs and supporting 5 inward investment opportunities.
42. Due to the success of the first phase, outline planning permission was secured in 2022 for Phase 2 of the development which would provide a further 550,000 ft². However, due to the challenges of inflation and construction costs, the second phase has not progressed. The developer is keen to explore options to speculatively build the units but there remains a viability gap which would require public sector intervention.
43. There have been several enquiries from end users but none have come to fruition and some end users have gone on to occupy existing units elsewhere in the region.

44. While not directly on the Jade site, the Eastern Green Link 1 (EGL1), a two-gigawatt high voltage electrical connection which provides a marine cable link between Thorntonloch beach, East Lothian and a landfall point north of Seaham, which will result in underground onshore cables will be installed that will run to a new convertor station and substation on the Hawthorn Pit Reclamation site, westerly of Jade.
45. This additional power capacity in the nearby area has resulted in lots of interest in the Jade site for power intensive uses such as data centres and other energy storage solutions. One of note and a potential location for Jade, is the Morven project.
46. The proposal involves the Morven Wind Farm, a significant offshore wind project by bp and EnBW, to be located in the North Sea about 60 kilometres off the Aberdeenshire coast. Underwater offshore cables will run from this and potentially reach landfall in the proximity of the Jade Site. To support this a dedicated substation as well as onshore cable corridors are required.
47. Morven are currently running a non-statutory consultation relating to the proposal. A dedicated substation will need to be constructed to connect the Morven project to the existing Hawthorn Pit substation. The new substation is needed to transform the power generated by the offshore wind turbines.
48. Morven are currently in the process of conducting a thorough site selection process, considering factors such as distance from homes, environmental constraints and technical constraints.
49. The extent to the proposed development, or land requirement, is not yet known but it may be situated on the Jade Business Park.

Durham Innovation District (Aykley Heads)

50. Aykley Heads, situated within Durham City, provides the catalyst from which to establish Durham as a leading location for knowledge intensive and innovation focussed businesses. Aykley Heads, in conjunction with Durham University's Business School and Milburngate, forms part of the Durham Innovation District.
51. This strategic site, which secured outline planning consent in 2021, is positioned in close proximity to the city centre and the railway station, spans a total of 62 hectares and has the capacity to bring forward 414,000 ft² of commercial development and support the creation of 3,700 jobs.

52. The first development took place in 2024 on Plot C - Corten House. The 38,000 ft² modern office development accommodates Durham County Council staff and supports the decommissioning phase of County Hall, which will make way for subsequent redevelopment of the wider area.
53. In early 2025, planning permission was granted to establish a Durham University supercomputer site on Plot D. The facility will build upon the university's world class skills and expertise and will act as a catalyst to attract businesses who wish to benefit from the power of high-performance computing; and would particularly appeal to those knowledge-intensive and data driven organisations and improve the productivity of business already in the area.
54. The council worked with Durham University on a joint vision for the wider site and embarked on a competitive procurement exercise to secure a joint venture partner to be involved in taking forward the Durham Innovation District. Following completion of the procurement exercise, a recommendation to appoint the preferred joint venture partner will be considered at the Council's February 2025 Cabinet meeting.
55. Aykley Heads is a unique opportunity for the county and will become regionally, nationally and internationally significant to support knowledge intensive industries and drive economic growth within the city, including potentially as part of an AI Growth Zone for the North East, following the recent Government call for expressions of interest.

Forrest Park

56. Located adjacent to Junction 59 of the A1(M), south of the existing Aycliffe Business Park, which has been a highly successful location in attracting inward investment and supporting the growth of existing businesses. In a joint venture between Durham County Council and the Forrest family, Forrest Park provides 55-hectares of land with planning consent for up to 1.75m ft² of industrial accommodation, suited to warehousing, distribution and manufacturing uses.
57. The council and [what was formerly] the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) funded £13m of enabling infrastructure works to create a new signalised junction and electricity substation, these works have been completed is enabling further development to come forward.
58. In 2022, outline planning was granted to provide 854,859 ft² of industrial accommodation across 8 units. However, since this time discussions have ensued, which has resulted in DPD committing in 2024 to establish a new 63,000 ft² parcel sorting and distribution facility and could be the first occupier of the site.

