

The Sedgefield Plan

Shaping the future of our area

**Neighbourhood Development Plan
for Sedgefield, County Durham
Planning period 2018 to 2033**

Adopted by Durham County Council

23 October 2019



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Foreword

Sedgefield is a wonderful place. The ancient centre and surrounding built up area that make up the town are attractive, with a range of housing for different individual or family needs. There are good schools, healthcare facilities and other amenities for residents, and a variety of employment opportunities. The local economy is driven by a combination of business interests, on the high street, a trading estate, a modern science park and many farms in the surrounding countryside. All of this happens in a location with an established conservation area, numerous listed buildings and much-cherished green spaces and parks. The beating heart of Sedgefield is its exceptionally strong community, with a huge number of active sports clubs, arts and cultural groups and other clubs and societies, all adding a richness to life in the town.

This rich tapestry has not magically appeared overnight, but has been woven together over many centuries, in the 700+ years since Sedgefield was granted its market charter. The town has changed much and that change has accelerated during the last half century. Sedgefield has welcomed development at the right level, as it has brought great benefits to the town and its people. Sedgefield will continue to welcome appropriate development, provided that it is undertaken to a level and in a manner that conserves the essential character of

the town. Sedgefield Town Council embarked on the process of preparing this neighbourhood plan for that purpose.

The Sedgefield Plan sets out a vision, objectives, policies and statements for positive development of land within the parish of Sedgefield. It reflects the views of the community in the areas of housing, infrastructure, community facilities, the economy and green spaces, and demonstrates how Sedgefield should grow between now and 2033. This plan is the result of extensive partnership work within the community and residents have engaged with the process frequently and with great enthusiasm. The Sedgefield Plan provides an admirable framework that will allow our town to continue to be a wonderful place to work, to enjoy leisure activities, to visit, and to live at any stage of life.



**Councillor Mel Carr,
Chairman of Sedgefield Town Council,
September 2018.**

Section 1

Introduction and Land Use Policies

(to be read in conjunction with 'Evidence Base' which can be accessed on
www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk)

Introduction

1.1 This document is the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Sedgefield, County Durham; it is branded 'The Sedgefield Plan', and it covers the area designated and agreed with Durham County Council as the Neighbourhood Area for this plan, which is also the area covered by the parish of Sedgefield. For the avoidance of doubt within this document, unless otherwise qualified, 'Sedgefield' refers to the town of Sedgefield, or 'village' as it is known by many residents and visitors alike. The development that this plan addresses is anticipated to take place in the town, as explained in the policies that are set out in the document. Within the parish, there are a number of smaller hamlets and groups of dwellings which will be referred to individually (see Appendix 1). These – and the countryside that surrounds them and the town – play an important role in shaping the character and community of Sedgefield. However, it is not expected that the kind or scale of development covered by this plan will take place in these areas outside the town.

1.2 The Sedgefield Plan is concerned with land use, its implications and impact for the planning period 2018 to 2033. The plan seeks to allow for positive sustainable development in Sedgefield, through projects that bring benefits to all sectors of the community, enhancing the attractiveness of the town as a place to live, study, work, run a business, and visit. Sedgefield Town Council is the Qualifying Body, and in September 2013 it appointed



an Independent Steering Group to produce a neighbourhood plan on behalf of the community. The project to develop The Sedgefield Plan has benefitted from the enthusiastic and committed support of the community who have contributed their thoughts, opinions and many ideas to the process. This plan is a true reflection of those thoughts and opinions.

- 1.3 A Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared which demonstrates that The Sedgefield Plan:
- i. has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - ii. contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and
 - iii. is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
 - iv. does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and has complied with prescribed matters.
- 1.4 In considering the Basic Conditions above, it is important to note that the current development plan for the area consists of the saved policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (SBLP) (adopted October 1996) (policies saved September 2007) insofar as they are consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF July 2018).
- 1.5 The community context for the growth and development of Sedgefield is important because it sets the legal framework for housing policies that are identified in this plan and against which these policies are justified by Sedgefield Town Council. The town council, and through it the community, had made a clear statement before the neighbourhood plan process began, that the town was very reluctant to accept more than 300 new homes, on dispersed sites. A community survey, which can be accessed on www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk, articulated residents' views. Sedgefield Town Council and the community are of the opinion that that the scale and location of growth in Sedgefield are a local matter and are best dealt with through this plan.
- 1.6 In the time since work on this plan began, several housing developments have been given planning permission in Sedgefield. A total number of 448 (as of July 2018) new homes on medium to large sites have been given approval. This scale of new housing represents major growth for a town of Sedgefield's size.
- 1.7 The NPPF states that "where the Council deems appropriate, new development will be required to contribute towards the provision and /or improvement of physical, social and environmental infrastructure, taking into account the nature of the proposal and identified local or strategic needs". Through the extensive community consultation employed by The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group it has become clear that the community anticipates that Section 106 contributions / developer contributions will enable investment in facilities for young people, sports and recreation infrastructure. To encourage this, the town council will seek to work with others, as appropriate.

- 1.8 Sedgefield Town Council and the wider community believe that The Sedgefield Plan should remain a 'live' document and a tool to manage change which will be updated in accordance with legal requirements. This plan not only provides a framework for allowing appropriate development, but also offers useful guidance that will help all stakeholders to manage a sustainable and successful long-term future for the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Area.

Vision

- 1.9 Our vision for the parish of Sedgefield is for it to continue to develop and grow; for it to thrive and prosper, while preserving its distinctive character and community cohesiveness, its rural landscape, open spaces and historical heritage. This will deliver a sustainable future for existing and future residents of all ages and will be achieved by delivering against the objectives that follow.

The Objectives of 'The Sedgefield Plan'

- 1.10 The Sedgefield Plan has the following core objectives:
- i. **Managing development and growth of the built environment:** The community accepts that the development and growth of Sedgefield is necessary, but such development must respect the existing character and heritage, and conserve its ambience and green spaces for future generations.
 - ii. **Preserving Sedgefield's distinctive identity:** There is a need to conserve Sedgefield's distinctiveness from the physical growth and development of neighbouring communities such as Wynyard, Stockton and Fishburn, to conserve its important identity as a modern progressive community with a historic heritage.
 - iii. **Green spaces for sport and recreation:** To promote the creation of green spaces for sport and recreation that contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community now and in the future.
 - iv. **Ensuring new building is compatible with the conservation areas:** To ensure that the scale, scope and character of new developments are in keeping with the existing environmental composition, and in particular the central conservation areas.
 - v. **Supporting generational continuity:** Future development must provide affordable housing for acquisition and rental in the community to enable the continuity of family development.
 - vi. **Supporting young people:** To acknowledge that young people are critical to a successful future of the community and plan to provide facilities that support their development in the community.

- vii. **Infrastructure, facilities and amenities:** To ensure that the impact of new homes in Sedgefield and adjacent communities does not overwhelm existing infrastructure, facilities and amenities but instead complements and enhances.
- viii. **The elderly and infirm:** To create housing for independent living, as well as facilities and amenities that are accessible to those who have limited mobility, encouraging intergenerational integration.
- ix. **Supporting business and industry:** To strengthen links between schools and industry, through mentoring, work placement and inspiration to achieve aspirations.
- x. **Management of on street parking:** The community will work with town and county councils to implement a creative approach to the provision of parking spaces and the management of permitted use of bays.

1.11 This plan sets out the details of a vision, objectives, strategy and policies, that the community has discussed, debated and agreed for the development and growth of Sedgefield for the planning period 2018 to 2033.

1.12 Following thorough and extensive consultation with the community, stakeholders, landowners, developers, statutory consultees and interested parties, the document sets out the community's views of the preferred options for development and growth of Sedgefield, taking into consideration the impact and implications on the character, environment, facilities and amenities of the area.

1.13 Community consultation and engagement underpins all of the policies and community development strategies, including young people's views and opinions, which are crucial to the success of this plan because they will inherit its legacy.

1.14 The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group was formed by Sedgefield Town Council in September 2013; it consisted of an independent Chairman, community volunteers and town councillors. The steering group established four specific 'topic' groups to gather intelligence and evidence to reveal issues and develop ideas on a thematic basis; they were Housing, Infrastructure, Community and Environment, and Economy. The group strengthened input to the process by recruiting more volunteers from the community.

1.15 Saved policy E4 of the SBLP (Designation and Safeguarding of Green Wedges); states that "proposals for built development will normally be refused in the following green wedges which provide the settings of towns and villages ... South of Sedgefield Village". The reason for this policy, as set out in the SBLP, is that green wedges comprise the open areas around towns and villages and between parts of settlements which maintain distinction between the countryside and built-up areas, prevent the coalescence of

adjacent places and provide a rural setting to development. They can also provide a link between the countryside and built-up areas and can be a valuable recreation and wildlife resource. The wildlife of open space can be enhanced by modifying their management and through additional planting. The SBLP goes on to state that green wedges must be conserved and built development within them be resisted. The type of land uses that the council will encourage in green wedges include agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor leisure uses, wildlife reserves, and other appropriate open space uses.

- 1.16 Developer interest in Sedgefield as a location for new houses confirms the town as a premium location. The sites on which developers have sought planning consent or have expressed an ambition to do so are listed on a map in the supporting evidence. These sites combined have revealed a potential for over 3,000 new houses around the periphery of the settlement. This has created a clear impression of a “community under siege”. Following the revelation of the extent of developers’ ambitions for Sedgefield, a Site Preferences Survey was undertaken. This survey, which was distributed to each household, asked respondents to rank their preference for each of the sites identified. The resulting analysis, shown in supporting evidence, demonstrates a strong preference for brownfield sites.
- 1.17 In the draft County Durham Plan, submitted in April 2014 (withdrawn in 2015), Durham County Council proposed an allocation of 470 new houses for Sedgefield to be located on a single site to the South of Eden Drive. The proposal included the re-routing of Stockton Road from its present position to a new road through the housing estate onto the A689 roundabout contrary to the Sedgefield Borough Council saved policy D5. The proposal met with resistance in the community. It also emerged that the draft County Durham Local Plan housing allocation was based on research that assessed the housing requirement in neighbouring communities of South Durham, but allocated the outcome exclusively to Sedgefield. In response to the County Durham Local Plan, Sedgefield Town Council stated that it would accept no more than 300 houses dispersed on sites within the community. In the period since Sedgefield Town Council resolved to develop this plan, approval has been granted for the building of 448 new homes in development schemes within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.18 The Sedgefield Plan has developed and introduced a ‘Built-up Area Boundary’ (see Appendix 2) that will enable the delivery of housing that is sympathetic to the history, heritage and character of Sedgefield while protecting the community from urban sprawl, by focussing on the development of suitable brownfield sites before greenfield sites in accordance with NPPF. The Built-up Area Boundary takes into account permissions that have been granted.

- 1.19 The Sedgefield Plan must be a key supporting component of the County Durham Local Plan when it is published, and will be used to determine land use and planning decisions that have an immediate and future impact on Sedgefield.
- 1.20 In the development and writing of this plan, Sedgefield Town Council is grateful for the support and advice provided by Durham County Council's Planning Department, and Planning Aid through its local representative and for a County Durham Community Foundation grant. The town council is also very grateful for the support of a host of volunteers who helped with publicity distribution and actively participated in the project by offering views, ideas and suggestions as the plan developed.

Challenges and Principles for the Development and Growth of Sedgefield

Challenges

- 1.21 The critical challenge for Sedgefield is to enable growth and development while protecting the character of the community as a small town with an ancient village at its heart.
- 1.22 Growth and development must reflect the views expressed by the community in various surveys and consultations. These views have revealed the need to:
- Conserve the rural atmosphere
 - Conserve and create green spaces
 - Consider brownfield development sites first
 - Develop greenfield sites sensitively
 - Balance new development with the provision of adequate and appropriate services, amenities and infrastructure.
- 1.23 An important challenge to the future of the community is managing its attractiveness to people from outlying areas with regards to access to facilities and amenities such as health services, and to visitors who use shops, pubs and restaurants. Visitors and residents should be encouraged to consider sustainable transport options, such as walking and cycling in and around the town. It is also important to encourage people to tend more active lifestyles, supporting local, regional and national health and wellbeing initiatives.
- 1.24 New development in adjacent communities such as Wynyard and Stockton-on-Tees, whose residents use Sedgefield's facilities and amenities, schools and retail, are an important issue when considering the incremental increase that the impact of new building and population growth will have on Sedgefield. It is therefore important to phase growth so that the existing infrastructure is not overwhelmed.

Challenges and Principles for the Development and Growth of Sedgefield

Principles

1.25 In preparing this plan, important principles have been followed. These reflect the will of the community in Sedgefield and are intended to inform Durham County Council, and assist the local authority as it considers Sedgefield in the development of the County Durham Plan. The principles listed here are not exclusive, and do not cover the breadth of this plan's objectives and policies. They include, but are not limited, to:

1.26 New developments in and around Sedgefield that facilitate growth will be looked on more favourably if they are in character with the existing settlement in terms of design, density, efficiency and sustainability. When it is allowed, new development should add value to the community and not diminish its desirability as a place to live, raise children and retire.

1.27 Development can have a significant impact on existing facilities, amenities and infrastructure. The best chance for it to add value and successfully integrate into the town is when it is matched by investment in the infrastructure's capacity.

1.28 To help sustain a vibrant community for the long term, new development should come with funds for investment into the community for amenities and facilities, for example, for young people, sport and recreation.

1.29 In order to ensure that Sedgefield is an attractive place to live for multi-generations, new development should incorporate affordable accommodation for young families who wish to live in Sedgefield, provide facilities for elderly who wish to be accommodated in the community close to their families, and also for people with disabilities, who have a right of access and to live independently in a community that is sympathetic to their needs.

Local Context

- 1.30 Sedgefield is a historic village set around an ancient green and bounded by a conservation area that features many 17th and 18th century buildings which are listed (see conservation area designation and map in Appendix 3). The most prominent feature is St Edmund's Church which dates from the 12th century. Surrounding the centre are a number of modern housing estates that have been added to the community since the 1960s, meeting the needs of the then growing population, attracted to the area by the burgeoning petrochemical and engineering industry on Teesside. Today, the population of the parish is 5211 (2011 census) who live in 2373 residential properties, which equates to a population of 4846 and 2232 residential properties within the Built-up Area Boundary. This will further increase within the plan period, with the addition of 448 new dwellings on three development sites in the town.



- 1.31 Sedgefield is a community that has a strong sense of civic pride, reflected in the many groups, societies and organisations formed to enable the pursuit of interests and hobbies, to provide community services, and to promote the success and sustainability of the community. An outstanding example is 'Sedgefield in Bloom', a dedicated group of volunteers who maintain gardens and floral displays that have won the Royal Horticultural Society 'Britain in Bloom' awards on several occasions in the last few years, including gold medals. Other thriving groups include mother and toddler groups, 'Days In Days Out' which provides support for the older generation, Sedgefield Squash Club, Sedgefield Players, an award winning amateur dramatic society, and Sedgefield Civic Trust. Many of these and other organisations are based in the Parish Hall and Ceddesfeld Hall, once a Georgian vicarage that is now a community centre owned by Sedgefield Town Council and leased by Sedgefield Community Association to support activities and organisations. The annual Mediaeval Fayre is run by Sedgefield Community Association to raise funds for the maintenance of Ceddesfeld Hall.

- 1.32 Sedgefield is home to Sedgefield Harriers, an extremely successful athletics club that has won local, regional and national awards for its achievements in working with young people, and which enjoys regular success in track and field, and in road races and cross country events.
- 1.33 Knotty Hill Golf Centre is located to the west of the community and is a great success with two challenging 18 hole courses and a par three course to encourage young people.
- 1.34 Adjacent to the golf course is a very successful quad bike and off road motor sport venue that attracts in excess of 30,000 participants per year. It has planning permission for expansion. It serves an important role in training young people to be responsible riders under supervision, and adolescents to hone their skills off road and not illegally.
- 1.35 Sedgefield's business community is an important element of the community and this includes a vibrant small industrial/retail estate, NETPark, a world class technology park located on the edge of the town and supported by Durham County Council and Durham University. Current plans are for the site to support 10,000 jobs (see "Sedgefield a Place to do Business").
- 1.36 Sedgefield is classified as a small town; it is represented by two county councillors and has its own town council comprising of 15 councillors.