59. DPD's requirements have resulted in some minor revisions to the scheme and a variation to the current planning permission has been submitted, which will seek to accommodate these changes. Overall, it is proposed that the scheme will be delivered in a phased approach:
- a. Phase 1(a & b) – makes provision for 7 units with a total floorspace of 716,650 ft². DPD have formally committed to leasing unit 1, which will lead to the creation of up to 250 jobs. The remainder of phase 1(b) will accommodate a further 6 industrial units ranging from 46,250 ft² to 243,200 ft² for future development and will be customised to an end user's bespoke requirements.
 - b. Future phases – makes provision for a further 5 units, ranging in sizes from 40,000 ft² to 573,500 ft²; the combined developable floorspace of future phases will make provision for a further 1,762,550 ft².
60. These revisions are subject to approval by the council.
61. The enabling infrastructure works to the site and the recent interest from DPD, has resulted in early-stage discussions with another potential occupier, which could see a further 100,000 ft² development coming forward.
62. With the size and scale of the site, this positions Durham as a leading location for large scale manufacturing, warehousing and distribution; this coupled with its working age population and road infrastructure makes Forrest Park an extremely compelling inward investment proposition. Larger scale units are in short supply across the region, and this enables Durham to be competitive on a national and internal scale.

Integra 61

63. The largest of all the strategic employment sites, a site of significant scale, Integra 61 spans 83 hectares and is strategically located adjacent to the A1(M) at Junction 61. Already home to Amazon's advanced fulfilment centre which spans 2m ft² and provides employment for over 1,000 people, the site also benefits from several ancillary uses including Costa Coffee and Greggs.
64. In 2023, Citrus Group brought forward a development of 5 new speculative industrial units providing a total 640,000 ft² of industrial accommodation with unit sizes ranging from 43,000 ft² to 298,000 ft²; suited to warehousing, distribution and light manufacturing uses.
65. Take up of the units has been slow to gather pace but in late 2024 a lease was agreed on the 84,000 ft² unit with Re-store – a document

storage facility who were seeking to consolidate sites from Washington, Spennymoor and Middlesbrough. This will lead to 33 jobs being created.

66. In addition, the 43,000 ft² unit is currently under offer and advanced negotiations are underway with a logistics operator for the 298,000 ft² unit. The site is now gathering momentum, and it is expected more interest will come forward as the current interested parties move towards occupation.
67. In addition to industrial development, complementary ancillary uses are also progressing, including a KFC and a Tesla charging facility, alongside early-stage discussions for a petrol filling station and a self-storage facility.
68. Further speculative development was planned to take place at Integra 61 to provide additional floorspace of 140,000 ft² across two parcels of land: the first known as 'Evolution', which would make provision for 52,000 ft² across several units designed for start-up or early-stage businesses; while the second, known as 'Optima' would provide up to 88,000 ft² for businesses scaling up.
69. Detailed planning was sought for the 'Evolution' scheme, however due to market changes and the lack of demand for smaller units at the time, this was put on hold. Business Durham is working collaboratively with the developer and property agent(s) to scope the market demand for these smaller units, to provide the developer with the confidence to bring forward this development
70. In addition to the aforementioned plots, there remains up to 300,000 ft² of development capacity within Phase 1's land allocation. The developer remains flexible in offering both freehold and leasehold opportunities for emerging opportunities. Furthermore, there is an additional 42.64 ha of land, south of Integra 61, safeguarded for the next phase of development.

Supporting Business Growth & Inward Investment

71. Whilst delivering growth on a significant scale is key to broader economic development, it is critical that the council continues to support employment across its smaller employment locations, which typically provide commercial accommodation to SMEs and who are the enablers of local job creation opportunities in the hearts of the community.
72. Whilst this report does not specifically focus on these developments the council's business support service, Business Durham, does deliver

localised support and activities in these widespread employment locations. Such support includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Business engagement and account management activities,
- b. Delivery of business support activities and thematic workshops,
- c. Networking and collaboration opportunities,
- d. Property search and site selection,
- e. Land owner and developer engagement/facilitation,
- f. Access to funding and finance,
- g. Supply chain development,
- h. Skills and support programmes.