History of Sedgefield

- 1.37 Until recently the recorded history of Sedgefield commenced with the Romans, who built Cades Road that is thought to run to the west of the settlement, through East Park. A Romano British settlement was revealed there in 2003 following excavations by Durham University School of Archaeology and Channel 4's Time Team.
- 1.38 A recent archaeology survey on a potential development site close to Eden Drive has revealed an Iron Age enclosure bounded by a double ditch and at least one roundhouse. The survey found Iron Age pottery, Romano British pottery and a flint arrowhead, potentially taking Sedgefield's history back to at least the first or second century BC.
- 1.39 At the heart of the town is St Edmund's Church which dates from the 12th century. It is a very prominent building located at the highest point of the community. Views of it on entry to Sedgefield are very important to residents and visitors and it can be seen high on the skyline from the A1(M), and the East Coast Mainline. It is an important historical landmark. At one time this was one of the richest parochial 'livings' in England as evidenced by the once very large vicarage adjacent to the church that is now two substantial domestic dwellings, and a large community centre.



- 1.40 The green was once the site of the market cross erected following the grant of a market charter in 1312 by the Bishop of Durham. A modern cross was unveiled by the Princess Royal on a visit in 2012 to mark the 700th anniversary of the charter, and the market still operates as a monthly farmers' market. The annual Mediaeval Fayre centred on the

green attracts thousands of visitors who contribute to the upkeep of the community centre, Ceddesfeld Hall.

- 1.41 On Shrove Tuesday, the town hosts the ancient Sedgefield Ball Game, first contested in 1325 between farmers and tradesmen. It is played by large groups of people who seek to score a goal in one of two 'alleys' at either end of the town. The winner gets to keep the ball which is made especially for the occasion each year.



- 1.42 Immediately to the west of Sedgefield is Hardwick Country Park and Hardwick Hall Hotel. The recently restored park was laid out in the 18th century as a pleasure garden for the incumbent of the hall. Both park and hotel are very successful venues, the park in particular attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and is host to many events.
- 1.43 Sedgefield is essentially a rural agricultural community; the annual Sedgefield Agricultural Show had its 16th event in 2017. In the 19th century, coal was mined at Fishburn, an adjacent community, and a very large Victorian asylum was founded in Sedgefield, known as Winterton Hospital. This was home to more than 2,000 patients until 1996 when the site was closed. The hospital was demolished and new homes constructed on Winterton Park. The Grade 2 listed church of St Luke's still remains.
- 1.44 In the 1960s Sedgefield began to expand with the construction of modern housing estates around the centre. These were a response to demand for houses created by the growing petrochemical and engineering sectors on Teesside some 15 miles distant.
- 1.45 Modern Sedgefield is a thriving small town with a village at its heart; it is home to schools and many clubs, societies and groups all of which contribute to the development of a civic pride and sense of community that has built up over centuries.

The Sedgefield Plan Strategy

- 1.46 Sedgefield has continued to thrive by welcoming development and integrating growth throughout its 1,000 years of recorded history. In recent times the community has accepted new homes, facilities and public amenities to accommodate the housing demands of the local and regional economy. The strategy of The Sedgefield Plan is to continue this positive response to development and growth while conserving the heritage, history, character and rural environment that is core to Sedgefield's attractive location between the former South Durham coalfields and industrial Teesside.
- 1.47 Following a careful assessment of the evidence and the response analysis from extensive community consultation, The Sedgefield Plan strategy is to focus on well-designed development to meet identified needs within Sedgefield while protecting and enhancing the character of the town at the heart of the community and the open countryside beyond. This was central to the approach taken in the SBLP saved policy E4 (adopted October 1996), that recognised its importance in preserving the character of the community, the historic entrance to the village and the views of the Grade I Listed St Edmund's Church and the village centre.
- 1.48 As The Sedgefield Plan evolved it became increasingly clear that landowners and developers encouraged by current planning legislation and the perceived attractiveness of Sedgefield as a profitable location, have seen an opportunity to maximise their options by seeking planning permission and/or expressing aspirations to build up to 3,000 new houses. If realised, such development will more than double the size of the existing community.
- 1.49 The Sedgefield Plan strategy is positively aligned with the key elements of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This plan seeks to:
- Empower local people to shape their surroundings and sets out a positive vision for the future of the area;
 - Positively support opportunities to meet development needs of the area;
 - Find ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
 - Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, businesses and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;

- Secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Take into account the different roles and character of the area, promoting the vitality of the built-up area and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- Support the transition of a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encouraging the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encouraging the use of renewable resources;
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution - although this plan does not allocate any land for development, it does prefer land of lesser environmental value where consistent with other policies in the NPPF;
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing previously developed (brownfield sites), provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land;
- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

Strategic Review Every 5 Years

- 1.50 The Sedgefield Plan is dynamic and will be reviewed by Sedgefield Town Council at five yearly intervals to 2033 to ensure that it keeps abreast of the prevailing social and economic context and to reflect the refreshed views and opinions of the community on emerging opportunities.

Monitoring of The Sedgefield Plan

- 1.51 The Sedgefield Plan has set out the strategy for the development and growth of Sedgefield to 2033. Sedgefield Town Council will monitor its performance to ensure that the strategic authority is referring to it and applying its policies to decisions on the use of land, its impact and implications for the period of the plan.

Community Action, Green Spaces

1.52 The Town Council is keen to protect green spaces which are valuable community assets for recreation and ecology. A number of spaces are identified below as important to the community and where the Town Council will seek to promote and protect them. This is not a formal planning policy but rather an aspiration. Depending on the individual attributes of these spaces there may be statutory national or local planning policies operated by Durham County Council which lend weight to their protection.

- i. The designated Village Green
- ii. The Eden Drive recreation area.
- iii. The Sedgefield Primary School playing field
- iv. The 'three cornered field' (SHLAA¹ reference 7S/F/124), and land adjacent to Beacon Lane/A689/Stockton Road (SHLAA reference 7S/F/123)
- v. The playing field off Station Road backing Queen's Drive and Hornby Avenue.
- vi. The Beacon Lane Cemetery and Lane (old link to A689)
- vii. The Sedgefield Community College area and playing fields including the Hardwick Primary School
- viii. There are several wooded buffer areas that should be protected;
 - (a) Wooded areas bordering Durham Road
 - (b) The area of grass in front of the Winterton Park estate (bounded on the east by the B1278/Salters Lane link, north by NETPark, west by St. Luke's Crescent and south by Wellgarth Mews) to be retained as an amenity for that estate.
- ix. Allotments – Salters Lane adjacent to Winterton Cottages and the allotments next to Sedgefield Community College on Butterwick Road.



¹ SHLAA – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.53

Policy G1a - Development within the Built-up Area Boundary

For the purposes of this policy the term development includes new build, changes of use and extensions but not householder development.

Development within the Built-up Area Boundary will be supported providing it accords with national and local planning policies.

Policy Justification

Historical context:

Sedgefield is a historic village, set in a rural landscape, surrounded by green fields and undulating farmland. The setting enhances its identity and only by preserving this will its character remain distinctive.

Although over several years development has taken place in and around the parish, there has always been protection afforded to Sedgefield by Conservation Policy and Article 4 Direction to ensure that the intrinsic character of Sedgefield is retained and conserved.

The existing settlement:

A Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) for Sedgefield (Appendix 2) has been drawn up, taking into account the extent and surroundings of the current settlement. The boundary includes recent developments permitted on land south of Eden Drive, on the site of the old community hospital and on the site of Turners. It allows for additional suitable residential development, including infill development and change of use. This is not intended to cover householder proposals. Anything outside of the BUAB will be considered as countryside for national and local planning policy purposes.

Policy Justification (cont.)

Any new residential properties that are developed within the BUAB must meet the criteria relating to density, mix of housing, and design and style that are outlined in policies in the rest of the development plan.

The boundary has also been drawn to accommodate the proposed expansion of NETPark, a major employment site for science and technology enterprises in the northern part of the town. This expansion has been approved by Durham County Council.

The NPPF in section 6 encourages the development of strong competitive economy and appropriate business and industrial development is encouraged within the Built-up Area Boundary. Saved policies in the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan also direct appropriate scale of business and industry to the town and there is potential for this to continue in future local plans.

In drawing up the policy consideration has been given to landscape and heritage qualities as they are an intrinsic part of the community and are important to both residents and visitors. Around Sedgefield there are sites that were inhabited, and landscapes created, in the Bronze Age and Iron Age, the Roman period and the middle ages. The Romans created Cades Road that runs through East Park along which an important Romano British settlement developed and there are the remains of abandoned mediaeval villages at Hardwick Park, Embleton and West Layton. There is clear evidence of mediaeval farming in a field at the entrance to the community, at the junction of Beacon Lane and Stockton Road, that shows 'rig and furrow' ploughing. The 'green wedge' was created by Sedgefield Borough Council "to protect views of the church at the entrance to the community".

Policy Justification (cont.)

Areas within the parish, have been excluded from the BUAB because development in those areas would change the shape and physical cohesiveness of Sedgefield, and start the process of unacceptable spread into the surrounding rural countryside. The following areas that surround Sedgefield are deemed unsuitable for future development:

- Land to the west of Sedgefield occupied by Hardwick Park (including East Park), which is a registered park and garden, and therefore a designated heritage asset. This area of historic park land includes land covered by the conservation area, which is also afforded protection by national policy;
- Land south of the natural boundary to Sedgefield that has been created by the A689;
- Land to the east of Sedgefield that Durham County Council has identified as unsuitable for housing in its most recent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (sites 7/SF/050 – Land East of Sedgefield Community College, 7/SF/110 – Land East of Butterwick Road, 7/SF/123 – Land East of Stockton Road).

Since 2013, housing development has been approved for three sites within the BUAB - land South of Eden Drive, a site to the east of Salters Lane (previously occupied by Turners of Sedgefield), and the old community hospital site to the west of the B1278/Salters Lane between Sedgefield and Fishburn. This will deliver 448 homes and it is expected that given average build out rates (circa 30 dwellings p/a) and the lifespan of the neighbourhood plan (up to 2033) that this will be sufficient for local need.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.54

Policy G1b - Development outside the Built-up Area Boundary

Development will be supported where it meets national and local policy requirements.

The NPPF and strategic local plan policies allow certain relatively small-scale development that protects the character of the countryside. Other development, which can justify a rural location including dwellings for agricultural workers, farm diversification and recreation and tourism development may also be allowed.

In the case of proposals for affordable rural exception housing it must be demonstrated that:

- ***The development is immediately adjacent to an existing settlement;***
- ***There is an identified local need for affordable housing sufficient to justify the scale and nature of the development, with accompanying evidence showing this could not reasonably be satisfied in other settlements in the vicinity;***
- ***Any market housing is only included where it can be robustly demonstrated that this is essential to support the viable delivery of affordable housing. Only the minimum necessary should be included; and***
- ***Affordable housing is made available to the local community identified as being in need, with priority given to occupation by households with a local connection.***

Where employment development is proposed it must be demonstrated that:

- ***It is of a scale and type that is appropriate to its location; and***
- ***It could not be more appropriately situated on an existing or allocated industrial estate, an existing suitable building or other land within other settlements in the vicinity.***

All proposals must be in scale and keeping with the form and character of the neighbourhood area and the local landscape.

Policy Reason

This policy seeks to protect the rural infrastructure and landscape which surrounds and enhances the setting of Sedgefield.

The distinctive character of Sedgefield is greatly enhanced by the ancient landscape that surrounds the community and makes it an attractive place to live. It is a landscape that has been shaped for millennia by many, including prehistoric farmers, the Romans and mediaeval farmers.

This policy is in conformity with the general restraint and landscape protection policies in the NPPF which aim to promote sustainable development in the countryside. These policies seek a balance between environmental protection and enhancement and providing for local housing needs, rural employment and facilities to provide for sustainable communities.

The 'green wedge' was established by Sedgefield Borough Council and remains of great importance to the community. This policy is in line with saved policy E4 of the SBLP (Designation and Safeguarding of Green Wedges), which states that "proposals for development will normally be refused in the following green wedges which provide the settings of towns and villages ... South of Sedgefield Village". The SBLP also states that green wedges must be conserved and development within them be resisted. The type of land uses that are encouraged in green wedges include agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor leisure uses, wildlife reserves, and other appropriate open space uses.

The 'Built-up Area Boundary' (see Appendix 2) enables the delivery of housing that is sympathetic to the history, heritage and character of Sedgefield while protecting the community from urban sprawl, by focussing on the development of suitable brownfield sites before greenfield sites, in accordance with NPPF. The Built-up Area Boundary takes into account permissions that have been granted.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.55

Policy H1 - Older Persons Housing

To enable the needs of the ageing population to be met, at least 10% of private or intermediate housing on sites of 10 units or more shall, in relation to design and house type, increase the housing options of older people. Appropriate house types considered to meet this requirement include:

- ***Level access flats***
- ***Bungalows, particularly single storey***
- ***Sheltered housing or Extra Care Scheme***

The provision of this type of accommodation may be overridden if it can be demonstrated with evidence there is no further demand for the level of accommodation required by the policy.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
<p>Sedgefield has an ageing population some of whom are infirm, many of whom wish to downsize their accommodation or to live life as independently as they can. Single storey bungalows are desired to accommodate this demand.</p> <p>New dwellings should make provision for the changing needs and life-styles of an ageing population and built to the 'lifetime homes' standard in accordance with current national guidance.</p>	<p>The 'community survey' (January 2014) showed that 35% of the population of Sedgefield are retired people and that there is a strong desire for more bungalows to enable downsizing for those who wish to release their property for sale and to meet the needs of the less able or infirm to lead independent lives. This is very important as it is the policy of the Government through the NHS among other departments, to encourage the elderly and infirm to be independent, and to be released from hospital to be treated and recover at home within their communities.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.56

Policy H2 -

Design, Style and Density of Housing

All development proposals must: Demonstrate good design principles that respond to local character and distinctiveness; deliver a density of housing that is appropriate for the local setting and historic character but where these issues are not predominant makes effective use of land; and utilise appropriate materials.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
As set out in Paragraph 124 of the NPPF, good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. Therefore, all development proposals should contribute positively to making places better for people. To achieve this, the density of housing in any development must also be sensitive to the specific location for which it is intended. However, in accordance with the NPPF there is a need to achieve the efficient use of land on appropriate sites where the site is relatively self-contained or there are not prevailing issues of local character to be considered.	<p>The village at the heart of Sedgefield is historic and boasts many buildings of the Georgian period and some that are much earlier, including a 12th century church. Many of these buildings are listed and all are within a Conservation Area. New homes in Sedgefield must be designed to be sympathetic to the historic character of the community and constructed from materials that reflect the existing village centre. For example, developers should avoid the modern tendency to build steeply pitched roofs and brightly coloured brickwork.</p> <p>New construction must give the visitor a prospect that enhances the special nature of this community. The density of existing housing in Sedgefield varies, depending on its location, and new development must also be incorporated in a way that sustains the physical attractiveness of the town.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.57

Policy T1 - Cycling and Walking Access

The improvement of existing and the development of new walking and cycling routes will be supported.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
To actively encourage cycling and walking, and to minimise the use of private cars within the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area and to promote healthy communities in accordance with Chapter 8 of the NPPF.	Durham County Council planners and highway engineers have made it clear to The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group that they pre-suppose that people in new and existing developments will walk to use facilities and amenities. This assumption has been challenged because of a high proportion of retired elderly and infirm residents, and school runs and visitors. Cycling is an increasingly important choice for a wide range of ages and ability as a means of local travel and indeed commuting, therefore it is important that developers and house builders provide paths and kerbing that facilitates the use of bicycle and 'buggy'/wheelchair use.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.58

Policy R1 - Recreational Facilities

Development for indoor and outdoor recreation and sport facilities will be supported subject to conformity with statutory planning policies including those in this plan.