73. County Durham's strategic employment sites present a compelling opportunity to drive forward its inward investment strategy, in a place based and sector focussed approach to securing mobile inward investment opportunities.
74. A review of each of the strategic employment sites has been carried out and a strategy is under development that will set out a refreshed narrative for each site which will detail:
 - a. The current and pipeline of opportunity,
 - b. Its intended sectoral focus and appeal,
 - c. The wider infrastructure that supports business success (transport and workforce availability),
 - d. Its position within the regional and national landscape
75. This narrative will be used as a basis to engage with intermediaries, agents and developers to support in the promotion of these opportunities and increase the visibility of the opportunities across the county. In addition, work has already been undertaken with colleagues in the Department for Business and Trade and NECA to raise awareness of these opportunities and will further increase opportunities to secure inward investment opportunities.

Next Steps

Identifying Future Employment Land

76. The council's Employment Land Review was completed in 2018, and the refresh process will continue in 2025, to inform the impending review of the CD Plan.

77. The plan will continue to provide the framework for future development across the county, seek to identify the strategic employment sites and quantify anticipated future land requirements. Whilst allocated land in the current plan provides sufficient supply in the short to medium term, consideration must be given to the longer-term requirements to ensure continued economic growth and prosperity.
78. Intelligence gathered through the council's business engagement and inward investment enquiry handling will be gathered to support the ELR and CD Plan refresh process(es) to ensure the continued needs of Durham are met through future allocations.

Opportunity Sectors and Inward Investment

79. It is critical that County Durham continues to explore opportunities to raise its profile as a leading business investment location to ensure Durham stands out from other locations within the region and beyond.
80. The development of opportunity sector growth plans is key to providing a pathway to gathering a deeper understanding of the existing business base and their barriers to growth. Identifying areas of strength, opportunity and uniqueness can set County Durham apart from that of the North East, which is particularly important in a competitive environment in the retention and attraction of businesses. Utilising key selling messages from these studies can underpin wider messaging and marketing of the strategic employment sites and its advantages for businesses.
81. Delivering an excellent service to inbound inward investment enquiries must continue and businesses must remain at the heart of everything we do. Durham needs to ensure that it is suitably engaged with its developers, landowners and intermediaries to work collaboratively in securing inward investment opportunities. As part of this:
 - a. Sector propositions are under development for each of the key opportunity sectors and strategic employment sites, which position Durham as a key location for those operating in those industries and setting it apart from competitor locations.
 - b. A refresh of the gateways into the council, including websites and other customer entry points to ensure the breadth of opportunities is made available upon first contact.
 - c. County Durham's new place branding will be woven into business facing messaging to utilise the wider assets, heritage and quality of life.

82. Utilising research and intelligence tools, key locations within the UK will be identified where Durham can present a compelling case to businesses, to influence them to establish a base within the county. To achieve this the following will be undertaken:
 - a. Attendance at relevant events and trade shows,
 - b. Identification of cluster locations outside of the region,
 - c. Leverage Durham University's academic strengths and wider networks,
 - d. Utilisation of other intermediaries' networks to reach new audiences.

83. In addition to raising the profile of the county on a national level, exploration of international networks is already underway. This involves working closer with colleagues in Invest North East England, NECA's regional inward investment agency, and the Department for Business & Trade to:
 - a. Arm them with our refreshed narrative and propositions,
 - b. Ensure regional propositions are reflective of the unique strengths and opportunities available in County Durham,
 - c. Play a more pivotal role in overseas delegations to the region,
 - d. Raise the profile of foreign direct investment (FDI) taking place across the county,
 - e. Use key Durham based events and activities as a basis from which to attract overseas delegations.

84. Underpinning all of this is the need to continue to work with the wider development community to ensure we have the right sites and properties, in the right locations and at the right time to facilitate existing business growth and support the attraction of new businesses into the county.

85. In practical terms no business investment will make progress without appropriate land and premises and the number of investors wanting a building ready to move into far outstrips those wanting a bespoke unit building with the consequent impact on timescales. It is important therefore to have a stock of suitable buildings available and a successful working relationship with landlords, developers and agents.

Conclusion

86. This report sets out the importance of having an appropriate supply of employment land to enable delivery of economic growth. The council has a clear strategic vision to deliver this growth, and significant new investment opportunities through devolution. Crucially, through the County Durham Plan it also has significant allocations of employment land that complements its large existing employment land base, which continues to adapt to the needs of modern business.
87. The delivery of these sites, and other allocated employment land, is being enabled by the council through a mixture of direct delivery, securing external investment and attracting inward investment to support the creation of more and better jobs in the county.