Future development of sports and community facilities must be of an appropriate scale and in keeping with the form and character of Sedgefield and the local landscape.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
<p>Sedgefield is potentially well served with recreational facilities and amenities which are listed below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Hardwick Farm – recreational motorsport and shooting • Knotty Hill golf centre – 36-hole course and facilities • Six lane running track – Sedgefield Harriers Athletics Club is pursuing a project to develop the facility. • Sedgefield Bowls Club – planning permission has been granted • Sedgefield Cricket Club • Sedgefield Rugby Club • Sedgefield Squash Club. 	<p>There is currently no dedicated facility or indeed proper organisation of facilities for the young people of Sedgefield. There are several established institutions such as Scouts, Guides and amateur dramatics, but there is a clear need for dedicated facilities for young people.</p> <p>Sedgefield Harriers is a very successful organisation in which membership from adults and young people has grown rapidly since its relatively recent foundation. The club has won national awards and its members frequently win trophies and achieve high performance standards.</p>

Policy Reason (cont.)	Policy Justification (cont.)
<p>However, the community and young people's surveys revealed that there is an urgent demand for a dedicated young people's centre in Sedgefield, either stand alone or as part of a wider community facility.</p> <p>In 2017, following a significant period of research and consultation, Sedgefield Town Council launched Sedgefield Youth Club, providing a regular meeting time for young people. Furthermore, the club has since been constituted and its committee – made up of young people - is taking a lead in identifying needs in Sedgefield. The town council has also worked closely with the Area Action Partnership, Investing in Children, Sedgefield Community College and the town's two primary schools, to engage with young people and establish their ongoing needs.</p>	<p>Sedgefield Harriers is raising funds for a new all-weather running track and field facility. There is strong community support for this project.</p> <p>Low Hardwick Farm attracts over 30,000 visitors annually, most of whom are young people, and it has plans for expansion.</p> <p>Sedgefield Squash Club has developed plans to build a third court on its facility in Ceddesfeld Hall grounds and Sedgefield Cricket Club also has plans to develop its clubhouse on Station Road, where Sedgefield District Rugby Football Club is also based.</p> <p>Sedgefield Bowls Club has had plans approved to develop an outdoor bowling green on a site immediately adjacent to the cricket club.</p> <p>All existing and planned recreational facilities are extremely well supported.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.59 Policy E1 - Visual & Spatial Impact

Development should enhance the visual and spatial characteristics of the plan area. In particular development should respect significant views of designated and non-designated heritage assets and views referred to in the Sedgefield Conservation Area Appraisal. These views should be protected from significant intrusive development which has a demonstrable impact on the character of the heritage asset or area.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
To maintain the attractive visual and spatial setting of Sedgefield by ensuring that any development is in line with the NPPF and the latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal (adopted in May 2016 and available at www.durham.gov.uk).	Sedgefield is approached mainly from four sides, via the A689 from the east and west and the A177 from the north and south. These four approaches present appealing views of St. Edmund's Church, surrounded by trees, which are valued and important to both local residents and visitors. Excessive development in Sedgefield would permanently destroy one of the most picturesque and unique views in North East England. The neighbourhood plan area contains many designated and non-designated heritage assets, including two conservation areas. These make a significant contribution to Sedgefield's attractiveness and distinctiveness and are vital to the long-term sustainability of the town and surrounding area as an appealing place to live, do business, work or visit.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.60

Policy E2 - Accessible Open Spaces

When open space is provided it shall be integrated with the public footpath network and, where possible with other areas of community use.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
To encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport to move around the community, reducing reliance on private cars, encouraging active lifestyles, interaction between all generations and backgrounds, and improving social cohesion. This policy provides additional detail in respect of the open space requirements set down in the local plan.	<p>New housing development is required to provide open space through the local plan to the standards set out in the most up to date Open Space Needs Assessment. Children's ability to play outdoors in safe, accessible play areas, where their parents or carers can provide supervision is paramount.</p> <p>To promote healthy, active lifestyles and cohesive communities, development must ensure public access to these open spaces and be available and connected to the rest of the community.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.61

Policy E3 - Sub-division of existing gardens

Development within gardens in the conservation area (as identified on the map in Appendix 3 on page 39) will be resisted unless it is small-scale, which does not have a significant impact on the character of the area or the setting of heritage assets.

Policy Reason	Policy Justification
To conserve the special character of Sedgefield, in particular the 'burgage' plots which are part of its heritage and feature in the Sedgefield Conservation Area, and to discourage over development.	Sedgefield has a historic village at its heart, set around a village green, built on land owned by the Church Commissioners. A 'burgage' was a town rental property owned by a king or lord. The property ('burgage tenement') usually and distinctly consisted of a house on a long narrow plot of land, with a narrow street frontage. In Sedgefield many of these plots, as well as other properties benefitting from large gardens, have already been lost to development. These plots of land are heritage assets, recognised in the Sedgefield Conservation Area, and represent an important aspect of the town's physical attractiveness and distinctiveness. Paragraph 70 of the NPPF states that "consideration should be given to setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, where development would cause harm to the local area".

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

1.62

Policy E4 - Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Heritage Assets

Proposals which affect designated and non-designated heritage assets will be considered in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to protect them subject to certain criteria.

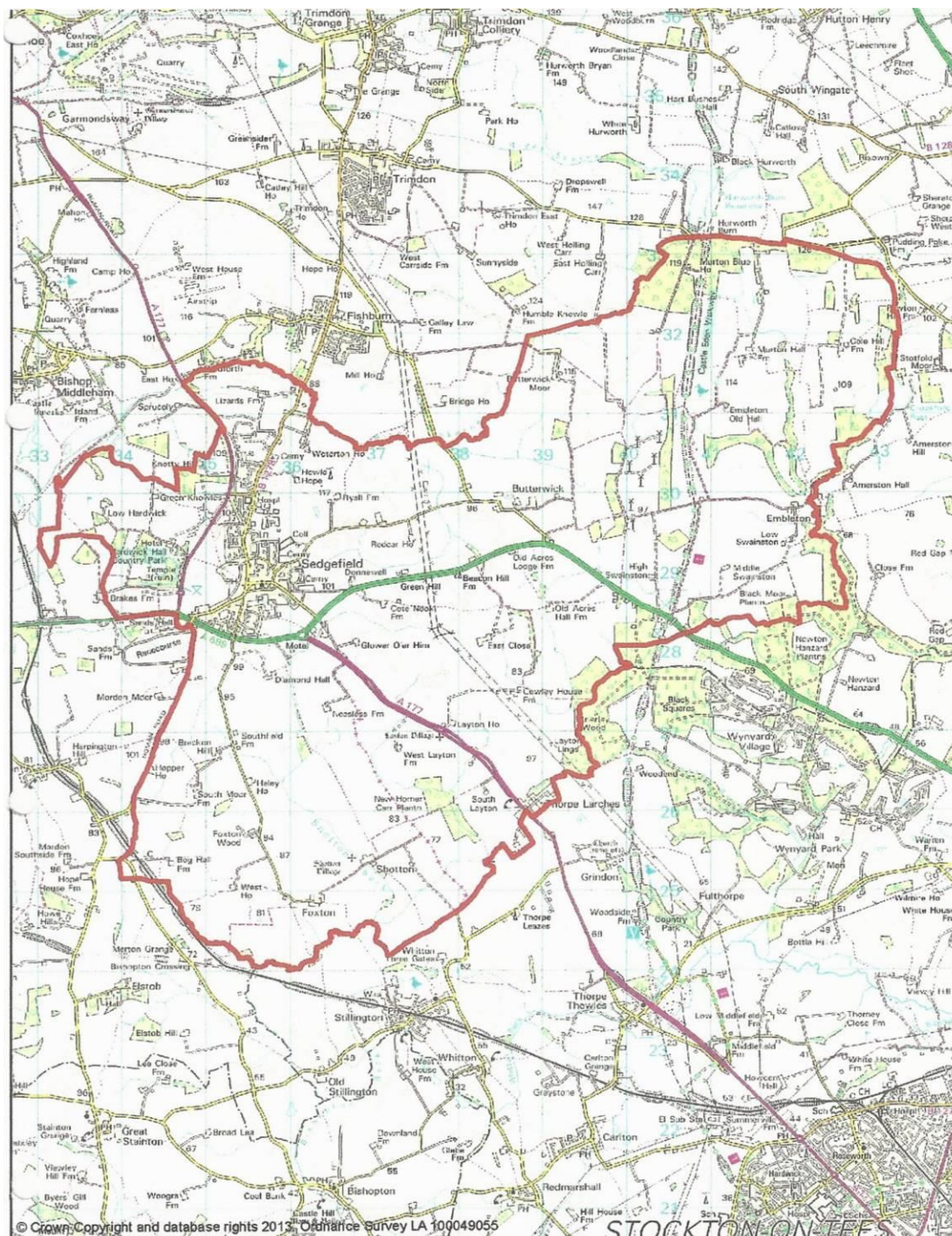
Policy Reason	Policy Justification
<p>To protect, conserve and enhance conservation areas and designated heritage assets in the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Area (see Introduction, paragraph 1), in accordance with the NPPF and the latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal, adopted by Durham County Council in May 2016.</p> <p>The NPPF section ‘Proposals affecting heritage assets’ contains detailed advice in the manner in which proposals will be considered as they relate to both designated and non-designated heritage assets. The Conservation Area Appraisal makes reference to certain non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area. There may also be other non-designated heritage assets identified outside the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>The latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal highlights the importance of the land covered and other heritage assets in Sedgefield and the surrounding area. Details of the conservation areas included in the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Area are available at www.durham.gov.uk.</p> <p>The community considers that the conservation areas are important to maintain the character and appearance of Sedgefield and its surroundings, and must be protected.</p>

Community Assets

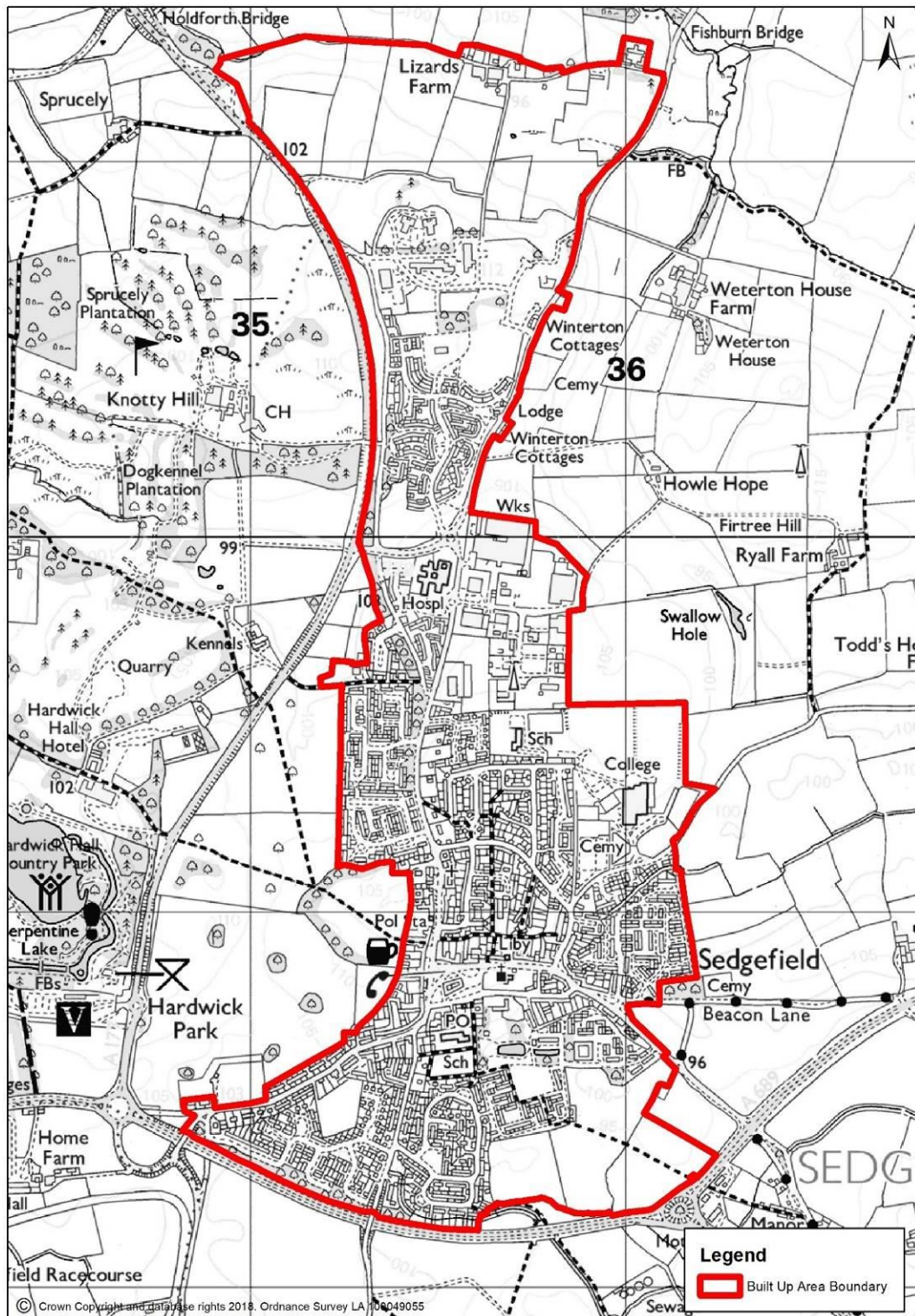
1.63 Under the Localism Act 2011, communities can nominate important local buildings and facilities as “assets of community value” (e.g. shops, public houses, cultural dwellings etc.) for inclusion on a central list held by Durham County Council. If the owner of a building on a list wishes to sell it they must then conform to the “Community Right to Bid” procedure. This means that if the community is interested in buying the asset it has six months to prepare a bid to buy it before the asset can be sold. Whilst not a policy of this neighbourhood plan, Sedgefield Town Council has undertaken the process detailed above and the following have been designated as Community Assets and placed on Durham County Council’s Community Assets Register:

- i. Sedgefield Library building, Front Street
- ii. Public Car Park bounded by the Doctors surgery, Parish Hall and library
- iii. Sedgefield Methodist Chapel building, Durham Road

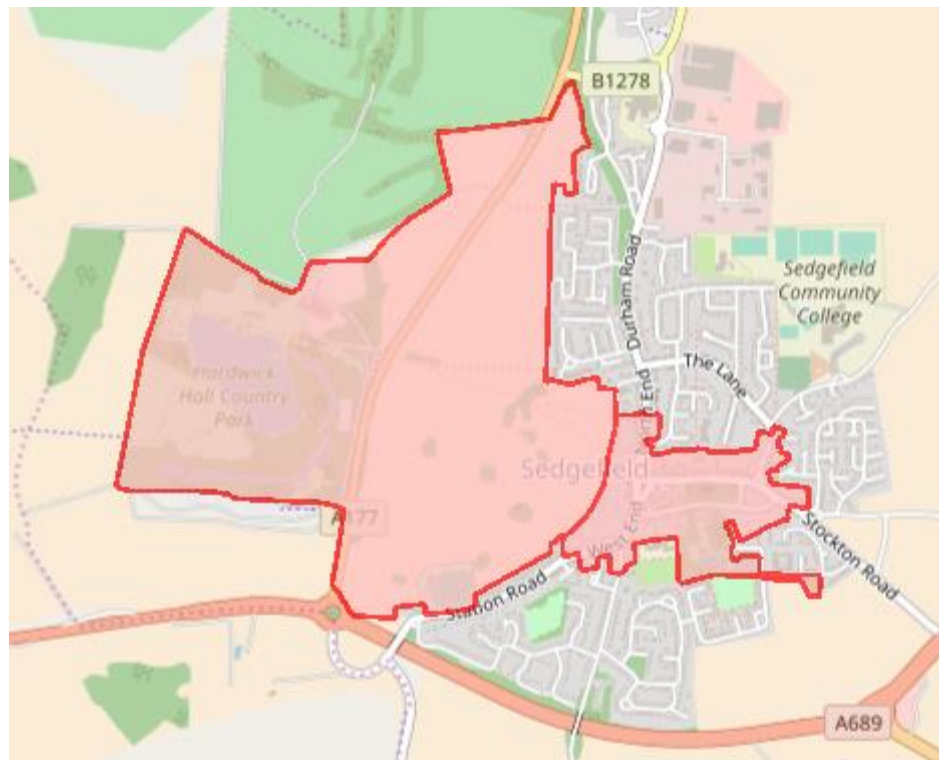
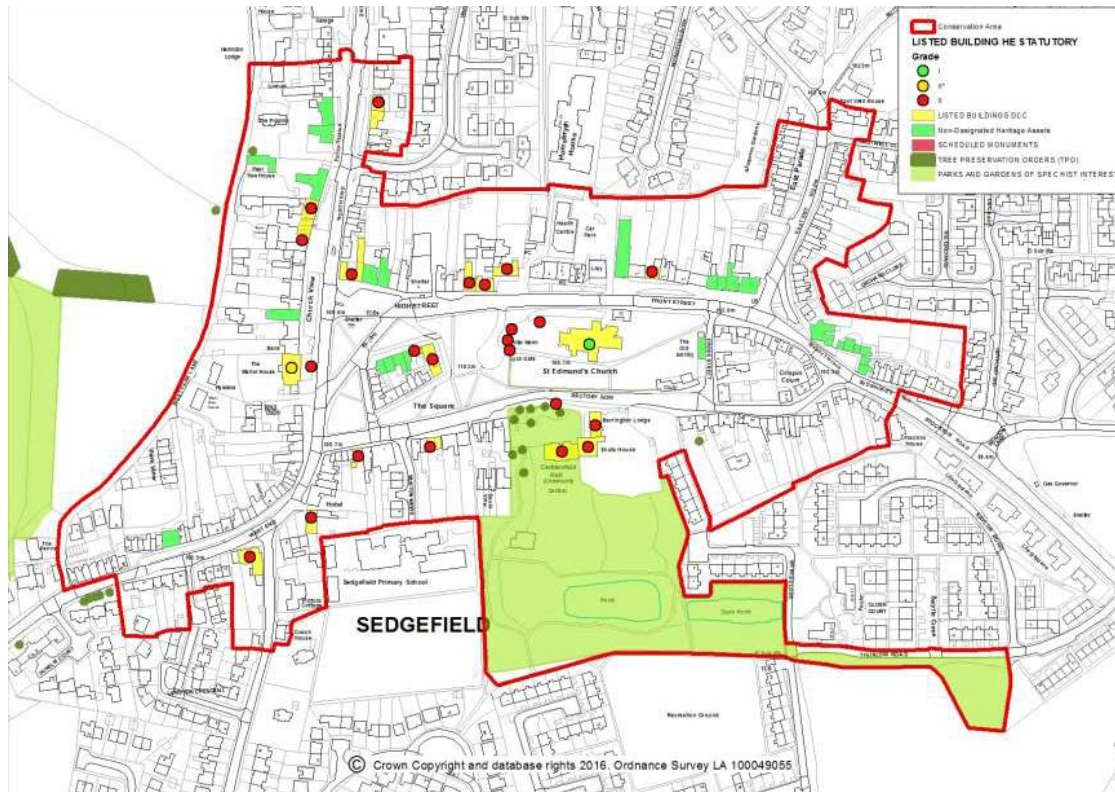
APPENDIX 1 SEDGEFIELD DESIGNATED PARISH BOUNDARY