Background papers

- a. [County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy 2022-2035](#)
- b. [County Durham Plan](#)
- c. [County Durham Vision](#)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

None.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Human Rights

None.

Climate Change

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2

| Strategic Site | Description | Owner/Developer | Public sector role | Timescale | Sector/Industry | Jobs |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| A1 Corridor | | | | | | |
| <p>NETPark Phase 3</p> <p><u>Location:</u></p> <p>Just off the A177 at Sedgefield</p> <p>Website</p> | <p>A 77-hectare site to expand the existing science park.</p> <p>232,151 ft² of new laboratory, office, production and storage space under construction to facilitate the growth of existing NETPark tenants and attract new inward investment opportunities.</p> | <p>DCC owns the land, the existing buildings at NETPark and subsequent development, which are managed by Business Durham.</p> | <p>The site has been developed by DCC over 15 years with European funding and funding from the NELEP Local Growth Fund.</p> <p>DCC agreed to invest £48m in the Phase 3 development, with £3.9m from NELEP and a further £10.7m of Devolution Regeneration funding from NECA.</p> <p>In 2024, NECA awarded £11.3m of IZ monies for infrastructure works to unlock Zone 1 and the wider site for development.</p> | <p>Construction of x11 units to Phase 3, ranging between 11,000 ft² and 32,000 ft² are underway and scheduled for practical completion in Q4 2025.</p> <p>Advanced discussions are continuing to bring forward a further 54,000 ft² facility to support a large inward investment opportunity.</p> | <p>Science and technology businesses, including in the semi-conductor, advanced electronics, space and satellite, and health and life sciences sectors.</p> <p>Tenants to date (Phases 1& 2):</p> <p>40 businesses including Kromek, Filtronic, Axenic, Ibex Innovations, Polyphotonix, PragmatlC, Tekgem, Magnitude Biosciences, Redditch Medical, Northumbria Pharma.</p> | <p>Target 1,250 jobs (Phase 3)</p> <p><u>To date:</u></p> <p>700+ jobs</p> |

| Strategic Site | Description | Owner/Developer | Public sector role | Timescale | Sector/Industry | Jobs |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| A1 Corridor (continued) | | | | | | |
| <p>Durham Innovation District (Aykley Heads)</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Durham City</p> | <p>A total of 62 hectares site available for development.</p> <p>A distinct opportunity to develop an Innovation District and high-quality office space at a successful business location, home to existing occupiers including Atom Bank, Waterstons, Durham Constabulary and the North East Chamber of Commerce, amongst others.</p> | <p>Site owned by DCC.</p> <p>Durham University are interested in being a key partner.</p> <p>A competitive procurement process to secure a Joint Venture partner for the site to accelerate its development has recently completed with the JV Partner expected to be announced shortly following Cabinet approval.</p> | <p>Development of the first building on the site 'Plot C' was funded by DCC.</p> <p>A Joint Venture Partnership with an investor/ developer is in the process of being agreed to bring forward commercial accommodation at the site.</p> | <p>The total amount of office accommodation is 414,000 ft², with Plot 3, the development of Corten House completed.</p> <p>In early 2025, planning was granted for a datacentre and supercomputer and underpins the sites aspirations as a business district for innovation.</p> | <p>Vision is to attract innovation and knowledge-intensive businesses, including those in the fintech and digital sectors, to establish Durham as a leading business innovation district.</p> | <p>The current estimate is that the land available for development has the potential to deliver up to 3,700 jobs.</p> |

| Strategic Site | Description | Owner/Developer | Public sector role | Timescale | Sector/Industry | Jobs |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| A1 Corridor (continued) | | | | | | |
| <p>Forrest Park</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Off Junction 59 of the A1(M) at Aycliffe Business Park</p> <p>Website</p> | <p>A 55-hectare site with planning consent for more than 1.75 million ft² of industrial and distribution accommodation.</p> <p>Phase 1 (a & b) - will comprise of 7 Industrial Units ranging in size from 46,250 ft² – 243,200 ft²</p> <p>Future Phases – will comprise 5 industrial units from 40,000 ft² to 573,000 ft², plus a 60-bed hotel & pub development.</p> <p>It forms an extension to Aycliffe Business Park, creating the largest industrial estate in the North East region.</p> | <p>A Joint venture – Forrest Park (Newton Aycliffe) Ltd – between DCC and the Forrest Family.</p> <p>The development Partner is Richardson Barberry.</p> | <p>DCC and NELEP funded £13m infrastructure works to create a new signalised junction and electricity substation, to open the site for future development; works have been completed.</p> | <p>10-15 Year Development Programme</p> <p>Outline planning permission granted for 1.75m ft² for mostly for general industrial, storage and distribution uses, with some roadside retail, food and trade counter use at the site entrance.</p> <p>A reserved matters application was submitted in 2024 for the erection of 7 industrial units.</p> <p>A variation was received to reduce the number of units in Phase 1 from 8 to 6; with an optional unit for future expansion.</p> | <p>Aimed at businesses in the warehousing, logistics and manufacturing sectors.</p> <p>Roadside frontage accommodates petrol filling station, retail units and KFC drive thru restaurant.</p> | <p>Target 3,200 jobs</p> |