APPENDIX 2 BUILT-UP AREA BOUNDARY MAP



APPENDIX 3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY MAPS



Section 2

Basic Conditions Statement and SEA Screening

(to be read in conjunction with 'Evidence Base' which can be accessed on
www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk)

Basic Conditions Statement – An Introduction

- 2.1 The Sedgefield Plan (TSP), a neighbourhood development plan (NDP) for the town of Sedgefield is being submitted by the qualifying body Sedgefield Town Council. This is the Basic Conditions Statement to accompany TSP.
- 2.2 The Sedgefield Plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The area of the TSP is identified in the plan's evidence base which was approved by Durham County Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 23rd September 2013. The TSP covers the planning period from 2018-2033.
- 2.3 The plan does not deal with excluded development such as strategic county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The NDP relates to Sedgefield Parish area and no other area. There is no other NDP relating to this neighbourhood area.
- 2.4 The development plan for the area of the Local Planning Authority is the 'saved' policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (SBLP), in so far as the policies are consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.5 Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4b to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that NDP's must meet the following relevant basic conditions:
- (i) The NDP must have appropriate regard to national policies and advice contained in the NPPF;
 - (ii) The NDP must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - (iii) The NDP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the local planning authority, in this case the SBLP; and
 - (iv) The NDP must meet the relevant EU obligations.

2.6 The Basic Conditions Statement explains how the draft TSP complies with paragraph 8 schedule 4b of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. This covers the following key issues:

- NPPF Obligations – this section demonstrates the conformity of the TSP with the NPPF;
- Local Plan Obligations – this section demonstrates the conformity of the TSP with the SBLP and emerging County Durham Plan; and
- EU Obligations – this section demonstrates compliance with the appropriate EU obligations.

NPPF Obligations

- 2.7 This section describes how TSP relates to the NPPF (July 2018)
- 2.8 The central theme of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF specifies that delivery of sustainable development by the planning system is to be through the application of a plan-making framework.
- 2.9 In respect of sustainable development, Chapter 2 of the NPPF requires the following aspects to be considered when making planning decisions; ‘an economic objective’, ‘a social objective’ and ‘an environmental objective’.
- 2.10 The TSP Objectives and Policies have taken account of the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, as defined and outlined in the NPPF. Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken which shows that Sustainability Appraisal is not required.
- 2.11 The NPPF plan-making principles and framework are outlined in Chapter 3, ‘Plan-making’, paragraphs 15-37, in support of sustainable development.
- 2.12 Paragraph 15 of Chapter 3 of the NPPF describes the approach that should be taken to planning, namely: “The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.” TSP has developed a positive and inclusive vision for the town which reflects findings from community surveys, public meetings and village consultations, and developed a vision and objectives that will help deliver the community’s aspirations. All TSP Objectives and Policies have been refined and developed, including through feedback from consultation, to reflect this approach and meet this NPPF requirement. The TSP is based on up to date evidence and sets down a local policy framework which does not repeat either national or local policy guidance (including the emerging County Durham Plan).
- 2.13 Chapters 5-17 of the NPPF list guidelines for planning that meet Government objectives for achieving sustainable development. The table below lists the ways in which TSP Objectives and Policies comply with the basic conditions for sustainable development set out in those guidelines.

Table 1: NPPF Requirements

NPPF REQUIREMENT	TSP OBJECTIVES	TSP POLICIES
Delivering a sufficient supply of homes	i. Managing development and growth of the built environment viii. The elderly and infirm	Policies G1a and G1b allow for the development of sufficient housing to meet the needs of Sedgefield in the period covered by the plan, both within and outside the Built-up Area Boundary. Policy H1 highlights Sedgefield's need for suitable and affordable housing for older people in the community and sets out requirements for this.
Building a strong, competitive economy	ix. Supporting business and industry	Policies G1a and G1b allow for appropriate employment and economic development alongside housing, on land within and outside the Built-up Area Boundary. The plan also contains a Business Support Strategy.
Ensuring the vitality of town centres	vii. Infrastructure, facilities and amenities ix. Supporting business and industry x. Management of on street parking	Policy G1a allows for mixed use development within the Built-up Area Boundary, encouraging economic growth alongside new housing. Policy T1 supports the improvement of cycling and walking routes, to reduce the pressure on parking in the town centre, and facilitate easier access for local residents to local businesses, amenities and community services.

NPPF REQUIREMENT	TSP OBJECTIVES	TSP POLICIES
Promoting healthy and safe communities	iii. Green spaces for sport and recreation vi. Supporting young people viii. The elderly and infirm	<p>Policy H2 sets out how the design, style and density of new housing in Sedgefield should contribute positively to making the town a better place to live for people, and be sensitive to the setting and historical context.</p> <p>Policy T1 supports improved cycling and walking routes to promote healthy communities, including routes that are suitable for 'buggy'/wheelchair use.</p> <p>Policy R1 supports the development of new sports and recreational facilities at an appropriate scale and in keeping with the form and character of Sedgefield and the local landscape.</p> <p>Policy E2 outlines requirements for open spaces to be provided alongside development, with public access, to promote healthy, active lifestyles and a cohesive, integrated community.</p> <p>The plan identifies important green spaces and includes a community action to seek to promote the protection of these areas.</p>
Promoting sustainable transport	viii. The elderly and infirm x. Management of on street parking	<p>Policy T1 promotes the improvement of existing, and the development of new, walking and cycling routes (that also facilitate the use of 'buggies' and wheelchairs/mobility scooters), to minimise the use of private cars.</p>
Supporting high quality communications	Not applicable	Not applicable

NPPF REQUIREMENT	TSP OBJECTIVES	TSP POLICIES
Making effective use of land	i. Managing development and growth of the built environment	<p>Policies G1a and G1b support appropriate sustainable development within and outside the Built-up Area Boundary, that accords with local and national policy relating to land use.</p> <p>Policy H2 requires that new development should deliver a density of housing that is appropriate for the local setting.</p>
Achieving well-designed places	<p>i. Managing development and growth of the built environment</p> <p>ii. Preserving Sedgefield's distinctive identity</p>	<p>Policy H2 requires that development proposals must demonstrate good design principles that respond to local character and distinctiveness.</p>
Protecting Green Belt land	Not applicable	Not applicable
Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change	Not applicable	<p>Policies of the plan promote the transition to a low carbon future through supporting sustainable transport (Policy T1).</p>
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	<p>i. Managing development and growth of the built environment</p> <p>ii. Preserving Sedgefield's distinctive identity</p> <p>iv. Ensuring new building is compatible with the conservation area</p>	<p>Policy E3 resists the sub-division for development purposes of existing gardens in the village core, to conserve the special character of Sedgefield, and which feature in the Conservation Area.</p> <p>Policy E4 provides protection for listed buildings, scheduled monuments and other heritage assets in Sedgefield, in accordance with the NPPF and the latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal.</p>

NPPF REQUIREMENT	TSP OBJECTIVES	TSP POLICIES
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	i. Managing development and growth of the built environment	<p>Policies G1a and G1b require the protection and conservation of the ‘green wedge’/local green space in and around Sedgefield.</p> <p>Policy E1 requires that development should only be permitted where it maintains the attractive visual and spatial setting of Sedgefield, ensuring that it is in line with the NPPF and the latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal.</p> <p>The plan identifies important green spaces and includes a community action to seek to promote the protection of these areas.</p>
Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Local Development Plan Obligations

- 2.14 TSP must meet the requirements of the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area (in this case the 'Saved' Policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan). While the strategic policies for the Borough were originally set down in the Durham County Structure Plan, this was subsequently replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (RSS). The RSS was then formally revoked in 2013, effectively removing the strategic policy layer.
- 2.15 Notwithstanding this, however, national guidance provides a more up to date interpretation. It advises that strategic policies will be different in each local planning authority area and will depend on the following considerations:
- Whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective
 - Whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development
 - The scale at which the policy is intended to operate
 - Whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced
 - Whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the local plan
 - In the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspiration of the local plan
 - Whether the local plan identifies the policy as being strategic.
- 2.16 Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:
- Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development
 - Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)
 - Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)
 - Conservation and enhancement of natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 2.17 They should not:

- Promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies
- Extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with through neighbourhood plans or other non-strategic policies
- Extend beyond those necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area (and any relevant cross-boundary issues), to provide a clear starting point for any non-strategic policies that are needed.

2.18 Durham County Council have provided the Town Council with a list of policies they consider to be 'strategic' for the neighbourhood plan project and the purposes of meeting this basic condition. The TSP must be in 'general conformity' with these strategic local policies.

National planning policy guidance advises when considering whether a policy is in general conformity a qualifying body, independent examiner, or local planning authority, should consider the following:

- Whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with
- The degree, if any, of conflict between the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal and the strategic policy
- Whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy
- The rationale for the approach taken in the draft neighbourhood plan or order and the evidence to justify that approach.

The table below summarises the relevant strategic policies and assesses whether TSP policies are in general conformity with them.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
E1	Maintenance of Landscape Character	The NP does not conflict with E1 and complements it with its environmental policies. NP Policy E1 supports the conservation of landscape character, only permitting development that can be successfully integrated into the visual setting of Sedgefield.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
E2	Preservation and Enhancement of Historic Parklands	Whitworth Park and Windlestone Park are not within Sedgefield Parish boundary. Land to the west of Hardwick Park is a registered park and garden, and therefore a designated heritage asset. As such, this land is excluded from the Built-up Area Boundary.
E4	Designation and Safeguarding of Green Wedges	Policies G1a and G1b require protection and conservation of the 'green wedge' established by SBC with development in these areas resisted. The land south of the natural A689 boundary is excluded from the Built-up Area Boundary to protect the ancient landscape and maintain the distinction between the Built-Up Area and surrounding rural countryside.
E11	Safeguarding of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest	Policy G1b supports the need to encourage effective use of land, by requiring development on suitable and previously developed brownfield sites before greenfield sites, in accordance with NPPF.
E15	Safeguarding of Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows	There are no policies in the NP that conflict with E15.
E18	Preservation and Enhancement of Conservation Areas	E18 is complimented by NP policies H2, E1 and E4, ensuring the scale, scope and character of developments do not compromise the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas. Policy E4 provides protection for listed buildings, scheduled monuments and other heritage assets in Sedgefield, in accordance with the NPPF and the latest Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
IB2	Designation of Type of Industrial Estates (inc. Salters Lane, Sedgefield)	The IB2 allocation in Sedgefield is strategic in nature and the NP does not impact upon its delivery as it is included within the Built-up Area Boundary and not identified for any alternative use. The site will be protected through the County Durham Plan.
IB6	Acceptable Uses in General Industrial Estates	There are no policies in the NP that conflict with IB6.
H8	Residential Frameworks for Larger Villages (inc. Sedgefield)	The Built-up Area Boundary set down in the NP updates the existing Residential Framework set down in the LP. The area of coverage has been expanded to include the permitted residential development to the South of Eden Drive, retail development to the east of Salters Lane Industrial Estate and to provide employment development to the north of NETPark. There are therefore no conflicts with the existing or emerging local policy frameworks.

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
H19	<p>Provision of a Range of House Types and Sizes Including Affordable Housing</p> <p>N.B. Affordable requirements are determined against up to date evidence set down in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018)</p>	<p>TSP strongly advocates that future development must provide affordable housing for acquisition and rental in the community to enable the continuity of family development.</p> <p>NP policy G1b supports development outside the Built-up Area Boundary when it can be demonstrated that there is an identified local need for affordable housing where evidence shows this could not reasonably be satisfied in other settlements in the vicinity or it is essential to the delivery of affordable housing.</p> <p>NP policy H1 stipulates 10% of private or intermediate housing on sites of 10 units or more shall, in relation to design and house type, increase the housing options of older people, including affordable housing, and taking into account Sedgefield's retired population (35% - January 2014 Community Survey), many of whom wish to downsize. This also compliments paragraph 64 of NPPF (2018).</p>
H20	<p>Provision of Special Needs Housing</p>	
S2	Town Centres	<p>There are no NP policies that conflict with S2, with NP policy G1a encouraging economic growth within the Built-up Area Boundary.</p> <p>The NP Business Support Strategy (BSS 1, BSS 2, BSS 3 and BSS 4) and policy T1 support the improvement of cycling and walking routes, to reduce the pressure on parking in the town centre, and facilitate easier access for local residents to local businesses, amenities and community services, with special consideration for sustainable transport and mobility scooters.</p>

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
L1	Provision of Open Space Including Standards	These standards have been replaced by up to date requirements set down in the Open Space Needs Assessment (2018). NP policy E2 acknowledges that housing development is required to provide open space through the local plan to the standards set out in the most up to date Open Space Needs Assessment.
L2	Open Space in New Housing Development	
L5	Safeguarding of Areas of Open Space	The ethos of safeguarding open spaces is present throughout the NP, however, it does not have a specific policy on the safeguarding of areas of open space, therefore there is no conflict with L5.
L8	Development of Hardwick, Whitworth and Wynyard Country Parks and Ferryhill Carrs	Whitworth Hall, Wynyard Hall and Ferryhill Carrs Nature Reserve are not within the Sedgefield Parish boundary. NP policy R1 supports provision of external recreation facilities within the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area.
L15	Winterton Hospital Site	Previous Winterton Hospital Site is now Winterton Housing Estate.
D1	General Principles for the Layout and Design of New Development	NP Policies G1a, E1, H2, E1 and E4 are consistent with and reflect the principles in D1.
D2	Design for People	D2 and D3 are supported by the NP Business Support Strategy, aiming to implement a creative approach to the provision of parking spaces and the management of permitted use of bays in addition to allocated parking for disability / mobility transport. NP policy T1 encourages the use of sustainable transport through the development and improvement of walking and cycling routes.
D3	Design for Access	

LOCAL PLAN POLICY REF	POLICY SUMMARY	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) CONFORMITY
D4	Layout and Design of New Industrial and Business Development	There are no policies in the NP that conflict with D4 or D5, however, as the High Street and a number of residential properties are located with an established Conservation Area, NP policies E1 and E4 underpin the conservation requirements for listed buildings and heritage assets.
D5	Layout of New Housing Development	

- 2.19 Sedgefield Town Council is aware that there are draft strategic policies emerging within the County Durham Plan. There have been a number of meetings and consultations with planning officers at Durham County Council to ensure that the TSP is consistent with emerging policy in the County Durham Plan (CDP). This has involved a number of amendments to several policies, for example the policies which define the Built-up Area Boundary and Environmental policies, to ensure that they are consistent with policies in the emerging CDP.

European Union Obligations

- 2.20 The screening exercise for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Statement for TSP (see below) concluded that there would be no impact on any designated sites due to the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan and as a result, no SEA is required.
- 2.21 The screening exercise for Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for TSP (see below) concluded that there are no European sites that would be affected by the proposals within the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area, and it was agreed by Durham County Council that an HRA was not necessary.

Conclusion

- 2.22 The Basic Conditions Statement has set out how the draft TSP complies with all relevant clauses of paragraph 8, schedule 4b of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, and demonstrates the conformity of the TSP with the NPPF. The statement also shows how TSP will contribute to sustainable development. The statement considers the requirement for the TSP to conform to local policy obligations, identifying no conflicts. This statement also sets out the appropriate EU Obligations for neighbourhood plans and the relevant SEA and HRA screening undertaken for the TSP.

SEA Screening – An Introduction

- 2.23 Fairhurst have been instructed by The Sedgefield Plan (TSP) Steering Group to undertake this screening statement, which is designed to determine whether or not the contents of the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Development plan – titled ‘The Sedgefield Plan’ – requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 2.24 On behalf of the community, The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group has developed a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Sedgefield, known as ‘The Sedgefield Plan’.
- 2.25 The European Union Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken for certain development plans that would have a significant environmental effect. An SEA may be required for a neighbourhood plan, dependent on what the plan is proposing.
- 2.26 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 require that the need for an SEA is to be determined by a screening process. This must meet the criteria of Schedule 1 of the Regulations (Appendix One).
- 2.27 For Sedgefield, it is the responsibility of Durham County Council to determine whether an SEA is required. To make this decision the County Council are required to consult with three statutory consultation bodies: Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage.
- 2.28 This SEA screening statement comprises of two parts: part one assesses the neighbourhood plan against the steps that should be taken to determine the need for SEA in accordance with the Directive and associated regulations, part two assesses the likely significant effects on the environment of the neighbourhood plan.

Stage One: Establishing the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.29 'A Practical Guidance to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (2006) by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister sets out guidance on how to comply with the European Directive 2001/42/EC known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. Figure 2 of this practical guidance shows the Directive's field of application in the form of a diagram (Appendix 1), which provides an outcome of whether a directive does or does not require an SEA.
- 2.30 Fairhurst have been requested by Durham County Council on 22 January 2015 to provide an assessment of the The Sedgefield Plan against the diagram provided in Appendix 1 to establish whether an SEA is required. Each stage of the diagram provides a criteria which a 'yes' or 'no' response is required to progress to the next stage.
- 2.31 The table below shows the assessment of whether the The Sedgefield Plan will require a full SEA. The questions below are drawn from the diagram in Appendix 1 which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied and provides justification for the particular path considered suitable by Fairhurst for the The Sedgefield Plan.

Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes to criterion 1	The preparation of and adoption of the plan (TSP) is allowed under The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The TSP is prepared by the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Planning Group (as the 'relevant body') and will be adopted by Durham County Council as the local authority. The preparation of TSP is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	No	Communities, such as Sedgefield which are represented by the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Planning Group, have a right to be able to produce a neighbourhood plan. The plan (TSP) is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. Instead, if adopted the plan would form part of the statutory development plan of Durham County Council. Therefore it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine further if an SEA is required.
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to	Yes to criterion 1 No to criterion 2	The TSP is prepared to set out for town and country planning purposes; policies which will influence future development within the town of Sedgefield, including development of housing and recreational land uses. However, the plan will be used as a tool which manages the design details of development rather than the principles of land use; the draft TSP does not allocate any sites for development.

Stage	Y/N	Reason
the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))		Furthermore the TSP will not be a tool to manage development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	No	An individual assessment, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening assessment, has considered the potential impacts of the TSP on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. This was submitted separately alongside this SEA Screening Statement to Durham County Council. This HRA screening assessment concludes that a HRA is not required for the TSP.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Yes	
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	Once the TSP is adopted by Durham County Council it will form part of the statutory development plan against which planning applications will be determined.
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	No	

Stage	Y/N	Reason
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No (see section 3 of this document)	Stage 2 of this SEA Screening Statement will consider the potential effects of the TSP on the environment. This considers the effects of TSP against the criteria referred to in Article 3.5 of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

Stage Two: Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

2.28 The table below shows the assessment of the potential significant effects of the environment, as required by Article 3.5 of the SEA Directive.

Table 2: Assessment of the likely significant effects of the environment

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The TSP would form part of the statutory development plan and therefore would set a framework for future development projects in Sedgefield. However, the plan sits within a wider framework set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and the draft County Durham Plan; the policies of the TSP are in general conformity with the NPPF, the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and the draft County Durham Plan. In addition, the projects for which the TSP contributes to setting a planning framework are very local in nature. For example, policies within the TSP will not affect land use and instead focus on design issues of future	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	development.	
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The TSP has a low hierarchical position within a number of statutory development plans, therefore the TSP will respond to rather than influence other plans or programmes. Policies set out in the TSP are in conformity with the NPPF, the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and the strategic policies of the local council within the draft County Durham Plan.	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	<p>The TSP will work to protect and enhance the natural environment and landscape of Sedgefield. Although there are no statutory environmental designations within the TSP area, the policies of the TSP provide protection for areas of high environmental value, green spaces and the 'green wedge' (Draft TSP policy G1b).</p> <p>A number of TSP policies will contribute to the sustainability of Sedgefield. Draft policy H1 of the TSP requires new housing development to provide a range of housing types, particularly for the older demographic of Sedgefield.</p> <p>Therefore, the TSP will provide sustainable development as defined in the NPPF, which requires the planning system to supply housing which meets the needs of current and future generations. In addition, in accordance</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	<p>with paragraph 50 of the NPPF, draft policy H1 of the TSP will contribute to delivering a wide supply of quality homes, which should meet ‘the needs of different groups in the community’ including older people.</p> <p>Developer contributions linked to new residential development are seen as essential to fund important services required for socially sustainable development. A number of TSP policies require new development to contribute to community facility provision. For example, draft Policies E1, E2 and E3 set out the standards for green infrastructure to be provided by new housing development.</p> <p>Therefore it is considered that the TSP will have a positive impact on local environmental assets and will promote sustainable development.</p>	
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	<p>The TSP will help to address wider environmental problems as highlighted in the NPPF at a local level, such as climate change, air pollution, traffic congestion, loss of biodiversity; without any negative effects. Other subjects that the TSP will seek to address during the planning period include: reliance on cars; potential to encourage sustainable transport; and opportunities to support renewable energy/improved energy</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	<p>efficiency. The historic building stock may make certain properties 'hard to heat', but opportunities to reduce carbon emissions should be encouraged. For example, TSP draft policy T1 will encourage sustainable transport methods of cycle and walking within Sedgefield for local journeys and will therefore discourage travelling by private vehicles.</p> <p>The TSP does not allocate specific land uses and therefore potential environmental problems resulting from certain land uses in specific locations have not been assessed as part of this neighbourhood plan.</p>	
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	<p>The TSP is not directly relevant to the implementation of European legislation. This legislation is taken into account by the local plan with which the neighbourhood plan complies.</p>	No
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	<p>The TSP seeks to result in positive environmental effects through policies that are intended to protect landscape character and green spaces.</p> <p>The duration of the positive effects are likely to be long term. However, due to</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	the small scale and nature of the issues considered in the TSP, it is considered that any effects will be low in frequency and reversible.	
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	A combination of this neighbourhood plan which seeks to protect and enhance the character, environment and landscape of Sedgefield, and wider environmental policy of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and Draft County Durham Plan, is likely to have cumulative positive environmental effects will have cumulative positive benefits for the area of Sedgefield. Notwithstanding this, as the TSP deals with issues which are of a small scale and nature, it is considered that the impact of the neighbourhood plan will be limited.	No
(c) the trans boundary nature of the effects;	All effects will be very local in impact, having negligible impacts on neighbouring areas.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	There are no significant risks to human health or the environment. Instead the plan aims to enhance the environment and to provide the infrastructure required to meet the social needs of Sedgefield residents.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be	The neighbourhood plan relates to an area of approximately 4500ha. However only a small proportion of the neighbourhood plan area will be affected	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
affected);	by the plans policies, as they are focused on the small town of Sedgefield, approximately 150ha with a population of approximately 4,500 which sits in wider rural hinterland. Therefore the magnitude and spatial extent of the plan is small.	
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or - intensive land-use	Draft policy G1b of the TSP provides protection to the Green Wedge which surrounds Sedgefield from detrimental new development. Present within the plan area are numerous grade 1, 2 and 2* listed buildings, and a scheduled ancient monument. TSP policy E1 (once adopted) will provide protection to heritage assets within Sedgefield. In addition, these heritage assets will also be protected by higher tier documents, such as the NPPF, Sedgefield Borough Local Plan and the Durham County Plan (once adopted). Among other locally important assets, policies in the TSP reflect and are intended to provide appropriate protection to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 x Conservation Areas• 1 x Grade I Listing (Church of St Edmund)• 37 x Grade II* & II Listings• 1 x Registered Park and Garden (Hardwick Park, Grade II*)• Various non-designated locally	No

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	<p>important historic buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x Designated Local Wildlife Sites (although ecological site-assessments will be required to determine the presence and absence of protected species and potential impact on them). • 2 x Areas of Ancient Woodland • Areas within Flood Zone 3A – although this is primarily related to River Skerne (other known surface water flooding issues) • The majority of agricultural land within the area is classed as Grade 3 (good/ moderate) • There are no known exceedances of national air quality objectives within the area • The County Durham Landscape Strategy classifies the majority of land around Sedgefield village and land to the east as ‘Conserve and Restore’, with other significant areas classes as ‘Enhance’. <p>A negligible amount of the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area is within Flood Zone 3, as a result of the River Skerne.</p> <p>However the neighbourhood plan doesn’t propose any new development in this area, therefore having a no impact on flood risk.</p>	

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment Commentary	Likely significant effect? (Y/N)
	No intensive land-use will result from the TSP as the plan does not provide allocations for any land use.	
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognized national, community or international protection status	There are no areas or landscapes with national, community or international protection within or near the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area, therefore the TSP will have no impact on designated landscapes.	

Conclusion

- 2.29 As a result of the assessment in section 3, based on Article 3.5 of the SEA Directive, Fairhurst consider that there will be no significant environmental effects arising from The Sedgefield Plan. As such, The Sedgefield Plan does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.

HRA Screening – An Introduction

- 2.30 The European Directive (92/46/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the 'Habitats Directive') protects habitats and species of European nature conservation importance. These regulations require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken for certain development plans that may have an impact on specific habitats or species designated for European importance. A HRA may be required for a neighbourhood plan dependant on what the plan is proposing and therefore is determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.31 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive states *"Any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an Appropriate Assessment to determine its implications for the site. The competent authorities can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned."*
- 2.32 The need for a HRA is to be determined by a screening process, to identify whether there is likely to be a significant effect on the integrity of qualifying species and/or habitats by assessing the neighbourhood plan against the designated interest features and conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites. For Sedgefield, it is the responsibility of Durham County Council to determine whether a HRA is required.
- 2.33 The Habitats Directive establishes a network of internationally important sites designated for their ecological status. There are referred to as Natura 2000 sites or European Sites which comprise of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and Special Protection Areas (SPA). In addition, the NPPF also requires that listed or proposed Ramsar sites should be given the same protection as European sites.
- 2.34 The below screening assessment considers the need for a HRA to be carried out for TSP.

Stage One: Likely Effects on Natura and Ramsar Sites

Table 1: Determining the effects of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites in County Durham

SITE	DISTANCE FROM SEDFIELD NP	SITE LINKED THROUGH KNOWN PATHWAY (E.G. RIVER) TO NP AREA?
Thrislington SAC	2705m	No
Durham Coast SAC	Over 16000m	No
Castle Eden Dene SAC	Over 11000m	No
Moor House - Upper Teesdale SAC	Over 51000m	No
Northumbria Coast SPA & Ramsar	Over 15000m	No
North Pennine Moors SPA	Over 26000m	No
Teesmouth & Cleveland Coast SPA, Ramsar	Over 13000m	No
Thrislington SAC	2705m	No
Durham Coast SAC	Over 16000m	No

2.35 The above table demonstrates the lack of linkages through a known pathway, and the considerable geographical distances between all Natura 2000 & Ramsar sites in relation to the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan Area.

2.36 Notwithstanding this, a number of the designations noted above are popular visitor destinations which lie within travelling distance from Sedgefield. Policies in the Sedgefield Neighbourhood Development Plan do not propose any additional development sites to those already committed and will therefore be unlikely to result in

significant increases in recreational activity. Similarly, as there are many alternative recreational destinations within closer travelling distance from Sedgefield, any additional recreational activity is likely to take place at these closer locations such as Hardwick Park. On this basis, there will be no significant impacts on any designation resulting from additional recreational activity.

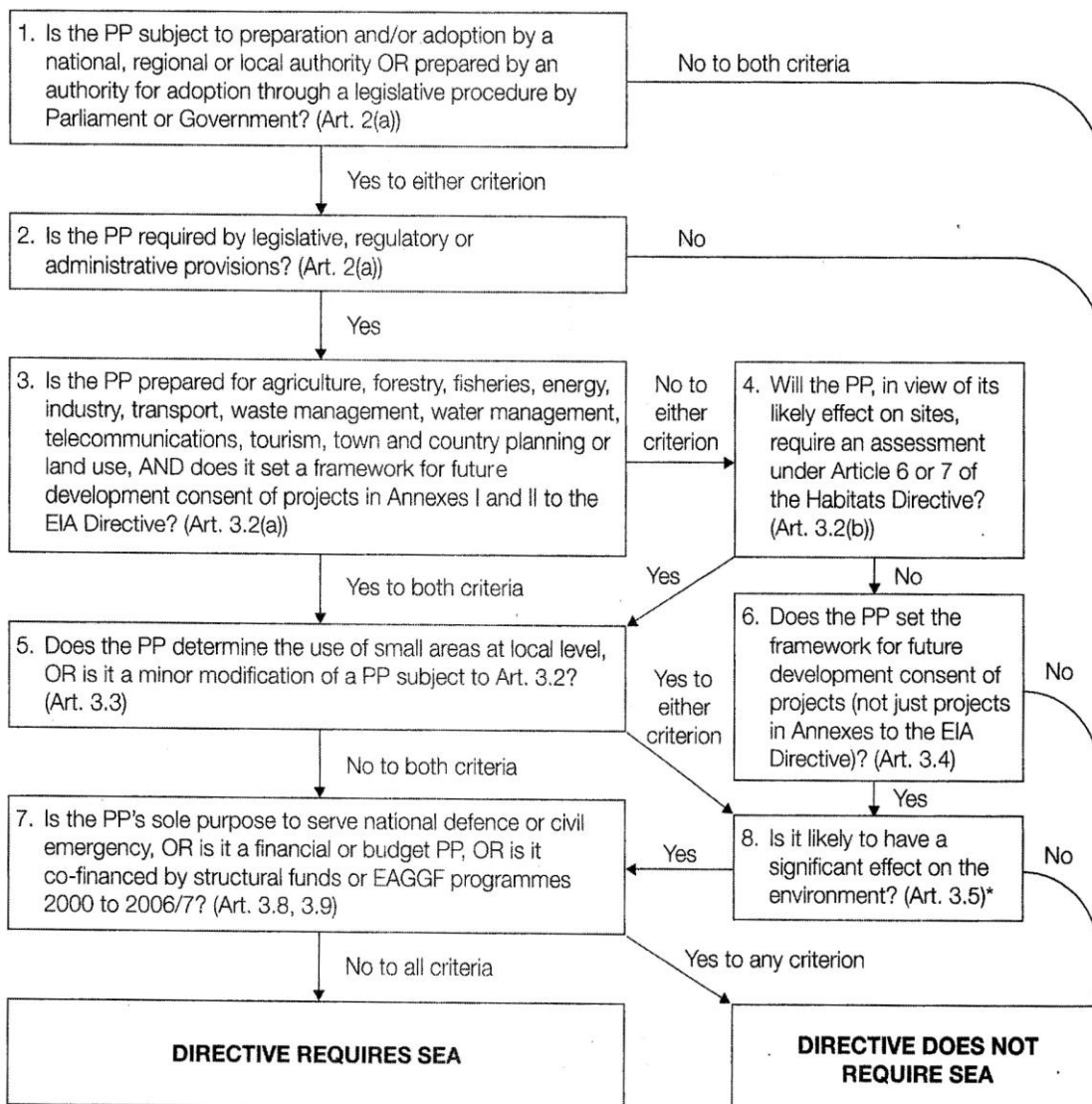
Conclusion

- 2.37 The above screening assessment concludes that there will be no significant impact on any designated sites due to The Sedgefield Neighbourhood Plan and as a result, no HRA is required.