| Strategic Site | Description | Owner/Developer | Public sector role | Timescale | Sector/Industry | Jobs |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| A1 Corridor (continued) | | | | | | |
| <p>Integra 61</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Bowburn at Junction 61 off the A1 and opposite Durham Services</p> <p><u>Website</u></p> | <p>83-hectare mixed use site adjacent to the A1(M).</p> <p>£300m mixed use development will provide a total of 3m ft² of industrial and logistics space, 300 new homes and 50,000ft² of roadside opportunities, including a family pub/restaurant, hotel, drive-thru, trade counter units, car showrooms, a care home and a nursery.</p> | <p>Citrus Group is the owner and developer of the site, supported by agents Avison Young and Colliers.</p> | <p>NELEP and DCC funded £7m infrastructure works to improve access to the site and address congestion and safety issues.</p> | <p>Phase 1 was completed in 2022, with Amazon taking 2,000,000 ft² at a cost of circa £150m.</p> <p>In 2023, 5 new units, totalling 640,000 ft² were speculatively completed.</p> <p>In late 2024, the first unit (84,000 ft²) was leased to a storage and distribution facility, which will become fully operational in 2025-26.</p> | <p>A premier industrial and logistics hub.</p> <p><u>Tenants to date:</u> Amazon has located its second robotics fulfilment centre in the North East at the site, one of the largest distribution centres in the UK, creating around 1,000 jobs.</p> <p>Re-store, a document storage company, has committed to leasing an 84,000 ft² unit, leading to the creation of 33 new jobs.</p> | <p>Target 5,000 jobs</p> <p><u>To date:</u> 1000+ jobs</p> |

| Strategic Site | Description | Owner/Developer | Public sector role | Timescale | Sector/Industry | Jobs |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| A19 Corridor | | | | | | |
| <p>Jade Business Park</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Murton next to Dalton Park retail outlet off the A19</p> | <p>18.85-hectare site reclaimed from Hawthorn colliery and cokeworks.</p> <p>Total capacity for the site is circa 655,000 ft² of industrial development for logistics, distribution and high value manufacturing industries.</p> <p>The site has benefitted from Enterprise Zone status, providing business rate discount to businesses locating in the area.</p> | <p>DCC owns the freehold and funded the speculative development of Phase 1.</p> <p>The 7 units were built by Highbridge Developments, whom have an option agreement on the land; and are supported by regional agent HTA and National agent CBRE.</p> | <p>As one of ten Enterprise Zone (EZ) sites in the region, NELEP funded £11m infrastructure works to unlock the site for development.</p> <p>DCC funded the £14m development of the Phase 1 units, which are managed by Business Durham.</p> <p>Phase 2 options for further development are being explored.</p> | <p>Phase 1 – x11 units completed August 2020, totalling 155,000 ft² and fully let.</p> <p>Outline planning permission for Phase 2 for up to 550,000 ft² was approved in October 2022.</p> <p>The developer is keen to bring forward a speculative development at phase 2 but there remains a viability gap at present and options are being explored.</p> | <p>Aimed at businesses in the advanced manufacturing, technology and distribution sectors.</p> <p><u>Tenants to date:</u></p> <p>Sumitomo Electric Wiring Systems Europe (SEWS-E)</p> <p>CoreHaus</p> <p>Power Roll</p> <p>Low Carbon Materials</p> <p>RGA Distributors</p> | <p>Target 1,000 jobs</p> <p><u>To date:</u> 178 jobs</p> |