Appendix One: Diagram of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Section 3

Statement of Consultation and Community Engagement

(to be read in conjunction with 'Evidence Base' which can be accessed on
www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk)

Community Engagement

- 3.1 At its first meeting 'The Sedgefield Plan' Steering Group decided that the policies and aspirations it espoused would be based on the views and opinions of the community that the plan would serve. Therefore a detailed survey was commissioned to establish a baseline of opinion and it is the outcome of this that forms the basis of the evidence used to justify the policies and assertions of the plan. It was also agreed that the project had to reach all of the community in the Designated Parish Area many of whom rarely get involved with the issues and concerns that from time to time impact on the lives of residents. It was also agreed that the success of the project's ability to articulate policies that will be supported by the community would be underpinned by capturing views and opinions in a 'broadly based' approach.
- 3.2 At the inaugural meeting of the Steering Group it was agreed that a website would underpin our communications strategy. Its purpose is to provide a platform for informing the community; therefore its sections have been routinely updated with relevant information, meeting dates, agendas and minutes. It hosts press articles, documents and correspondence. The website address is: www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk.

Community Survey

- 3.3 The first major project was a community survey to gather opinions, views, and concerns, and to establish a baseline demographic profile of the community. The survey was designed and developed in partnership with Public Knowledge (a subsidiary of Dipsticks Ltd) an established research business based in Hexham, who have a successful track record of public surveys in the sector. Public Knowledge were appointed following a detailed procurement process involving members of the Steering Group and the Chair of Sedgefield Town Council's Policy and Resources Committee. Details of the company can be accessed at www.publicknowledge.eu. Design of the questionnaire went through several iterations and scrutiny by the Steering Group; it was printed and distributed to every household in the designated area in early January 2014. It was also made available for completion online via the website, www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk. Residents were requested to complete the questionnaire online or in print format and return it to one of four well known locations where boxes were placed to receive them.

3.4 There was an excellent response, 665 surveys were completed representing 24% of households, 11.6% of residents and 10.5% of registered voters. The resulting analysis underpins all policy decisions, the survey results are available on the website, the community survey questionnaire and its data analysis can be accessed in the plan's evidence base. The key findings of the community survey are shown below and can be accessed in the evidence base. The full analysis of the survey can be accessed on the home page of The Sedgefield Plan website.

- The most important physical characteristics of Sedgefield are the green spaces around the community, the 'village' centre, the conservation area and the rural atmosphere.
- More than 50% of residents feel that Sedgefield has the right amount of housing, slightly less think there are too many houses in the area, a small proportion think Sedgefield requires additional housing.
- Perceptions of current housing stock are mixed but it is clear that respondents feel there is a lack of affordable starter homes, bungalows, and eco/energy efficient homes.
- There was a high awareness (86%) of Durham County Council's allocation of 470 new houses in Sedgefield, and of the Council's preferred site 'Eden Drive'.
- The majority of respondents would like no more than 50 new houses to be built.
- Respondents cited energy efficient well designed homes as important and that 'design for security' is important.
- Facilities that are key to the character and infrastructure of Sedgefield such as the high street shops, and the doctor's surgery are of greatest importance.
- Respondents are concerned that community expansion will put pressure on existing facilities and amenities and the infrastructures ability to cope with increased traffic and parking.
- 55% of respondents prefer no more than 50 new houses, 12% up to 99, 13% up to 149 and 10% up to 299.
- Style/type of housing; 60% bungalows, 55% small starter homes, 35% semi-detached, 33% detached, 19% executive homes, 17% flats and apartments, 13% terraced houses, and 12% large homes.

- Development priorities; 90 % energy efficiency is important, 89% building design is important, 84% security is important, 69% access to green spaces important.
- Sedgefield is a true community; it enjoys its green spaces and rural atmosphere, it is willing to accept development but no more than 300 houses, and it has strong preferences for the types and design of new homes.

3.5 Sedgefield Development Trust publishes a monthly newsletter 'Sedgefield News' to which the Steering Group contributes a column. It is used to inform and update residents on the latest information and intelligence, and to request their engagement in various meetings and activities as they are planned. Sedgefield News has also been used to publicise policy brainstorming events and to encourage feedback via emails and phone calls.

3.6 It became clear that as intelligence was gathered and a clearer knowledge and understanding of the project developed, that Sedgefield was a 'community under siege' from a wide range of developers who saw opportunities around the fringes of the central settlement. It was important to publicise the extent of this interest and to gauge community opinion on its desirability and suitability for the future growth and development of Sedgefield. A questionnaire and map identifying potential development sites was distributed door to door to all households and the results which form the basis for policy in this document and can be accessed in the evidence base.

3.7 In addition to the initial community wide survey the project surveyed young people through a specifically designed questionnaire that was predominantly distributed via local schools. The questionnaire was distributed to the upper classes of the two primary schools, all of the Sedgefield students at the community college and to Sedgefield students at two faith schools and a public school. The response rate was very good, over 50%, and the results are available on the website. It is interesting to note that the schools used the exercise as part of the maths curriculum. The results can found in the evidence base.

3.8 The project has engaged with a large company of community volunteers who have distributed leaflets and surveys from door to door. The Steering Group also organised policy planning sessions and a policy seminar with Planning Aid that was helpful in identifying and constructing policy.

Young People's Survey

- 3.9 The young people of Sedgefield have a long term stake in the growth and development of the community and so it is important to understand their views and opinions. The Steering Group designed, developed and distributed 750 questionnaires to the upper classes of Sedgefield Primary School and Hardwick Primary School, and to Sedgefield students at Sedgefield Community College. We also distributed it to two external faith schools and a public school attended by some young people from Sedgefield.
- 3.10 Some of the schools used the questionnaire as an exercise in statistics, 352 (50%) completed questionnaires were returned. The complete analysis is available on the website, the key findings follow below:
- 195 boys and 157 girls responded, of those 318 were at school in Sedgefield and 34 went to an external school.
 - The majority enjoyed the green spaces, surrounding farms, parks and countryside.
 - Facilities and amenities such as the doctor's surgery, the high street shops, dentist and banks are a high priority.
 - 28% thought there are enough houses in Sedgefield, 57% thought there are too many houses
 - 28% were aware of Durham County Council's allocation of houses in Sedgefield
 - 37% would accept up to 300 new homes, 16% thought there should be more starter homes
 - A high number of respondents want investment in facilities for them such as youth facilities, and they rate organisations such as scouts, cubs and brownies as very important.
- 3.11 On 12th June 2014, members of the Steering Group met with Durham County Council's Head of Planning and Assets to discuss emergent issues that required clarification. Durham County Council and the Sedgefield community have a shared interest in the success of both the County Durham Local Plan and The Sedgefield Plan so regular meetings to update shared knowledge and to exchange advice have been helpful. The meeting was recorded with minutes available in the evidence base.

- 3.12 A second meeting at this level took place on 5th December 2014 when the proposed housing allocation was discussed against the background of multiple planning applications from aspirant developers that if successful could result in an additional 3000 houses. Assurances were given that this was unlikely to happen and officers helpfully produced an infrastructure review to advise the development of The Sedgefield Plan. A minute of this meeting can be accessed in the evidence base.
- 3.13 It has been a guiding principle of the process that there should be a culture of no surprises in the relationship with the strategic authority so on 21st October 2014 members of the Steering Group met with the planning department of Durham County Council for a 'peer review' exercise on the emerging strategy and policies of The Sedgefield Plan. The event was very helpful and the notes can be found in the evidence base.
- 3.14 On 4th December 2014 the Steering Group met with Durham County Council Planners, Planning Aid and planning advisors for a technical review of The Sedgefield Plan. It was a constructive event that identified issues such as the SEA and HRA requirement. The advice and guidance received has been incorporated into The Sedgefield Plan.

Public Meetings

- 3.15 As the plan has evolved it has been necessary to engage and inform the community of progress and issues emerging from the process. As a result of the work of the thematic groups, meetings with developers and landowners, utility companies, the schools and Durham County Council the community had gathered a great deal of intelligence and information on the aspirations of developers, the constraints of existing infrastructure and the potential impact on the community, so the Steering Group decided that it needed to 'share its accumulated knowledge' with residents.
- 3.16 Public meetings were held on 10th and 11th March 2014 to share intelligence with the community and to seek input and suggestions to the on-going process. The meetings were advertised by leaflet drop to every house and took place in Sedgefield Parish Hall which was filled to capacity on each evening with a total of 240 people attending over the two days. Following presentations the community was invited to use 'post it notes' to express opinion, make suggestions or offer advice. The report is available in the evidence base.
- 3.17 A second round of public meetings were held on 11th and 12th August 2014 to enable the Steering Group to 'present emerging draft policies' and to seek suggestions and

issues. The meetings were advertised by leaflet drop to every house in the community and were held in Sedgefield Parish Hall, with 180 residents attending over two nights. A1 posters of draft policies including the concept of a 'Built-up Area Boundary' were mounted on the walls of the hall. At the end of each presentation there was discussion and debate followed by a show of hands to gauge support for the draft policies and general direction of the plan, support was unanimous on both evenings.

- 3.18 A third round of public meetings took place on 3rd and 4th November 2014 to enable the Steering Group to present the first draft of The Sedgefield Plan to the community. Copies of the plan were distributed in the surgery, Ceddesfeld Hall and No 4 Café for people to read and it was posted on the website. Visitors to the website trebled in the period prior to the meetings. The leaflet publicising the meetings was distributed door to door and indicated where people could read the plan. 120 residents attended over both evenings, there was a good discussion and debate raising a number of ideas and suggestions, resulting in a unanimous vote in favour of the draft plan and its policies.
- 3.19 A fourth round of public meetings took place on 29th and 30th June 2015 to inform residents of the current status of The Sedgefield Plan, to update them on the status of the County Durham Local Plan following the critical interim report by HMIP on Stage 1 of the examination in public, and to update on a number of planning applications by developers for sites outside the 'Built-up Area Boundary'. There was a good attendance (approximately 120) over both evenings of the events, delegates heard presentations followed by debate and discussion on the emergent issues.

Consultation with Schools

- 3.20 Within the designated parish Sedgefield has three schools that have a significant role in the future development of the community. The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group held meetings with the head teachers and some governors to better understand the issues that concern them in the planning period and to gauge the potential impact of new homes in the community.
- 3.21 Sedgefield Community College is relatively new replacing a building constructed in the 1960's that had become inadequate. Along with the other schools serving Sedgefield it is very successful and a considerable asset to the community. The College currently has an intake of over 850 which is forecast to rise to over 975 by 2017, 19% of which come from Sedgefield. The school draws its students from a wide area including Sedgefield, Coxhoe, Ferryhill, Fishburn, Trimdon, North Stockton and Gilesgate in Durham City. Sedgefield Community College aspires to include a sixth form but needs to expand soon to accommodate its anticipated roll in 2017. It proposes the sale of two acres of land for housing that would fund class room expansion.
- 3.22 Hardwick Primary School is also very successful and has a pupil roll of 240, this school's intake has doubled in two years and forecasts an annual intake of 30 new pupils.
- 3.23 Sedgefield Primary School is also very successful and has a current roll of 202 pupils against a capacity for 238; its annual intake is 34.
- 3.24 St William's RC School is located in Trimdon and has a roll of 104, 40 of whom come from Sedgefield. The school is successful and has no capacity problems but is concerned at the cost of transport for parents to get their children there.
- 3.25 All of the primary schools reported concerns about the lack of nursery provision especially for two year olds.

Consultation with Landowners, Developers, Utilities and Institutions

- 3.26 During the course of the research period of The Sedgefield Plan's development the Steering Group has met with a number of landowners, developers, utilities and institutions.
- 3.27 **Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (DDBF)** is the landowner of the 'Eden Drive site' that lies to the south of the settlement. DDBF are represented by Smiths Gore.
- 3.28 **Story Homes**; represented locally by Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners, is a Carlisle based developer that has acquired a portion of the DDBF land. Planning approval was given by the Planning Inspectorate in late 2016 for a planning application to build 300 dwellings on the Eden Drive site.
- 3.29 **ESRG/Gradon**; ESRG is a London based financier/developer who are represented locally by Gradon Architects. Together they have submitted an application to build 460 homes on separate sites known as Beacon Lane and Salters Lane. The company has also revealed its ambition to build 2000 homes in the longer term on adjacent farmland, on which it has options.
- 3.30 **Kildrummy**; is a property consortium which has a freehold interest in 4.8 acres of land at Salters Lane on the edge of the village. The site currently lies within Salters Lane Industrial Estate and Kildrummy lease their site to Pactiv, a plastics manufacturer, who themselves own a freehold interest in adjoining land. Together the two land ownerships compromise around 7 acres. It is currently unclear whether Pactiv will seek to renew their current lease when it ends in 2019, and against this background, Kildrummy have made representations to Durham County Council seeking changes to the site's planning designation which would enable the site to be brought forward for a range of potential alternative uses in the future, including housing. Should the site be vacated by Pactiv, there is considerable support from within the local community for this site to be redeveloped for residential purposes, particularly given its prominent gateway location and brownfield status.
- 3.31 **Strutt and Parker**; are the agents for the old community hospital site on the Fishburn Road; it is a potential brownfield site for new homes.

- 3.32 **North Yorkshire & South Durham Properties/ Youngs RPS;** this company has submitted an application to build 42 homes on a site known locally as the triangular field, adjacent to Stockton Road. The site is of historical importance to the community and it is located in the 'green wedge'.
- 3.33 **Northumbria Water Ltd (NWL)** meetings with NWL have focussed on the capacity of the existing sewage processing plant to the south of the A689, and the overflow provision that is currently a small stream adjacent to houses in The Leas which has been a serious cause for concern. NWL has informed the Steering Group that the current capacity of the sewage works can accommodate a maximum of an additional 300 homes in Sedgefield, and that they have no plans to upgrade the processing plant until the next planning round in 2018/2020. This indicates that work, if agreed, is unlikely to start until 2020 which was confirmed by letter following a meeting on 11th November 2014. NWL informed the Steering Group that the processing requirement of the 330 caravans to be located on a 'park living' site on Brakes Farm (date of opening unknown), has been accounted for; the site will store sewage and pump overnight to the main sewer in Station Road. The Hardwick Hall Hotel currently uses the same procedure. The Steering Group has drawn the attention of NWL to the long term flooding with sewage that occurs on the sports field to the east of Station Road that may be exacerbated by additional pumping from the caravan park. Winterton Park and locations to the north of Sedgefield are served by a processing plant adjacent to Fishburn.
- 3.34 It is the view of the community that no further pumping should commence until thorough investigation of the flooding has taken place and measures to ameliorate the situation have been agreed and actioned.
- 3.35 **The Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE);** Has challenged the population statistics published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) that were used to justify the housing allocation by Durham County Council, and have supported the existence, under the saved policy E4 of Sedgefield Borough Council, of the 'green wedge' to the east of the community that included Durham County Council's preferred site of Eden Drive.
- 3.36 **Durham County Council;** the Steering Group agreed from the start of the project that liaison with Durham County Council was important and that there should be a culture of no surprises. Durham County Council assigned a member of planning staff to attend Steering Group meetings and provide advice and guidance as the project developed and this has proved to be very helpful. Members of the Steering Group have also had 2 meetings with Durham County Council's Head of Planning and Assets to seek clarification on issues emerging from the core strategy. This resulted in agreement to engage in a 'peer review' of The Sedgefield Plan prior to production of the plan for

formal adoption by Sedgefield Town Council, the Qualifying Body, and statutory consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 before formal submission to Durham County Council for Regulation 16 consultation and subsequent inspection by Independent Examiner.

- 3.37 **Planning Aid;** the Steering Group has worked with the local representative of Planning Aid who has advised on technical issues, provided advice and guidance on the structure and completion of the plan and has organised a policy seminar to educate.

The Neighbourhood Planning Process

- 3.38 As an integral part of developing a neighbourhood plan, The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group embraced the ‘good practice in public engagement and consultation’ as its template for the consultation process.
- 3.39 The NPPF contains basic requirements that must be followed to ensure The Sedgefield Plan meets the requirement for approval pre- inspection. The plan must include:-
- A map of the defined parish area that the plan relates to.
 - A Consultation Statement
 - The proposed neighbourhood plan
 - A Statement explaining how the plan meets the ‘Basic Conditions’
- 3.40 The following indicates the process that Sedgefield Town Council and The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group followed from inception to the completion of The Sedgefield Plan prior to submission to Durham County Council Planning Department for its scrutiny and subsequent inspection.

Pre-plan Stages A and B

- 3.41 Sedgefield Town Council, as the Qualifying Body, called a meeting to set up an independent neighbourhood plan Steering Group to carry out the activities required to produce a plan for Sedgefield that would represent the aspirations of the residents of the Town and outlying areas (refer to the evidence base to view a letter referring to meetings held on 7th and 22nd Oct 2013). A discussion document entitled “ A neighbourhood plan for Sedgefield “ was introduced and used by the newly formed Steering Group to formulate its ideas at meetings on 13th and 26th November 2013 (evidence for which can all be found in the evidence base underpinning this plan).
- 3.42 The first meeting with Mr Stuart Carter, a Durham County Council Planning representative, was held on 17th October 2013 where he outlined the proposals expressed by Durham County Council in their draft local plan and a further meeting was arranged for 21st November 2013.
- 3.43 The defined parish boundary for Sedgefield was agreed with Sedgefield Town Council and Durham County Council under section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Stage C – Plan Preparation

- 3.44 On appointment by Sedgefield Town Council, The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group defined the specific topic sections required to gather intelligence and information and established methods to encourage public participation and involvement in the development of the plan.
- 3.45 Specific topic groups were formed under the following general headings:-
- Communications – web site etc.
 - Housing
 - Local Economy
 - Community and Environment
 - Infrastructure.
- 3.46 The topic groups gathered and assembled intelligence and information to underpin the basis of the plan, and the Steering Group engaged with ‘Planning Aid’ through the regional representative who provided advice, guidance and documentation to assist in the process.
- 3.47 It was determined early in the process that the Steering Group needed to create a baseline study of community opinion and preferences to underpin the development of the plan. It was agreed to appoint an independent research company to carry out the work and as a result enquiries were made and bids were invited and submitted. Following a procurement process Public Knowledge Ltd were appointed to develop a questionnaire in partnership with Steering Group and this was completed on 22nd December 2013 ready for distribution on 13th January 2014.
- 3.48 Questionnaires were distributed throughout Sedgefield and the defined parish, by hand to each household and by post to residents in outlying areas. Completed questionnaires were requested to be returned to the Town Council Offices, No4 Café, Ceddesfeld Hall and the GP Surgery. These were returned to Public Knowledge for analysis and report.
- 3.49 In parallel with the development of the questionnaire, the specific topic groups gathered and assembled information for each topic. Topic group meetings were held to analyse data and make recommendations to the Steering Group. 2011 Census information specific to Sedgefield was obtained to assist with demographic profiling and at this stage proposals by developers to build in excess of a 1000 homes on seven sites comprised of green spaces at the perimeter of the town.

- 3.50 In October 2013 Durham County Council's draft local plan was made available for public consultation prior to being submitted for public examination in public. The local plan allocated 470 new homes for Sedgefield to be built on land designated on the perimeter of Sedgefield. These proposals were rejected by the community after the Durham County Council consultation and this has impacted on the development of The Sedgefield Plan in the matter of its general compliance with Durham County Council's core strategy.

Statement of Community Engagement and Statutory Consultation

3.51 In compliance with Section 15(2) of Part 5 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, this statement contains details of:

- The process of engagement with residents, land owners and developers within the defined plan area.
- Summary of community engagement.
- The individuals and organisations that were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood plan and the methods employed for this.
- Summary of Public consultation- the main responses and concerns raised by individuals and organisations consulted.

3.52 The process of community engagement and public consultation are viewed as two separate issues:-

- **1a and 1b Community Engagement** is concerned with the process by which the residents and those owning land or businesses within the neighbourhood plan area were informed about and consulted on the development of the plan.
- **2a and 2b Statutory Consultations** are concerned with the statutory process of consultation with all interested bodies once the draft neighbourhood plan is produced.

1a) Community Engagement

3.53 As detailed above Sedgefield Town Council called a meeting of those interested in helping develop a neighbourhood plan for Sedgefield.

3.54 An independent Steering Group was formed and specific topic groups defined (Communication, Housing, Infrastructure, Local Economy, Community and Environment). Residents were invited to help with the particular topic that held their interest. These meetings were advertised via the parish notice boards and at meetings held in various venues including the Parish Hall, to encourage volunteers to help or to learn more about the process of producing a neighbourhood plan for Sedgefield.

- 3.55 From the outset it was recognised that it was essential that the creation of the land should be inclusive and systematic and a variety of methods and formats would be used to achieve this.
- 3.56 As stated above, the Steering Group has worked closely with Sedgefield Town Council and with Durham County Council's Planning Department throughout the process of the development of this plan.
- 3.57 An extensive consultation process was undertaken to ensure that everyone living, working or owning land within the defined plan area had the opportunity to express their views and opinions. Meetings were held with all landowners, builders and developers with options on the land they wished to develop. The consultation process also included six separate public open consultation meetings held in Sedgefield Parish Hall and access to the information made available in the Town Council Offices, Sedgefield Library, Ceddesfeld Hall and The Sedgefield Plan website. As stated above a comprehensive household survey, young people's survey and business survey were commissioned and completed. The analysis for this surveys underpins all of the assertions and policies of The Sedgefield Plan.
- 3.58 At all stages the views, opinions and suggestions of residents were welcomed and collated through question and answer sessions and in writing e.g. by post it notes during or after public presentations and discussions. 21500 leaflets were printed and distributed to all households to advertise specific public meetings, events and surveys. Information about the neighbourhood planning process was made widely available to all residents. Leaflets were delivered door to door by volunteers to invite residents to participate in surveys, events and public meetings, on every occasion return dates were indicated and as some areas did not receive their copies until later than planned, the specific consultation period was extended to give all the opportunity to complete and return.
- 3.59 Completed community survey questionnaires were returned to the Steering Group and subsequently delivered to Public Knowledge Ltd for analysis and report in late January / early February 2014. The analysis indicated that of the total of 2438 households 665 surveys were completed - representing 24% of households and 11.6 % of the population, this is an excellent robust response. A subsequent young people survey was distributed to the upper classes of the Secondary and Primary schools and of 750 questionnaires distributed, 352 were returned (50%). Findings can be found in the evidence base.
- 3.60 A survey of the businesses in the Sedgefield area, comprising the High Street, Industrial Estate and NETPark was undertaken with a limited response. This was carried out by

drop notice and followed up by telephone. We discovered that many of the businesses although they engage with the community are not prepared to provide information on their businesses.

- 3.61 The initial findings from the community survey questionnaire was presented to the residents at Public meetings held in the Parish Hall on 10th and 11th March 2014. These meetings were well attended by a total of 240 residents over the two evenings. The Sedgefield Plan was presented to the residents on the 11th and 12th August 2014 in the Parish Hall and as always attendance was recorded by signature on both evenings. The assertions and draft policies of the plan were presented by PowerPoint. Presentation included the introduction of a 'Built-up Area Boundary'. The meetings were well attended by 180 residents over the two evenings. A question and answer session after the presentation enabled residents to suggest additional material to be incorporated into the plan. A show of hands indicated a 98% approval for the draft policies presented.
- 3.62 Members of the Steering Group together with some Town Councillors and volunteers attended as follows;
David Bowles , Morton Spalding, Sarah Guest, Tony Guest, Julie Archer, Liz Mitchell, Kieran Meighan, David Walker, Chris Lines, Allan Blakemore, Gloria Wills, Rachael Lumsdon

(1b) Summary of Community Engagement

Date	Activity	Comment
7 th & 22 nd Oct 2013	Parish council meetings to agree to produce neighbourhood plan	Meeting held in Town Council Offices with members of public & councillors
29 th Oct 2013	1 st meeting SDP to discuss plan Hardwick Hall	Consult on Durham County Council involvement and community
13 th Nov 2013	Development of questionnaire	Consulted on what it should contain
20 th Nov 2013	Sedgefield News public notice on meeting	Sedgefield News public notice of meeting
22 nd Nov 2013	Dipstick basis of questionnaire	Meeting on proposals
26 th Nov 2013	Steering Group Meeting	All Steering Group meetings open to public
28 th Nov 2013	Great Aycliffe Town Council meeting on proposed neighbourhood plans	Town Council meeting to discuss plan formats – Planning Aid
13 th Dec 2013	Meeting on draft questionnaire	Check pre- printing
10 th Jan 2013	Distribution of questionnaires	Steering Group members and public assistance
21 st Jan 2014	Meeting Business Section	Meeting open to public
21 st Jan 2014	Community & Environment Topic Group report	Notes for Steering Group and public discussion
24 th Jan 2014	Complete questionnaire distribution	Steering Group and public assistance
30 th Jan 2014	Aycliffe TC presentation on requirement of neighbourhood plans	Town Council Meeting to discuss plan formats – Planning Aid
26 th Feb 2014	Steering Group Meeting	Discussion on plan survey comments
26 th Feb-5 th Mar 2014	Public meeting posters and Flyers	Posters and flyers distributed by helpers to each household and places in prominent places
11 th / 12 th March 2014	Public meetings in Sedgefield Parish Hall to discuss findings	Public participation on findings of questionnaire and its use in plan for

Date	Activity	Comment
	of questionnaire	Sedgefield
19 th / 21 st March 2014	Consultants interviews	Several consultants interviewed as advice required to develop plan
24 th Mar 2014	Steering Group meeting to discuss consultants	Fairhurst quote and review of scope Town Council open to public
1 st Apr & 15 th May 2014	Consultant Fairhurst meeting	1 st Meeting to consolidate representation for Durham County Council Local Plan and our neighbourhood plan
21 st July 2014	Meeting Town Council Offices re locality and original Town Council proposals to Durham County Council	Meeting to discuss original proposal for only 300 houses- open to public
3 rd July 2014	Sedgefield News progress report on plan	Report in Sedgefield News and invitation to read website info
July 2014	Steering Group notification documents for public meeting on draft plan to be held 11 th & 12 th August 2014	Flyers posted around village to all residents giving notice of meeting and where hard copies can be inspected
7 th Aug 2014	Steering Group meeting (pre public meeting) to discuss the draft plan	Meeting to discuss presentation to public on 11 th & 12 th Aug 2014
11 th & 12 th Aug 2014	Presentation to public on the draft plan	Full public participation on each night and a full list of questions addressed during meetings
15 th Sept 2014	Steering Group Meeting	Minutes and agenda for October meetings open to public
21 st Oct 2014	Steering Group Meeting	Discussion on amendments to plan pre discussion with Durham County Council
12 th Dec 2014	Finalisation of draft plan before presentation to community on 16 th Dec 2014 and the Town Council on 5 th Jan 2015	Documentation for public presentation of near final draft plan
April 15 to June 15	Various meetings to discuss and make changes to The Sedgefield Plan due to the critical interim report by HMIP at stage 1 of County	Council and public meetings on the basis of saved policies of Sedgefield Borough Council

Date	Activity	Comment
	Durham Local Plan	
29 th and 30 th June 2015	Public meetings to update the community on current situation of the plan	Presentation and discussion on Durham County Council's decision to opt for a judicial review of the local plan and the planning vacuum that has been created for Sedgefield
21 st July 2015	Durham County Council Planning Committee meeting to consider the planning applications made for Eden Drive site	Group attended meeting at County Hall where the planning committee unanimously rejected the applications
During 2016	Regular articles featured in Sedgefield Extra to keep members of the public updated.	
17 th August 2016	Joint workshop between Sedgefield Town Council, Durham County Council officers and members of The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group to consider Independent Examiner's comments in relation to policy 1 "Built-up Area Boundary".	Several additional meetings and workshops were held between those attendees during September and October 2016 as the outcome of the Planning Inquiry relating to large scale development at Eden Drive was awaited.
During 2017	Regular update articles featured in Sedgefield Extra to keep members of the public updated.	
19 th January 2018	Public meeting held to explain the current status of The Sedgefield Plan and to agree, by public vote, the way forward for the plan.	
During 2018	Regular update articles featured in Sedgefield Extra to keep members of the public updated.	

2a) Statutory Consultation:

The persons and bodies consulted on the neighbourhood plan and methods used for this

- 3.63 The Steering Committee considered the most effective ways by which the consultation process could be carried out with the residents in relation to The Sedgefield Plan. The Steering Group decided to use as many ways as possible to reach the wider public and stakeholders. For example use of hand flyers through doors, e-mail, website, post and Sedgefield News as well as hard copy documents, notice boards, Sedgefield Library, Town Council Office and Ceddesfeld Hall (home of Sedgefield Community Association).
- 3.64 The Sedgefield Plan Group encouraged the public to respond to the consultation exercise and made it clear it was keen to hear the views, opinions and suggestions of residents and stakeholders so that the plan would reflect the views of the community. It was agreed that the consultation should be progressive with as wide a range of respondents as possible leading up to the publication of the first draft of The Sedgefield Plan. This first draft plan was introduced to the community at the public meetings on 11th and 12th August 2014 where the residents' views and suggestions were expressed and incorporated. The views of Durham County Council Planners were sought and considered and incorporated. This was followed by a number of meetings of the Steering Group, with planners, planning reviews, technical reviews and meetings to refine the draft plan prior to it being reviewed by Sedgefield Town Council on 5th January 2015 with a further review on 8th May 2015 to go to statutory consultation on 29th May 2015. At this stage the Town Council's chairman's foreword and basic conditions statement were completed.
- 3.65 The Steering Group believe that it has done all possible to involve and engage with the local community and those who might be impacted by the plan and have sought the views of the relevant statutory bodies and stakeholders. The consultees' views have been taken into account when considering how to achieve the outcome that will meet the residents' aspirations and to achieve a successful inspection outcome.

(2b) Summary of Statutory Consultation: consultees, timing and methodology and the results of the consultation

Date	Activity	Comment
8 th Jul 2011	Landowner Durham Diocesan Board of Finance letter	Outlines proposal to Durham County Council on large development in Sedgefield
21 st Nov 2013	1 st Meeting Stuart Carter Durham County Council Planning Representative	Introduction meeting regarding Durham County Council involvement
8 th Dec 13	North Yorkshire/South Durham Properties / Young RPS alternative but on green wedge	Previously proposed under Sedgefield Borough Council
17 th Dec 2013	2 nd Meeting Stuart Carter	Background info on the Durham County Council Local Plan and impact on our plan
26 th Feb 2014	Meeting with Durham County Council Planners at County Hall	Express public concern on proposals for the amount of development proposed for Sedgefield
24 th Jan 2014	Meeting with principals of all schools serving Sedgefield	Open discussion on the requirements and concerns regarding schools capacity
23 rd Jan 2014	Story Homes Developer H57 Eden Drive site	Meeting held to discuss development proposal
23 rd Jan 2014	Smith Gore representing Durham Diocesan	Developing scheme for outline planning to be sold on. Both these schemes represent 470 new houses
4 th Jun 2014	ESRG / Gradon Developer for Beacon Lane / Salters Lane – alternative to H57 Eden Drive site	This group were putting forward these sites as an option to Eden Drive
28 th Apr 2014	Kildrummy / Pactiv site currently industrial proposal for removal 2019 for housing	A possible brownfield site, public advised
April 2014 to Date	The Old Winterton Hospital (brown field) site	This site has been available for 11 years and is now seeking a change of use to housing rather than secure hospital
12 th June 2014	Durham County Council Planners Meeting at Spennymoor with Mr Stuart	discussion on our proposal as against Durham County Council draft plan

Date	Activity	Comment
	Timmiss	
12 th Jun 2014	Workshop Meeting	Plan development
3 rd Jul 2014	Meetings Sedgefield Community College Head Teacher Mr David Davis	To discuss school extension requirement and removal of old farm area for 36 houses
18 th Aug 2014	Town Council meeting re Durham County Council draft plan public inspection	Meeting discussed how Town Council would be represented at Durham County Council public inspection.
25 th Aug 2014	Durham County Council Plan Public Inspection at Chester-le-Street	Steering Group and Town Council representation at Durham County Council draft plan inspection that impacts on The Sedgefield Plan
24 th Oct 2013 to 13 th Oct 2014	Northumbrian Water Limited various meetings to address sewage disposal – 300 houses max until 2025	Various meeting held with NWL to establish capacity of current sewage disposal and water capacity – public informed during public meetings
11 th Nov 2014	Meetings with electrical suppliers, telecoms and gas	With the exception of the sewage disposal and water pressure requirements all could meet the supply requirements for further development
16 th Dec 2013	Durham County Council Plan meetings	Public Meetings on the Durham County Council draft plan and Town Council, The Sedgefield Plan Steering Group objections
To Jan 2015	Durham County Council Planners Meeting to review The Sedgefield Plan draft document with amendments Peer review	Peer review carried out by Stuart Carter and team with comment on The Sedgefield Plan content
20 th Sept, 7 th & 28 th Oct 2014	5 th Durham County Council meeting Mr Stuart Timmiss at County Hall to outline plan policies and proposal for next stage	Open meeting to discuss the elements of The Sedgefield Plan and our proposals.
21 st Oct 2014	Present the updated draft plan for Town Council comments	The Town Council were given hard copy and electronic copies of the plan to review prior to 5 th Jan meeting – comments by 9 th Jan 2015 for inclusion in final draft.

Date	Activity	Comment
4 th Dec 2014	Meeting Mr Alf Walton regarding Recreation and Golf - recreational	A meeting was held to consolidate the information regarding the quadbikes and the approved land usage for reference in the plan
5 th Dec 2014	Meeting with the Sedgefield Bowls club	A meeting was held to update the information from the Bowls Club for reference in the plan
5 th Jan 2015	Sedgefield Town Council final review of The Sedgefield Plan	Review prior to preparation to go forward to Durham County Council for inspection
7 th Jan 2015	Following the meeting at the end of January 15 the list of consultation bodies was reviewed and the Town Council agreed to send out copies to the following for their comments within 6 weeks	After review of the Regulation 14 and the Town Council comments and alterations to the draft document consultation doc was issued on the 8 th May 2015 and on website 19 th June 15
6 th Jan 2015	Hartlepool Borough Council	No reply
19 th Jan 15	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	No reply
29 th Jan 15	Bradbury and the Isles Parish Meeting	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Mordon Parish Meeting	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Bishop Middleham Parish Council	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Fishburn Parish Council	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Trimdon Parish Council	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Wingate Parish Council	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Sheraton and Halam Parish Council	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Coal Authority	Letter confirms Sedgefield not in coal measures area
Sent 8 th May 15	Homes and Communities Agency	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Historic England	Letter sent outlining their proposals to be considered
Sent 8 th	The Environment Agency	Previous comments

Date	Activity	Comment
May 15		
Sent 8 th May 15	English Heritage	Previous comments
Sent 8 th May 15	Network Rail	Not within Sedgefield boundary
	The Highways Agency	See letter
	BT Openreach	No reply
	Durham Dales, Easington, Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Gas - Transco	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Electricity – Northern Power Grid	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Northumbrian Water	Comments received we conform to NWL documentation
Sent 8 th May 15	Civic Trust	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Residents Forum	No reply
5 th June 15	Harriers Running Club	Reply – No comment other than reference involvement with young people
Sent 8 th May 15	Churches – All denominations – C of E, Methodist, John Fisher Catholic, New Generation Church	No reply
	Durham County Council	Extension for comment given but outside 6 week period allowed, to be considered when received
Sent 8 th May 15	Sedgefield Squash Club, Sedgefield Bowling, Sedgefield Rugby Club, Sedgefield cricket, Sowers and Growers	No reply from these groups
Sent 8 th May 15	Sedgefield Community Association	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Durham Constabulary	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service	No reply

Date	Activity	Comment
Sent 8 th May 15	Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Ray Craggs East Close Farm	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	National Farmers Union	Referred to Sedgefield agricultural heritage and the Sedgefield Show in its 162 nd year
Sent 8 th May 15	Hardwick Hall	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Hardwick Park Visitors Centre	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Livin Housing Association	Letter in support but thought we should increase the % of affordable houses to between 15% & 35%
Sent 8 th May 15	NETPark	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Donnewell Caravan	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	EON	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	George Bolam Foods	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Sainsbury Superstore	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	UPS Sedgefield	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	TC Harrison Sedgefield	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Andrew Sykes Sedgefield	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Jewson Ltd Sedgefield	No reply
Sent 8 th May 15	Alfred Walton Hardwick Moto X	Reply letter is covered by reference in plan and in documentation in evidence base
Sent 8 th May 15	Signet Planning seeking to develop site 7/SF/123	Stating The Sedgefield Plan not relevant to their proposals for development

Date	Activity	Comment
Sent 8 th May 15	Kildrummy	Reply 16 th June 15 in general support and advice on wording to establish principle to require brownfield development before greenfield. Comments to be considered
Sent 8 th May 15	Durham County Council Mr Stuart Timmiss letter regarding their comments on The Sedgefield Plan. A report was prepared for the Town Council on 30 th June 15 to consider all the replies from the statutory consultation completed 19 th June 15 (see report document in evidence base)	This was contrary to previous proposals but a meeting on 14 th July 15 arranged to resolve rebuttal document to be presented based on The Sedgefield Plan archive info
19 th June 15 letter received	Meeting held with Durham County Council planners to resolve the issues raised in Mr Stuart Timmiss' letter	Agreed to incorporate amendments and agreed to disagree on some key issues that are important to The Sedgefield Plan
Sent 8 th May 15	After consultation with Durham County Council the Town Council agreed to do a Further statutory consultation from 18 th November 15 to complete on the 6 th January 16. Further comment letter from Mr Stuart Carter from the original consultation 3 rd Feb 16 Addressed in Town Council report 30 th June 15	A further list of interested parties was provided by DCC and additional opportunities for further comment given. Additional comment on previous consultation addressed 4 th Feb 16

Date	Activity	Comment
Dated 15 th June 15 but received 29 th June 15	Walker Morris –Story Homes & Durham Diocesan Board of Finance	Reply 16 th December 15 with comments on SEA, Sedgefield BUAB, NPPF. Copy of letter and reply in attached documents
14 th July 2015	NLP –Story Homes & Durham Diocesan Board of Finance	Reply 11 th December 15 with comments on FOAN, and sustainability. Copy of letter and reply in attached documents
Sent 18 th Nov15	NLP Christopher Smith–Story Homes & Durham Diocesan Board of Finance	Reply 11 th December 15 with comments on pre sub draft, basic conditions. Copy of letter and reply in attached documents
Sent 18 th Nov15	Signet Planning seeking to develop site 7/SF/123 2 letters Hannah Rowan 6 th January 16	Letter on planning application 10 th December 15. Further letters and updates dated 6 th January 16. Copy of letter and reply in attached documents
Sent 18 th Nov15	ESRG / Gradon Developer for Beacon Lane / Salters Lane – alternative to H57 Eden Drive site represented by Colin Haylock planning and design	Reply 5 th January 16 with comments on pre sub draft, basic conditions and policies. Copy of letter and reply in attached documents
Sent 18 th Nov15	After The Sedgefield Plan had completed its consultation the Durham County Council then proceeded to carry out their 6 week statutory consultation period from end Jan 16 and the appointment of an inspector	Meeting Town Council re appointing inspector 11 th April 16 5 th May 16 Town Council & Durham County Council agreed appointment of an inspector
Sent 18 th Nov15	During the period writing of The Sedgefield Plan and going through the various consultations, developers	Within the consultation file, a record of the applications and refusals and appeals is kept for information. It is noted that some are additional applications for the

Date	Activity	Comment
	have lodged applications for planning with the Durham County Council. Several have been through the process but have been rejected however, several have gone to appeal	same sites around Sedgefield
Sent 18 th Nov15	14 th March 16 ID Planning presented proposals for the Development of the brownfield site situated at the Old Sedgefield Community Hospital site for the construction of 125 dwellings.	This scheme is within The Sedgefield Plan's Built-up Area Boundary and has received considerable support from the community. An appeal has been lodged with the Planning Inspectorate.
Returns due mid to end of March 16	Objections were submitted by Sedgefield Town Council to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the public inquiry to consider the Story Homes planning application to build 300 dwellings at Eden Drive, Sedgefield.	Sedgefield Town Council asked to speak at the public inquiry. The Sedgefield Village Action Group applied for, and were granted, Rule 6 Status to participate in this inquiry.
From Sept 13 to present May 16 applications have been lodged, some still awaiting to be heard.	Sedgefield Town Council and the Sedgefield Village Action Group participated in the Eden Drive public inquiry held by the Planning Inspectorate.	The Planning Inspectorate granted permission for 300 dwellings at Eden Drive, Sedgefield.
Presented to Sedgefield Town Council 14 th March 16. The Planning application	Following receipt of the Independent Examiner's Findings Report relating to The Sedgefield Plan a series of meetings took place between Sedgefield Town Council, the plan's Steering Group and Durham County Council Officers to modify	The modified plan was formally adopted by Sedgefield Town Council on 13 th February 2017 and submitted to Durham County Council in March 2017 with a request they undertake their statutory consultation in accordance with Regulation 16.

Date	Activity	Comment
was lodged with DCC duly considered but despite Town Council and community support refused.	The Sedgefield Plan accordingly. Throughout this timescale information articles for the public were put onto the plan's dedicated website, the Town Council's website, Sedgefield News and Sedgefield Extra.	
29 th March 2018	Sedgefield Town Council informed Durham County Council that it was formally withdrawing The Sedgefield Plan which had been submitted for independent examination in June 2016 and to undertake Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation for the draft of The Sedgefield Plan that was adopted by Sedgefield Town Council on Monday 13 th February 2017. The town council accepted Durham County Council's offer to perform a health-check on the adopted draft of The Sedgefield Plan, at the same time that Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation took place.	
9 th April 2018 – 23 rd May 2018	Sedgefield Town Council's period of statutory consultation, as the Qualifying Body, in accordance with Regulation 14.	Letters were issued to all of those contacted during earlier Regulation 14 consultations plus known developers with interests in the town. From this consultation responses were received from those detailed below.
13 th April 2018	Ms Janette Savage	Request for large grassed area at Winterton enclosed by St Luke's Crescent to be included in protected area.

Date	Activity	Comment
10 th May 2018	Sedgefield Sowers & Growers	Request reference to provision of allotments in the town both now and in the future linked to increasing size of Sedgefield.
21 st May 2018	Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG and North Durham CCG	Request for consideration of impact upon health services specifically provided at Skerne Medical Group.
21 st May 2018	Kildrummy (Sedgefield) Ltd	Broadly supportive of the plan's policies but would like to see references to the specific number of acceptable housing in the town removed, and an update to the Built-up Area Boundary Map to remove area identified as Employment Land (by Durham County Council), currently the site of the Pactiv business.
23 rd May 2018	Northumbrian Water	No comment on policies contained in the plan. Would encourage reconsideration of inclusion of policies relating to Land Use and Environment as way of safeguarding assets whilst boosting use of SuDS.
23 rd May 2018	Historic England	Would like to see change of emphasis from preserve and preservation to conserve and conservation plus linkage to all designated heritage assets in the area.
23 rd May 2018	Durham County Council	Suggested some alternative formatting to make the document more reader friendly and to update content in relation to number of additional dwellings already granted permission. Greater clarification needed between the town centre needs and outlying area needs in the parish. Refinement of some policies to ensure correct alignment with NPPF and, where appropriate, DCC.

Date	Activity	Comment
		<p>Following the Regulation 14 consultation exercise, representatives of Sedgefield Town Council and Durham County Council met on 06.06.18. They considered the submissions listed above and agreed to make some minor changes to the draft plan ahead of it being presented to the town council for adoption and then submission to the county council.</p> <p>Sedgefield Town Council wrote to each correspondent who had made a submission to the Regulation 14 consultation, to acknowledge their contribution and respond to their suggestions/comments, either highlighting any changes that would be made as a result, or explaining and justifying the reasons why changes would not be made. Copies of the letters can be found in the Correspondence section of the Evidence Base on www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk.</p>

Section 4

Business Support Strategy

(to be read in conjunction with 'Evidence Base' which can be accessed on
www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk)

Sedgefield: A Place to do Business

- 4.1. Sedgefield hosts a strong business sector that generates wealth, investment and employment that contributes to the gross value added (GVA) of the local economy. The sector provides employment in a wide range of activities and industrial sectors, ranging from high technology science based companies, through general engineering, to services, mass merchandise and traditional retail businesses. Operational support for these businesses is successfully provided by Durham County Council, which is the conduit for advice and guidance, and funding sources from government and the EU. The community of Sedgefield wishes to do its part in supporting its business and industry. For example, the town council is actively engaged in on-going dialogue and initiatives with the management team at NETPark. Other ways in which the links between local industry and the community can be strengthened are captured in the policies in this section.
- 4.2. The business community of Sedgefield is broadly distributed in three locations;
- The High Street
 - Trading Estate
 - NETPark
- 4.3. **The High Street** is at the centre of the community and its shops and offices are an intrinsic part of the character of the community, providing vital amenities including a pharmacy, dentist, undertaker, opticians and nursery. There is office accommodation for a range of businesses and a wide variety of retail premises serving the community and the many visitors that are attracted to Sedgefield. In total, the High Street and its immediate environs supports about 60 businesses, which employ a large number of permanent and part time staff, and provide work for young people and those who wish to work shorter hours.
- 4.4. The High Street is a busy location where car parking is a major issue for retailers because the lack of spaces and adequate controls, that restrict access to their premises. Local residents, especially the elderly and infirm who rely on their vehicles to access amenities such as health, pharmacy and dentistry (as well as to do their shopping) have difficulty finding parking spaces.
- 4.5. Sustaining the vitality of the commercial centre of Sedgefield is critical to its future and to the community that it serves, so it is important that the community, led by the Town Council, has a business support strategy.

High Street - business support strategy (BSS);

- 4.6. **BSS 1; identify an area at both ends of the High Street where bicycle racks can be erected with the aim of encouraging the use of sustainable transport.**
 - 4.7. **BSS 2; identify an area at both ends of the High Street where disability buggies/scooters can be safely parked.**
 - 4.8. **BSS 3; extend the area of marked parking bays, introduce enforceable disc parking scheme and restrict parking.**
 - 4.9. **BSS 4; enact a local ordinance to encourage responsible traders to discourage unsightly littering and drinking on the street with the aim of reducing broken glass and bad behaviour that discourages residents and visitors.**
- 4.10. **The Trading Estate** is located to the north of the community and supports a wide range of businesses that include service and distribution, manufacturing, mass merchandise retailing, equipment hire and builders merchants. A large number of people are employed on the estate, a significant proportion of whom are residents in the designated parish of Sedgefield.
- 4.11. The trading estate is an important commercial centre that contributes to the long term economic sustainability of Sedgefield. The creation and success of two major retail businesses there has improved the estate's vitality but has caused traffic flow and access problems. There is also a considerable flooding problem on the estate at times of high rainfall. The community, led by the Town Council, will adopt the following business support strategy.
- 4.12. **BSS 5; Work with Durham County Council Highways Department to permanently restrict parking on the roads at the entrance to the estate adjacent to the major retail premises.**
 - 4.13. **BSS 6; Work with NWL to implement a long term action plan to reduce flooding.**
- 4.14. **NETPark – the North East Technology Park** – is a world class location for science and technology companies in the UK providing a dynamic and supportive environment to accelerate the growth of ambitious, innovative, high tech companies into global markets. NETPark encourages collaborative multidisciplinary links, driving innovation, enterprise and economic prosperity. It focuses on supporting companies in materials integration that are developing technology and products, particularly printable

electronics, microelectronics, photonics and nanotechnology, and their application in the fields of energy, defence, and medical-related technologies.

- 4.15. NETPark is the driving force that will underpin the economy of Sedgefield and its place in the global economy. Businesses there are already making an impact nationally and internationally with breakthrough technical and scientific innovations that are serving customers around the world. Durham County Council has approved plans to expand the site to provide premises that could employ up to 10,000 people working in high value jobs. The companies that locate to NETPark will generate wealth and international investment. They will provide jobs for graduates who are currently at Sedgefield's schools, on a 'campus' populated by globally networked companies.
- 4.16. Young people face increasing competition for jobs in the evolving economy and industry needs to be able to recruit suitably qualified and motivated people. Therefore, it is sensible to promote stronger and more active links between companies and potential employees through local mechanisms such as those described in the policy above.

- 4.17. **BSS 7; work with the Governors and Faculty of Sedgefield Community College, Sedgefield Primary School and Hardwick Primary School to provide direct links with industry and to encourage the provision of work placements, mentoring, open days and talks to inspire potential recruits.**
- 4.18. **BSS 8; maintain an on-going dialogue with the management team at NETPark, to ensure that information about developments on the site is shared with the community in a timely manner.**
- 4.19. **BSS 9; collaborate with the management team at NETPark to ensure that, as the park grows, it also contributes to the wider community that it is physically located next to.**